

Bacton First School

Walcott Road, Bacton, Norwich, NR12 0EY

Inspection dates 9–10 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Not all pupils have made the progress they could, especially in writing.
- Pupils do not always write at length if they are not inspired by the writing tasks.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work varies.
- Teaching has not been good over time, because of inconsistencies in past provision.
- Pupils do not have enough time to find things out for themselves, especially through using information and communication technology (ICT).
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to respond to the advice in their books about how to improve their work.
- The impact of leaders, managers and governors has not been sufficient to sustain good teaching or achievement over time.
- The checking of teaching and learning is not systematic or rigorous enough.
- Past weaknesses in the use and analysis of data have meant that some pupils were not given prompt support to stop them falling behind.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in both classes is now mainly good as a result of some key appointments.
- A greater proportion of Year 5 pupils are making more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most pupils behave well in class and around the school. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and say they feel safe in school.
- The curriculum makes good use of the local environment, particularly the beach.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils read, attended two assemblies and looked closely at examples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and by telephone with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke with several parents and carers outside school.
- The inspector considered 10 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There are two mixed-aged classes. The headteacher teaches three days per week.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed services) is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- There are no floor standards because the school has no Year 6 pupils.
- In September 2011 the school retained its Year 3 pupils as Year 4 to become an all-through primary. These pupils, who are currently in Year 5, will progress to become Year 6 in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching consistently good or outstanding by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to find things out for themselves, especially through using ICT
 - allowing time for pupils to respond to the helpful advice in their books about how to improve their work.
- Increase achievement in writing by:
 - developing pupils' enthusiasm for writing through imaginative and stimulating activities
 - making sure that all pupils write as much as they can in the time allowed
 - improving pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - all checking of teaching and learning is conducted systematically and rigorously
 - the new data system is used to identify promptly any pupils at risk of falling behind so that action can be taken swiftly to help them catch up.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- For the past two years, standards have been below average at the end of Key Stage 1, especially in writing. Not enough pupils make more-than-expected progress, partly because of underachievement in the past when teaching was more inconsistent than it is now.
- Children join Reception with skills and abilities often below those expected for their age, especially in communication and language. This term, children are making good progress as teaching has improved during the course of this school year.
- The present Year 2 pupils are on course to attain better than last year and standards in writing are rising. In other year groups, pupils' progress and attainment varies, but pupils' achievement in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- The school is finding new ways to inspire pupils to be motivated to write, as they are sometimes reluctant if activities are not imaginative and stimulating. Occasionally, pupils do not write as much as they could in the time allowed. Books show that the quality of pupils' handwriting varies, and their work is not always neatly presented.
- In 2012, there were only nine Year 1 pupils and their performance in the national reading check was below average. However, almost all the present Year 1 pupils are on course to pass the check as a result of changes the school has made to the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).
- The attainment of pupils in the present Year 5 is below expectations, but this year their progress has sped up because of consistently good teaching and the gap is closing with where they should be.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not made good progress over time. This is because in the past their achievement has been measured against individual targets rather than national standards. The school now expects them to make the same progress as the other pupils. This has caused their progress to speed up and it is now similar to other pupils.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium have benefited from one-to-one support. Their attainment is similar to other pupils. There are no gaps in their performance with their peers.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Inconsistent teaching in all key stages in the past has led to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and some underachievement. This is why good progress has not been sustained over time.
- New appointments this year have contributed to more consistently good teaching. Teachers set work at the right level for the very wide range of abilities in the mixed-aged classes. They are very clear about what they want pupils to learn, and ask searching questions to check what they understand and to probe their thinking more deeply.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers and

teaching assistants work very closely together and all know their pupils well.

- Increasingly, teachers are using drama and role-play to bring learning alive, and there are good examples of links across subjects such as history. For instance, Key Stage 1 pupils thought up interesting questions to ask Florence Nightingale about her life and times.
- Reception children have opportunities to choose their own activities both inside and outdoors, as well as having direct input from adults. Resources are used well to encourage them to write. For example, the role-play area was set up as Scutari Hospital in the Crimea, from where children could write memos to Florence Nightingale.
- Very good use is made of the local environment, especially the nearby beach. Key Stage 2 pupils were following-up a visit to find evidence of coastal erosion and the impact of the sea on the land. They spoke with authority about tidal backwash and the effect of groynes on the sand.
- In Reception and Key Stage 1, pupils have lively discussions with lots of practical activity. Pupils enjoyed using 'journey sticks' to gather plants from the school grounds as part of a science investigation into different habitats and how they affect plant growth.
- Pupils often work with an adult in groups because class sizes are relatively small. While this gives them plenty of adult attention and support, it sometimes means they do not have enough chance to work on their own and find things out for themselves, especially through using ICT.
- Marking is regular and gives pupils helpful guidance about how to improve their work. However, they are not given enough time to respond to this advice and act upon it.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to take an active part in lessons. Behaviour is mainly good in class and around the school. Pupils are friendly and polite and get on well together. One pupil said, 'Everybody knows everybody because it is a small, friendly school.' The Year 5 pupils are good role models for the younger ones and take their responsibilities seriously as they help out around the school.
- Pupils have more of a voice now than they did at the time of the last inspection. The school council is active in helping to improve the school and in raising money for charity.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying, although there has been in the past. They know about different types of bullying, such as name calling and cyber bullying. Some parents and carers expressed reservations about behaviour and bullying. There are pupils who struggle to behave well, but staff manage their behaviour very well so that learning is not disrupted for other pupils.
- The school can pinpoint improvements in the behaviour of individual pupils as a result of the support they have received, both from school staff and outside agencies. Pupils know that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and know how to stay safe. Visits from the police and the coastguard have alerted them to potential dangers and how to avoid them.
- Attendance is rising and is now a little above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have not sustained good progress over time because teaching has been too inconsistent in the past, and the checking of teaching and learning is not systematic or rigorous enough. This is partly a result of the headteacher's heavy teaching commitment which reduces the amount of time available for regular monitoring.
- Teaching is improving following a new appointment and is more consistently good than it was. This year, pupils' progress has hastened and standards are rising more rapidly. The school does all it can to give pupils equal chances to succeed.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for improving the school and is supported by a close-knit and highly dedicated staff team. Leaders and managers know what the school does well and how it needs to improve. Assessments of teaching, while infrequent, are accurate and give helpful pointers for improvement.
- The school is adopting a new tracking system that makes it easier to compare how pupils are doing with national expectations. Leaders have identified that, in the past, tracking has not always picked up promptly enough pupils at risk of falling behind. This has meant that support to help them catch up has not been as timely as it could have been.
- The management of staff performance is robust, and training is used to tackle any particular areas of need, such as the teaching of phonics.
- The school works well with parents and carers, who provide considerable support. Parents and carers who spoke to the inspector were full of praise for the school's work. On Parent View a few parents and carers expressed concerns about various aspects, but most have positive views.
- The curriculum makes good use of the local area. Pupils enjoy 'beach school' (a variant of 'forest school') and make the most of the coastal environment. Year 5 pupils also benefit from learning Latin, which they say helps them with their English. The curriculum is well enriched by visits, visitors and a range of clubs.
- The local authority has helped the school to improve teaching and to prepare for becoming an all-through primary school. The school has forged positive partnerships with other local schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very supportive of the school and keen to drive improvement under their new leadership. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, and visit regularly to find out for themselves what is going on.
 - Governors have undertaken their own self-review with an external trainer and are committed to becoming even more effective. They know about the targets that are set for teachers, and what the school does to reward good teaching and tackle any underperformance.
 - Governors keep a tight check on the finances; they know how the pupil premium is spent and the impact it is having. They make sure that all safeguarding arrangements exceed requirements.

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

Unique reference number	120781
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	400205

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annie Edwards
Headteacher	Sandra Humphreys
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2010
Telephone number	01692 650240
Fax number	01692 650240
Email address	office@bacton.norfolk.sch.uk

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