

# Ilketshall St Lawrence School

Hogg Lane, Ilketshall St Lawrence, Beccles, NR34 8ND

**Inspection dates** 27-28 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Ilketshall St Lawrence is a caring and nurturing school in which pupils thrive. Many parents travel so their children can attend.
- Pupils throughout the school make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because teachers know their individual levels and what they need to do next.
- The school succeeds in its aim to give pupils a 'well-rounded' education.
- Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding do well and reach levels identical to other pupils.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the progress of the pupils they support.
- Pupils say, and their parents agree, that they feel safe in school.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well and enjoy all school has to offer. They have a real voice in their school. One said, 'It is the best.'
- Pupils say subjects are taught in interesting ways so they want to find out more. They particularly like the visits, visitors and special weeks that give them a deeper understanding.
- Staff form an effective team driven by their desire to do their best for every pupil.
- Staff morale is high because they know what is expected of them, and that they will be given any training they need to achieve it.
- School leaders and governors see that plans for any change are in place in plenty of time so the school runs smoothly. For example, the change from first to primary school has been managed effectively through careful planning.
- Leaders and governors have brought about improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some pupils have too little to do during the start and end of some lessons.
- Staff do not check pupils always listen when they should, nor that they read, understand and follow feedback about their work.
- Improvement plans do not make clear what success will look like.
- A relatively high number of pupils miss a week or more of school because their families take holidays in term time.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons. All of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to a sample of pupils read.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, governors, parents and carers, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 23 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector also spoke with some parents. The responses to 10 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress; planning and management 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.
- Since it was last inspected, the school has expanded from a first to a primary school.
- 2013 is the first year that the school has Year 6 pupils taking the national tests, the results of which are not yet known. Teacher assessments suggest that the school is on course to meet the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the extra government funding for children looked after by the local authority, known to be eligible for free school meals or whose families are in the armed services) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- Pupils are taught in four classes. Reception children are taught separately. All other pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes; Year 1 are taught with Year 2, Year 3 with Year 4, and Year 5 with Year 6.
- A privately run pre-school shares part of the building each weekday afternoon and is inspected separately.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - making the most of the time pupils are working purposefully in lessons
  - clarifying to all pupils what good listening skills look like so attitudes to learning are consistent
  - making sure that pupils read, understand and act on their teachers' marking of their work.
- Ensure success criteria in the school improvement plan are clear, measurable, realistic and set deadlines so everyone is clear what must be done and when it is achieved.
- Seek further ways to improve pupil attendance by reducing the number of term-time holidays taken.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start school their skills and range of experiences are broadly as expected by this age. They settle quickly, particularly those from the on-site preschool that have shared the class' facilities and are very familiar with the layout and routines.
- In Reception, children make good progress overall and very good progress in number. As a group, many count aloud to 100 and use numbers beyond 20 with confidence. The good progress is partly because the smaller class numbers give more contact with adults.
- Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. Over the last few years, results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 are consistently above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress is also good in Years 3 to 6. Although Year 6 test results are not yet known, teacher assessment and inspection analysis suggest standards in English and mathematics are above average.
- Reading is a strength. Pupils are well trained in how to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics) and standards by the end of Year 1 are above average.
- Every morning a short segment of time is used to focus on basic reading and writing skills. Classes are a hive of activity. Pupils work in smaller groups with others of similar ability, some moving classes to do so. Tasks are very focused so progress is rapid.
- Pupil-premium funding is spent effectively. Extra staff and resources are used to provide help to catch up so pupils make good progress and reach similar levels to others.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well catered for because they receive carefully targeted support from well-trained teaching assistants. No limits are put on their achievements. A parent said, 'The school let him try, the same as others.' Staff check regularly that extra help makes a difference, and change it if not. As a result, pupils do well.
- Basic skills are good. Many opportunities to practise writing and information communication technology skills particularly make sure pupils are adept in these subjects.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' knowledge of their pupils' different levels is outstanding. This information is used very skilfully so work is neither too hard nor too easy. Comments such as, 'This is a Level 5 element' give pupils a clearer understanding of their learning.
- Teachers check pupils' achievements and modify tasks accordingly, for example giving a group extra tuition in a particular skill so that doubt is clarified and mistakes corrected.
- A variety of questioning styles are used effectively. Teachers will often ask specific questions to check particular pupils understand. Questions at different levels of difficulty mean all pupils are kept on their toes.
- Technology is used well, particularly to explain and help clarify teaching. The youngest children,

at the end of a session, were re-invigorated using the interactive whiteboard to check their answers.

- Pupils learn to work as a group through interesting activities that challenge and excite them, an improvement since the last inspection. The eldest class, for example, re-told a play scene. They watched actors and wrote evaluations of each other's performance, using helpful criteria.
- Some lesson introductions are outstanding. Here, teachers juggle different ability groups so that all learn well. While they teach one group, another may have already started a task and a third receive extra help from a teaching assistant, perhaps to correct mistakes from yesterday. As the teacher finishes with one group, she checks how another is progressing before teaching a third. All pupils know what is expected. However, in other lessons, all groups come together for the same teacher input. Some are given no particular task and sit passively until it is their group's turn. This slows their progress.
- Whether leading a group with a specific task, or breaking the learning into smaller steps for a struggling pupil, teaching assistants make a positive contribution.
- While marking usefully recognises what pupils can do, it rarely gives pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work, nor do teachers check pupils have understood and followed the guidance given.
- Homework is suitably varied. Activities relate to the week's learning, or practise key skills, or research for future work in school.

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

- Ilketshall St Lawrence has a good reputation as a nurturing school. Staff know pupils individually and make sure they are happy at school. Well over half the pupils travel from outside the area because parents want them to attend.
  - The vast majority of pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. A small number of younger boys do not settle as quickly as others, nor concentrate as well.
  - Pupils and the vast majority of their parents say they feel safe in school. Staff see pupils' safety as paramount. Pupils, too, look out for one another and some say they come to the school because it is a 'small friendly place where everyone knows each other.' They say bullying is very rare and they are confident staff would deal with any concern they had.
  - Pupils' behaviour is generally very good and there have been no exclusions. The school's good reputation for care attracts pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their own behaviour. The school offers consistent, firm support and these pupils settle and do well over time.
  - Pupils have a real voice in the school. They are listened to, for example when giving an opinion of potential new staff. Governors survey their views. School council visits to the high school helped decide the preparation needed before transfer.
  - Pupils work well in teams. They collaborate, listen to one another's views and try to come to a consensus. These life skills develop well because much 'topic' work is through group work. Elder
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pupils' self confidence is boosted by their well thought out presentations.

- Pupils are very caring. They regularly raise funds for pupils in an African school, and correspond with them. Pupils are keen to find out about their lives, and how to help them further.
- Imaginative events such as 'safety week' give pupils' good understanding of how to recognise potential dangers and stay safe in many aspects such as first aid and e-safety.
- Attendance is broadly average and has fallen slightly over the last year. This is largely due to term-time holidays which account for a high proportion of absence.

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

- Foresight and planning are features of the school's success. Much preparation took place to see pupils were well prepared for Year 6 national tests and transfer to high school. As a result, pupils say they face both with confidence.
- The school knows itself well. Evaluation is clear and accurate so strengths and areas to improve are identified. How improvements will be measured, though, is too broad and imprecise, so it is impossible to say what they look like or when they are achieved.
- Meetings about pupils' progress are very effective. Because the school is small, all staff attend and staff who have previously worked with a pupil can give useful insight.
- Staff morale is high, all survey responses were positive. All staff benefit from clear systems to support and develop their effectiveness. All can contribute their thoughts. Visits to each other's classes enable them to better understand their part in preparing their pupils.
- The curriculum links subjects together so learning in one is applied to new experiences in another. Units of work include a visit or visitor to enthuse pupils and enrich understanding. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school succeeds in its aim to produce individuals with broad general knowledge and good basic skills. Discrimination is tackled and extra funding spent on ensuring all pupils have equal opportunities to all the school offers.
- Partnership with parents is strong. Parents like visiting the regular 'open classrooms' and know they will be listened to if they approach the school.
- The school benefits from very good relationships with local schools. Staff work closely together, for example undertaking joint training.
- The local authority offers practical well-targeted support. It organises good quality training to enhance staff effectiveness.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are far-sighted. Succession planning has begun. They are well organised. They 'buddy' with classes to understand day-to-day school life, the quality of teaching and learning

in all classes and guide decision-making. They regularly use data to check the school is effective and all pupils do well. They challenge and support the school equally well. Finances, including the pupil premium, are managed carefully. Governors meet statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding. Staff have clear targets and governors check arrangements to promote staff and link to pay. They know what the school is doing to tackle 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124592
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	412894

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	102
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pam Fenner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jill Fryer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01986 781315
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