

# Walsham-le-Willows Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Wattisfield Road, Walsham-le-Willows, Bury St Edmunds, IP31 3BD

**Inspection dates** 9–10 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Walsham-le-Willows is a very caring and nurturing school in which pupils thrive.
- Pupils generally make good progress with achievement in Years 3 and 4 greatly improved.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium make very good progress because they receive extremely good support.
- Teaching is at least good and some is outstanding. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils have a thirst for learning and apply themselves fully.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They encourage and celebrate one another's achievements.
- The curriculum offers pupils exciting learning activities and chances to be creative. It helps pupils see how subjects link together, and to use skills in real-life problem-solving activities.
- Staff morale is high and they form a highly effective team. Good quality staff training is linked effectively to improving pupils' learning.
- Staff are fully involved in discussions with the headteacher about the progress of pupils. They use this information increasingly to see changes are focused on the right areas.
- The headteacher and governors provide strong leadership. All are clear about the school's strengths and areas to improve. Any underperformance is tackled and the drive to improve further is relentless.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons, teachers' expectations of a few pupils are not sufficiently high. Outstanding expertise is not shared enough.
- Information and communication technology is not used enough in lessons in different subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons and all teachers teach. All were joint observations with the headteacher.
- In addition, the inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to a few pupils read.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, staff, governors and an independent consultant working with the school.
- The inspector took account of the 15 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and one letter from a parent. The responses to 11 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, the school's self evaluation, the records of how the school uses its funding, especially how the money from pupil premium is spent, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Robert Greatrex, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (extra government funding for children in local authority care and those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average, and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- Since the last inspection, the school has withdrawn from a federation.
- A Year 5 class will open in September 2013 and the expansion from First to Primary school will be completed in September 2014 when the school has its first Year 6 pupils.
- A 'walking bus' is organised by the school on three days each week.
- A breakfast club is run one day a week.
- In one of the four classes pupils from two year groups are taught together.
- The on-site independent pre-school provision is inspected separately.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for any of its pupils.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a higher proportion is outstanding, by:
  - sharing existing outstanding practice
  - accelerating the rate of progress of pupils capable of above average attainment.
- Extend the opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) in the range of subjects they study by:
  - ensuring pupils have time to practise and refine their skills
  - ensuring greater integration into other subjects so pupils understand the importance and relevance of the subject in everyday life
  - auditing staff skills and offering training where there are gaps.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age, although their range of experiences is wide. Transition from pre-school is very smooth and children do outstandingly well in the Early Years class and make very rapid progress so that they start Year 1 at an above average level.
- Over the last few years, Years 1 and 2 pupils have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics so that they reach above average standards in all three by the end of Year 2. Small year groups mean results achieved and levels reached can vary greatly from year-to-year.
- Recent improvements in the quality of teaching enable pupils to make good progress in Years 3 and 4, particularly so in mathematics. Here, nearly three-quarters reach levels above those expected for pupils of this age. However, in writing this falls to about a third and in reading a quarter. A small number of pupils are still reaching expected levels, rather than above expected levels, in these two subjects. Even so, this is an improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupil premium funding is spent very effectively on one-to-one support and small group work targeted at the precise next steps in learning for these pupils. As a result, they make rapid progress so that the gap between their achievement and that of other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is negligible.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from excellent support from teaching assistants particularly. Tasks are broken down into smaller steps and pupils are given the right balance between support and challenge.
- Although reading standards are good, the school has recognised they could be even better and have introduced changes in teaching how to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics). This is proving effective and pupils are making accelerated progress. All pupils show positive attitudes to reading.
- Pupils' ICT skills are generally good, but not used enough in the subjects they study. Pupils are not developing an understanding of how, for example, data can be interrogated quickly and accurately, or writing re-drafted more efficiently, or digital photographs used to illustrate key points in their work.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and outstanding in the Early Years class. Relationships between staff and pupils are very close so no time is lost in lessons because everyone is focused on maximising learning.
- Lesson planning is meticulous and the basis of effective learning. Teachers extend and simplify the basic tasks so that pupils who find learning easier and those who struggle learn at a good rate. This is further extended when pupils with a particular strength in a subject learn at a higher-level with pupils in an older-age class. However, not enough opportunities are planned for pupils to use ICT skills in other subjects.

- Occasionally, as in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the teacher will recognise when a pupil is doing particularly well and change the pupil's group immediately or set harder work. However, this does not happen so much in writing where tasks are often broader so some pupils are insufficiently challenged and work at a steady, rather than quick, rate.
- Pupils' outstanding attitudes to learning mean they soak up knowledge. They take pleasure in new learning and challenges. In the Early Years class, for example, a mathematics task presented by the teacher was extended by a child who wanted to see just how much he could achieve.
- Teachers build on pupils' attitudes effectively by giving tasks and challenging them to work together to solve them. In Year 2, for example, pupils collaborated and persevered with a difficult task. Since the last inspection, more relevant problem-solving activities have been introduced throughout the school which pupils say they enjoy. For example, a supermarket challenge gave pupils limited money with which to buy a healthy meal. This also successfully enabled pupils to apply knowledge gained in one subject to learning in another.
- Marking is clear, concise and consistent across the school so pupils understand what they have achieved and what they need to focus on next. It is particularly useful when pupils are given the opportunity to respond to what is written.
- Homework prepares for, and extends, learning in school. Key skills are practised and some activities are open-ended so pupils can interpret the task as they wish.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are very happy in school and fully enjoy their lessons because they are excited by the curriculum activities. They behave well and there have been no exclusions.
- Pupils' pride in their school is strong. Whether discussing their energy efficient school or the outdoor activities they do in the woods, their faces light up with pleasure.
- Pupils say they behave well because they know what is expected of them. They enjoy each other's company and the eldest seek opportunities to help younger pupils. They say bullying is rare. An assembly, led by pupils themselves, gave useful strategies and pupils are confident friends and adults would help them.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know adults will help them resolve any problems they face. They have a good understanding of e-safety. They describe the school community as, 'Like one big, happy family'. One parent stated, 'The school is academically focused but also nurturing'.
- Pupils' spiritual development is strong; mutual respect is paramount with a sense of concern and compassion for others. Pupils are encouraged to ask deeper questions such as 'why' and 'how'. Links with schools locally and internationally gives pupils a wider cultural understanding. Assemblies support the strong sense of community and mutual support.
- Pupils attend regularly and punctuality is good. The vast majority of pupils are keen to come to school because of the interesting lessons. They respond positively to rewards for full attendance.
- Parents feel their children are happy and safe in school, and that the school deals effectively

with bullying. Nearly all feel the school makes sure pupils behave well.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher provides a strong direction for the school, giving both a clear vision and route to success. Thorough and regular analysis of the school's performance gives an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- The school has continued to improve while managing the change from First to Primary school adeptly. The views of everyone, including pupils, have been carefully considered in the methodical planning for this expansion.
- Leaders track pupils' progress regularly and hold meetings with teachers to discuss how each pupil is improving, and whether it is enough. Extra support given to individuals and groups is also measured closely. Any pupil falling behind is quickly identified and necessary changes made.
- Staff morale is high, all responding positively to the questionnaire. Staff know the headteacher will support and encourage them, offering training to help them develop. They also know she is not afraid of tough decisions and has ensured that pupils' needs are always paramount. The outstanding teaching, however, is not used enough to improve teaching across the school.
- Pupils say they enjoy the curriculum and find it very interesting and varied. They particularly like opportunities to learn outside the classroom and how learning in school is linked to the real world. Pupils make good progress in key skills in literacy and numeracy. However, pupils have too few opportunities to use information and communication technology as an integral tool in learning generally.
- The school is very strongly focused on making sure every pupil has similar chances to enjoy all the school has to offer, and that no one is discriminated against. Parents are positive about the school and feel it has a strong sense of community. One stated, 'Staff always put the needs of pupils first and foremost'.
- The local authority has supported the school with suitable training tailored to the staff's individual needs, for example to meet the key areas for improvement from the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body know the school well; a nucleus of governors through regular visits, and all through detailed reports. Members have a wide range of expertise useful to the school. They are both supportive and challenging. Finances are carefully managed and premium funding allocated well to provide effective support and enable pupils' good achievement. Governors meet statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding. They set challenging targets for the headteacher and check arrangements to improve the performance of staff and the links to pay.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124717
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	402289

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	88
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Tuvey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Hunter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01359 259319
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