

Orford Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Orford, Woodbridge, IP12 2LU

Inspection dates	16–17 May 2013
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Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils achieve well at the school. Children get a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and are well prepared for secondary school by the end of Year 6.
- Good teaching promotes pupils' progress well. Teachers provide interesting and worthwhile activities that engage pupils' interests.
- The school provides very rich learning experiences through visits out for pupils, visitors to the school and additional activities such as the garden and kitchen which enable pupils, for example, to cook what they grow. These additional activities make an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary. The warm and friendly atmosphere within the school creates a strong sense of community. This nurtures pupils exceptionally well and enables them to develop and grow within a very happy and safe environment.
- The headteacher has provided strong leadership for improvement, since the last inspection. Hence, the school has progressed from being a satisfactory to a good school, as teaching and learning and pupils' achievement have improved.
- Governors provide good oversight of the school and manage the finances with care. They are good at thinking ahead to secure the long-term future of the school, such as appointing a joint headteacher with another school, which has been a positive initiative.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes, the pace of learning is slow for part of the lesson so pupils do not get enough done.
- On occasion, work is not hard enough, especially for the more able, and this includes expectations of pupils' writing
- Marking is not used consistently enough across all classes to promote pupils' progress well.
- While attendance has improved, it is just in line with the national average and lower than it should be. Some pupils' attendance is low.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons and these were jointly seen with the headteacher. In addition, shorter visits were made to lessons to focus on specific aspects such as marking or how well work was matched to pupils' abilities.
- The inspector held meetings with a group of pupils and listened to some reading.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders and a representative from the local authority. The lead inspector met with a small group of governors including the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspector took account of 15 responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents and carers, Parent View, as well as 12 responses to a survey for school staff, in informing the inspection findings. The inspector also spoke to a sample of parents at the school gate to gather their views about the school.
- The inspector looked closely at a range of documentation, including information on pupils' performance, the school improvement plan, safeguarding and behaviour policies as well as policies on teaching and learning, and documents relating to the targets set for teachers to improve their work.

Inspection team

Gulshanbir Kayembe, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is significantly smaller than other primary schools and has three mixed-age classes.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British but the school has a higher proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than most others. None, however, speak English as an additional language.
- A below average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which is extra government funding given to the school on the basis of the numbers known to be eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is below the national average, as is the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has a partnership agreement with another local school, Bawdsey Primary School. Under this agreement, the two schools share a headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - all lessons provide work that is sufficiently challenging for all pupils in the class, especially the more able
 - there are sufficient opportunities in all classes and subjects to challenge pupils to produce longer pieces of written work
 - pupils work at a good rate in all lessons
 - pupils are given specific and precise guidance on how to improve their work and that they respond to comments or questions that teachers raise when they provide written feedback to them.
- Raise attendance levels further by developing:
 - a more comprehensive system for rewarding pupils and classes with good attendance including making more public, through display, the attendance levels across the school
 - governors' roles in working with parents to improve their children's attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children begin at the school with a wide range of skills and knowledge. On balance, though, their overall attainment is often below age-related expectations in literacy and sometimes in aspects of numeracy. Whatever their starting points, pupils now make good progress across the school.
- Children currently in the Early Years Foundation Stage arrived with broadly expected skills and knowledge in most areas but their attainment was lower in literacy and, some had limited prior knowledge of numbers. They are making good progress and most are developing their early reading and writing skills well. All are counting well now and some are comfortable with early ideas of adding and taking away.
- Attainment in the past at the end of Year 6 has been low but is now rising. It was in line with national averages in 2012 but pupils made significant progress and improved considerably on their Key Stage 1 results especially in English. There was a good increase in the numbers of pupils in Year 6 who had made expected and more than expected progress between 2011 and 2012. Current Year 6 pupils are on track to attain above average standards.
- Pupils' reading skills are developing at a good rate. Younger children and pupils know their letter sounds (phonics) well and use these to help them with both their reading and writing. Most Year 1 pupils met the national standard for the phonic check last year. Older pupils make good use of their reading skills to support their work across different subjects.
- Pupils' writing skills are developed well through relevant writing tasks and through use of writing skills in subjects such as science and history. However, sometimes, pupils are not challenged enough by lower demands on their writing skills and this means they get less practice in producing longer pieces of writing.
- In lessons, pupils work with commitment and high levels of concentration. In the best lessons, their engagement is total and they work outstandingly well to support one another's learning. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, for example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 engaged in high-level discussion about subtraction techniques with their partners to crack a code to find hidden treasure.
- Skilled support and intervention from teaching assistants enables those with special educational needs to achieve well. Excellent support for behaviour needs has enabled individual pupils to make significant progress in their learning, often to catch up with others from their own low starting points.
- Good use of the pupil premium funding, such as provision for additional adult support, is benefiting the small number in receipt of this so that their progress is accelerating to make up for any gaps in their attainment with that of others. No pupils eligible for pupil premium funding were represented amongst those who took the Key Stage 2 tests in 2011 or 2012.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds do as well as others and boys and girls make equally good progress as they move through the school.
- Pupils' art and music work is of a high standard. They develop excellent skills through the work they do in the garden and the kitchen. Work in these is very well linked to other subjects such as English, mathematics and science as well as subjects such as business and economics through the enterprise work that pupils do in potting and selling plants for example.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and an increasing amount is outstanding. Teachers plan lessons well and set out clearly what they expect pupils to achieve so that pupils know what they are learning.
- Literacy and numeracy are well taught and there is a systematic approach to teaching pupils their letter sounds and how to use these to put words together when writing as well as how to

break words down by their letter sounds to read new or unfamiliar words.

- In most lessons, teaching assistants are deployed effectively. These members of staff have a good understanding of the capabilities of the pupils they are working with and what to do to help them to improve their work further.
- Relationships are strong across the whole school so that pupils respond well to all adults. Adults also model very effectively what constitutes good teamwork and collaboration through their own relationships with other adults and pupils.
- Teachers provide a good range of tasks and activities that help pupils to learn. Often, pupils are asked to work in pairs and groups and this helps them to share their ideas and develop their thinking in more detail.
- Occasionally, teachers talk for too long or provide pupils with unnecessary tasks, such as copying the learning objective, giving less time for pupils to get on with their work and practice new skills or apply new learning. This slows the pace of learning.
- In most lessons, teachers plan different work for different groups of pupils in the class and this is especially helpful given the mixed ages as well as a range of different abilities in each class. Sometimes, however, work is not as challenging as it might be for some pupils, usually, in these instances, the most able.
- Marking is excellent in some classes with detailed comments for improvement and where pupils' responding and acting on the advice given is part of the routine they work to. However, this quality of marking and response from pupils is not consistent across the school.
- Sometimes, marking is not focused sharply enough on the next steps and similar comments appear several times in books, such as 'improve your use of connectives', indicating that pupils are not acting on the advice given. Most teachers involve pupils actively in assessing their own work or one another's helping them to develop further their understanding of their work.
- Overall, in most lessons, pupils work at a good rate, producing a good amount of work and improving their skills and knowledge well because their learning is well organised. Teachers and support staff ask probing questioning to clarify pupils' understanding and check how well pupils are working to ensure that they use their time well.
- In the best lessons, work is exceptionally well matched to the different capabilities of pupils and challenges them to think for themselves and develop problem-solving skills systematically.
- Children in their Reception year are taught well. Practical activities engage them well and enable them to develop enthusiasm for learning. These activities provide many opportunities for developing early writing skills through, for example, clip boards to record what they see or using chalks to draw or write on boards in the outdoor area.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are very happy and safe at school and all parents responding to Parent View agree.
- Behaviour is often outstanding in lessons, and during break times pupils' strong relationships with one another mean they play together very harmoniously. They look after one another very well and this is evident in lessons where they support one another's learning to great effect.
- Pupils are curious and readily ask questions which help to take their understanding further forward. The youngest children in Reception are keen to explore the world around them and are not afraid to try out new experiences and activities.
- Pupils are also very reflective and thoughtful. When reading a poem about a boy with a sad life history, older pupils used the facts in the poem to empathise with the boy and described insightfully what he must be feeling and why.
- The very small number of pupils with behavioural needs improve their behaviour in the very positive environment of the school. This, in turn, has a beneficial impact on their learning.
- While pupils' attitudes to school are highly positive, their overall attendance is not as good as it could be. Some parents take their children on holiday during term time, for example. The

school's systems for rewards for attendance are not robust enough to get the best response from pupils and parents in relation to attendance.

- Governors have discussed the attendance issues in detail but have not been as actively involved in supporting improved attendance including holding parents who take their children away on holidays during term time more effectively to account.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe hence they know about road safety and what not to do when using the internet. Pupils are also confident that, should any bullying occur, the school will deal with it effectively. They are adamant, though, that bullying is not an issue. Unkind behaviour on the basis of an individual's background is also something that pupils say does not occur.
- Observations of pupils at work and at play indicate that they get on exceptionally well together and differences of race or gender have no impact on the way in which they interact with one another. Boys and girls, for example, enjoyed a game of football during the lunch break.
- Pupils are highly enthusiastic about the kitchen garden. They love making sophisticated dishes such as summer vegetable lasagne using the produce from their gardening.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's singular focus on school improvement has had a very positive impact on the quality of education provided, and the school is now much better than it was at the time of the last inspection. The school is well placed to continue to improve further, and both the headteacher and governors are ambitious to make it better still.
 - The headteacher's regular checking of the quality of teaching and learning has been robust and feedback effective in helping staff to improve their practice. Records show good analyses of strengths and areas for development from lesson observations and examination of pupils' books. These have provided the school with a clear agenda on which to focus training for the school and individuals and to manage teachers' performance effectively.
 - Other leaders are developing their roles well, including in checking the quality of teaching and learning. Subject leaders provide effective guidance for the development of their subjects. Staff are very positive about their roles and proud to be a member of the school community.
 - Tracking of pupils' progress is rigorous and enables any who are underachieving, or at the risk of doing so, to be identified early and given extra help or support to enable them to get back on track. Staff are making increasingly good use of the data on the pupils in their classes to support teaching and learning and improve achievement.
 - The school has a rigorous approach to equality of opportunity and does not tolerate discrimination in any form.
 - Pupils are provided with a wide range of learning experiences which include a strong focus on music and art as well as provision for learning French. Further enrichment through the kitchen garden and the visits from, for example, published authors provide pupils with memorable experiences. The pupil premium funding ensures that all pupils are able to participate fully.
 - The local authority has worked well with the school especially in supporting its efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Partnership with Bawdsey Primary School has been beneficial in helping to share ideas, resources and sharing staff that might be financially difficult as a single school.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors ensure that the school meets statutory requirements including for safeguarding. They are well informed about its work through their committees and the headteacher's reports. They are increasingly taking an active role through visits and links with different subject areas or aspects of the school's work. Governors' strong financial awareness means that they ensure pay is linked to performance and that the pupil-premium funding is spent

purposefully to support those eligible to receive it. Their overall good investment in teaching assistants helps to maintain continuity in the classes that have more than one teacher. Governors have clear understanding of pupil performance as well as staff performance. They know how the school is tackling any underperformance.

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	124777
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	406270

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	56
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Connolly
Headteacher	Stephen Green
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2011
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