

# West Earlham Infant School

Scarnell Road, Norwich, NR5 8HT

**Inspection dates** 4–5 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher, supported by other leaders and governors, provides inspirational leadership and has brought about rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- From very low starting points, pupils make good progress to reach average standards by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Children make an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes because of outstanding teaching and a relentless focus on developing their basic skills.
- Achievement in reading is improving very quickly as a result of changes to the way it is taught.
- Teachers know pupils very well and plan work that has sufficient challenge for them and builds on their interests.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in class and around the school. They are managed extremely well by all staff and say they feel very safe in school.
- Highly skilled teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' good progress.
- Leaders and managers are crystal clear about their roles and they all enthusiastically play a full part in driving improvement.
- Governors have an excellent oversight of the school's work and bring high levels of expertise as they hold leaders to account.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in writing, while good, is not as strong as in reading and mathematics, especially for the more able.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to assess the quality of their own and each other's writing.
- Teachers do not always make sure that they follow up the points for improvement when marking work so that pupils act upon them and make gains in progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- The inspection team heard pupils read, attended two assemblies and, together with the headteacher and Nursery teacher manager, reviewed examples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including development plans, policies, and the school's own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, safeguarding and subject planning materials, records relating to working with other agencies, 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 other governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of the 24 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as speaking with parents.
- The inspectors considered 40 staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average infant school.
- There are two Nursery classes, one including children aged two.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very high. This is additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is high, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school provides breakfast daily for pupils and their families.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2011. She is a local leader of education supporting other schools on behalf of the local authority.

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

- Improve achievement in writing, especially for more-able pupils, by:
  - giving more opportunities to pupils to assess the quality of their own and others' writing so that they are clear about what they need to do to improve it
  - making sure that teachers follow up the points for improvement they write when marking pupils' books so that pupils act upon them.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well because they reach at least average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. When they join the school their skills are often very low, especially in language and communication and personal and social development.
- Provision has improved greatly in the Nursery and Reception classes and is now outstanding. This means that children get off to a very rapid start. The stimulating learning environment harnesses their curiosity, and purposeful activities engage them extremely well. They soon settle and learn to play together, as well as working with concentration on tasks that interest them.
- In 2012, the proportion of pupils who met the required standard in the Year 1 reading check was below average. This year, despite having more needs, the pupils have done better and achieved very well. This is because the school has changed the way it teaches phonics (the sounds that letters make) and has arranged smaller groups for pupils, tailored more specifically to their needs. Less-able pupils, in particular, are making great strides in their reading as a result.
- The school has promoted reading for pleasure by using high-quality books in each year group, as well as encouraging parents to join their children at story cafes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and through shared reading in Key Stage 1. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic about reading, and read more at home.
- Pupils have attained particularly well in mathematics this year as standards are above average. This is because leaders have focused on training teachers in developing mental mathematics, especially at the beginning of lessons. The impact of this work is showing in pupils' increased confidence in calculating and applying their skills in solving real-life problems.
- While pupils make good progress in writing, it is not quite so strong as it is in reading and mathematics. Not enough pupils reach the higher levels of attainment. Pupils are beginning to assess the quality of their own and their friends' writing to identify specific ways in which they could improve it, but this is not consistent across the school yet. As pupils' confidence in reading grows, it is starting to have a beneficial impact on writing as well, but this is at an early stage.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the very high level of attention given to their specific needs through a range of approaches and constant checking of how well they are doing. The headteacher is encouraging staff to include pupils more in lessons rather than to take them out for additional support.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make better progress than others in the school. In 2012, there was no attainment gap in reading between eligible pupils and the others. Pupils were less than a term behind their classmates in English and just over a term behind in mathematics. These gaps have closed this year as pupils continue to benefit from one-to-one tuition and small-group support.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 1 and often outstanding in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers adapt learning with great skill to suit the specific needs of the children and to appeal to their interests. For example, Nursery children enjoyed organising a 'barbecue' in the

warm weather. They have done a project on cars, which particularly appealed to boys. They benefit from excellent resources, both in the classrooms and in the spacious outdoor areas that include a sensory garden.

- Good use is made of the local area; for example, through regular 'forest schools' sessions, when pupils learn about the outdoors and woodland life. These practical experiences inspire the pupils and motivate them to write across different subjects.
- Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils and have developed a wide range of approaches to interest and engage them in learning. These include asking probing questions of individuals and using 'talk partners' to share ideas by discussing them in pairs.
- Pupils' workbooks show that they make good progress over time. The good-quality work is consistent across all classes and year groups, so that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. They develop stamina so that their more recent writing is longer and more accomplished than what they were producing at the beginning of the year. It contains interesting vocabulary.
- When teachers mark pupils' writing, they leave helpful comments to show pupils how to improve their work. However, teachers do not always follow these up to check that pupils have acted upon them, and so miss opportunities to hasten pupils' progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, are taught well. They receive focused support from highly skilled teaching assistants who have been trained extremely well.

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

- Pupils behave extremely well in class and around the school. They have excellent attitudes to learning and are full of enthusiasm for their work. They are courteous and polite and support one another. They enjoy good relationships with staff, which makes for a positive learning environment.
- Staff manage and support pupils' behaviour extremely well. They know the pupils very well as individuals and can offer help to those with additional emotional needs so that they can play a full part in learning. The school has many case studies of individuals who have made excellent progress in their behaviour as a result of the support they have had.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school and that behaviour is very good. This is supported by parents who responded to Parent View. Pupils understand about different types of bullying such as name-calling. They know that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and know about keeping safe when out and about and at home. They look out for one another and are careful when using tools or tidying away toys. They enjoy taking responsibility and feel that adults listen to their views. They have extremely positive attitudes to learning and are keen to explain their work to visitors.
- While attendance is below average for primary schools, it is rising. In this school a relatively high proportion of children are of non-statutory age and this affects the figures. The daily breakfasts which take place in each classroom are a good opportunity for parents and children to enjoy some time together before the day gets underway, and this helps pupils to get to school in good time.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher has given focus and direction to the school, building on its existing strengths. Her determination and enthusiasm have encouraged staff to take on new responsibilities and new approaches to teaching. This has proven very successful, and leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, share the headteacher's ambition for all pupils to do as well as they can.
- Outstanding leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage means that all children, from the two-year olds onwards, receive high-quality provision tailored to their needs. Children's 'learning stories' build up a detailed picture of their achievements and set out the next steps they need to take to move their learning on.
- Leaders and managers are very clear about the role they play in driving improvement and know that their contributions are valued. As a result, they have an excellent knowledge of their areas of responsibility and are helping to raise standards. The leadership of special educational needs and the new reading programme are particularly strong.
- Leaders make very good use of procedures to manage the performance of staff to improve teaching. Targets are linked to pupils' progress and the national Teaching Standards. High-quality training means that new initiatives, such as those in reading and mental mathematics, have maximum impact in a relatively short time.
- The curriculum is adapted to suit pupils' interests and to be relevant to them. Themes are carefully chosen. Year 2 pupils have enjoyed finding out about the value of water in different cultures, especially where it is not freely available on tap.
- Themes are enriched by a range of visits and visitors, and by making good use of local facilities, such as the Olympic-standard gymnasium at the University of East Anglia. The school also has close links with the library.
- The school enjoys excellent links with parents, who returned very positive responses on Parent View. The school works very closely with families, and provides support in many different ways over and above the education of their children.
- The local authority provides very little support to the school as it recognises that it is a good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors bring a wealth of expertise to their roles and are a considerable asset to the school. They find out about performance data and the quality of teaching, and how teachers are progressing towards meeting their targets. They know how the school rewards good teaching and tackles any underperformance, and they ensure that teachers' pay is linked to the progress that their pupils make. Governors manage the finances carefully and know how the pupil premium is spent and the impact it is having. They make sure that all statutory requirements are met, including those for the safeguarding of pupils. Governors hold school leaders to account well and ask searching questions.

## 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>	120954
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	412538

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	249
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Grenville
<b>Headteacher</b>	Binks Neate-Evans
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 December 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 451299
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