

St John's Community Primary School and Nursery

Horning Road, Hoveton, Norwich, NR12 8NX

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The pattern of achievement at Key Stage 2, over a sustained period of time, is not yet good.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not as good as their progress in English.
- While there is now a significant amount of good teaching, the teaching in Key Stage 2 requires improvement.
- There are times when work is not always matched precisely to the stage pupils have reached.
- Teaching does not always engage pupils sufficiently throughout every lesson.
- Not all pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Attendance remains stubbornly below average.

The school has the following strengths

- Attainment and progress have improved and there are no pupils who are underachieving.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start.
- Teaching and progress in Years 1 and 2 are consistently good.
- Pupils work hard during lessons and contribute well to all aspects of school life.
- Support for pupils' personal and social development is outstanding.
- The headteacher and governing body are working effectively. They have eliminated pockets of underachievement and inadequate progress and are improving the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed parts of 19 lessons. The inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher during seven of the observations.
- Meetings were held with governors, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, pupils and a representative of the local authority. The inspectors also spoke with parents.
- The inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and discussed it with them. They also listened to some pupils reading.
- The inspectors took into account the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress, its self-evaluation and plans for improvement. They also looked at a range of documents and policies concerning school management and keeping pupils safe.
- The inspectors considered the 32 responses to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View), the results of the school's own recent survey of parents' views, and 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Godfrey Bancroft, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Piers Ranger

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and speakers of English as an additional language is low.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is a little below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational need is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional government funding through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is also a little below average.
- In 2012, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A privately operated pre-school group is housed on the school site. This is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Establish a consistent pattern of good or better teaching throughout the school which results in year-on-year progress in which the proportions of pupils achieving and exceeding the expected progress surpass the national average by:
 - sharing the existing good practice
 - making certain that work set is always matched precisely to pupils' learning needs and the stage they have reached, and that it builds effectively on their prior learning
 - ensuring that pupils are always able to contribute their ideas and are involved fully in all activities throughout each lesson, resulting in sustained good progress
 - making sure that pupils in all parts of the school are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Increase the rate of pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - building systematically on the mental and oral mathematical skills that pupils acquire during their early years in the school and during Years 1 and 2
 - ensuring that pupils have plenty of opportunities to use and apply their skills and knowledge to solving mathematical problems in a wide range of subjects.
- Improve pupils' attendance so that it is consistently at or above the national average by liaising closely with and supporting those families who struggle to maintain their children's attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- A very varied pattern of attainment and progress is evident in Key Stage 2. For example, in 2011 pupils who left at the end of Year 6 attained broadly average standards and the majority made the expected progress. In 2012, attainment in English and mathematics was below average and while school data indicates an improvement during Year 6, the progress of the Year 6 leavers across their time in Key Stage 2 was inadequate. This was mainly because the school leadership had not been in place long enough to tackle a residue of weaker teaching and had resulted in pupils making insufficient progress.
- Children's skills and knowledge when they start in the Nursery are much lower than expected for their age. Progress in the Nursery and Reception classes is good in all areas of children's learning. By the time they join Year 1, their skills and knowledge are just a little below average.
- School leaders have worked effectively to establish a pattern of sustained good teaching and good progress in Years 1 and 2. At the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average and has been for the last three years.
- An improving picture is evident for the current Year 6 and throughout Key Stage 2. In Year 6, attainment in English is above average and that for mathematics is broadly average. Pupils in all years are now making progress that matches that expected nationally with a significant number in each year exceeding the expected rate. This is affirmed by the progress seen during lessons and the work in pupils' books.
- Pupils of all ages are enthusiastic readers. Younger pupils, for example those in Year 1, acquire a good knowledge of phonics (the sounds made by letters and words) which supports their early reading skills effectively. This is affirmed by the outcomes of the national assessment of pupils' understanding of phonics at the end of Year 1.
- Pupils acquire other basic skills, such as information and communication technology, well. However, basic skills in mathematics, while improving, are not as well established as those for reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well and also make good progress. The progress of pupils who are entitled to the pupil premium matches that of other pupils in English and exceeds it in mathematics. The progress of these pupils is also better than that of similar pupils in the majority of schools. In mathematics, they are almost a term ahead of pupils in other groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- A residue of weaker teaching in Key Stage 2 in 2012 led to pupils making inadequate progress. However, school leaders have brought about significant improvements in teaching, to the extent that much seen during the inspection was good and some was outstanding. There is no inadequate teaching.
- Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is good and ensures that children settle quickly and get off to a good start. Staff provide children with a rich and varied range of learning experiences. Assessments are accurate and there are strong links with parents.

- Teachers usually make lessons enjoyable and capture pupils' interest. Pupils particularly value the ways in which teachers celebrate their successes and recognise their efforts. Even so, there are some lessons in which the pace of progress slackens. This usually occurs when teachers talk for too long and do not involve pupils sufficiently in responding to questions, participating in discussions or in formulating and sharing their own ideas.
- Occasionally the work set for pupils is not matched precisely to the stage they have reached and does not prepare them for moving on to the next level. When work is either too hard or too easy for some pupils, the rate of their progress slows. That said, there are lessons in which work challenges pupils at just the right level and their learning is exceptional. This occurred in a lesson in Year 6 in which pupils built model boats ably led by their class teacher and by a school governor who is an expert in this field.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are quick to recognise and to respond to the needs of any pupils who show signs of falling behind. When this occurs, pupils benefit from being taught in small groups and are invariably quickly back on track.
- The basic skills of reading and writing are taught effectively and, in many instances, so are those of mathematics. However, pupils' progress in mathematics is not as rapid as in English. The highly effective acquisition of basic skills by younger pupils is not always sustained further up the school and, in some classes, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are regular and accurate. Some teachers expertly assure that pupils understand fully the level they have achieved and what they need to do to be successful in the next steps of their learning. However, in this respect the picture across the school is inconsistent, leaving some pupils unsure of what they need to do to progress.
- Teachers work very effectively to promote pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Teachers create ample opportunities for pupils to reflect and to gain an insight into the lives of others and the challenges they face.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils apply themselves well during lessons, invariably working hard. Their behaviour around school is exemplary. The behaviour of children in the Nursery and Reception classes improves significantly from that found at the time of entry.
- Pupils say they feel safe, and school and parents agree. Pupils are emphatic in their view that, should they face any problems, either with their work or of a personal nature, adults will provide them with all the support they need. In this respect, the school's inclusion and well-being mentor plays an essential and greatly valued role. Pupils who are entitled to the pupil premium have benefited greatly from the work of this member of staff.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in its many and varied guises. They are adamant that, should any bullying occur, it will be handled well by staff and an amicable outcome will be found. Pupils know about the potential hazards posed by the misuse of the internet and other devices, such as mobile phones.
- Pupils are eager to take responsibility and contribute well to all aspects of school life. They value opportunities to be part of the school council and the eco council. They appreciate that adults listen to their views.

- Pupils' eagerness to participate in school events was typified by their enthusiasm for the 'Duathlon' in which they had to cycle and run around the large and hilly school field. They did this with admirable fortitude and resilience.
- Attendance is below average and has been for some time, although some improvement is evident at the present time. There is a small minority of hard-to-reach parents who struggle to ensure their children attend as often as they should.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and governing body have worked effectively to bring about rapid improvements. The weaknesses in teaching that led to the inadequate overall achievement of Year 6 pupils in 2012 have been resolved. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen to their highest level since 2008. The governors have also designated a member of staff to focus specifically on supporting the hard-to-reach families whose children do not attend as frequently as they should.
- Self-evaluation is suitably critical and realistic. The current plans for development highlight what needs to be done to maintain the pattern of improvement and promote a more consistent picture of good year-on-year progress.
- The professional development of staff includes visits to other schools to observe outstanding practice and opportunities to share the considerable expertise that exists within the school. Rewards for staff are linked closely to the school's targets for pupils' progress and reflect the requirements of the national teaching standards.
- Parent View and the school's recent survey of parents' opinions reveal positive views about the school. Communication with parents about activities and about their children's progress is good. For their part, parents make an exceptional contribution to the school. Many regularly offer their help and they, along with other members of the community, raise significant amounts to support the school's work.
- The range of subjects and additional learning opportunities are meeting pupils' needs increasingly well. The provision made for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is a significant strength and underpins their improving academic achievement. Good use is made of the school grounds for outdoor learning, particularly by the Nursery and Reception classes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and they particularly appreciate the range of additional activities. These encompass educational visits, including a residential visit to an outdoor learning centre for older pupils, the very popular productions (this year it was *Cinderella*), choir and sports clubs.
- Historically the local authority has seen the school, in terms of the support it provides, as 'light touch'. It did not realise that in the period leading up to 2011 the school was coasting with standards that were falling and failed to anticipate the inadequate progress made by the 2012 Year 6 leavers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body fulfils its duties well. Governors are very knowledgeable about all aspects of the school's work, including knowing how well pupils are making progress, and they are well placed to hold leaders to account of the quality of its work. The records that governors keep of their frequent visits are exemplary. These records are informative and evaluative and relate closely to essential areas of school improvement. Governors are fully versed about all

sections of the school's budget and are highly effective in ensuring that resources are used wisely. This includes a clear understanding of the positive impact that pupil premium funding is having on the progress of those pupils who are entitled to benefit. Current requirements in terms of the performance management of staff, the recognition and rewarding of good teaching and the safeguarding of pupils are met.

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	120920
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	405977

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Nicholls
Headteacher	Rebecca Quinn
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2011
Telephone number	01603 782520
Fax number	01603 784051
Email address	office@hoveton-st-johns.norfolk.sch.uk

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