

Somerleyton Primary School

The Green, Somerleyton, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 5PT

Inspection dates

11–12 September 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		Requires improvement	3
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 enough pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Weaknesses in teaching and assessment, although now eradicated, led to some underachievement and complacency in the past, which means that some pupils are still catching up on lost ground.
- There has been insufficient time for the changes to provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to have had a full effect on pupils' progress.
- The teaching of reading, spelling and handwriting is not systematic enough.
- Pupils do not yet have a good understanding of different world cultures or an awareness of all different forms of bullying.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not as well developed as their attitudes to one another.
- Although the work of the governing body is much improved, the way it challenges pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching is not yet founded sufficiently on its own checks.
- Leaders' improvement plans and checks on the effectiveness of actions taken are not sufficiently focused on providing good academic outcomes for pupils.
- Leadership and management of the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not thorough enough.
- Not all areas of the curriculum are assessed or planned well enough to make sure that pupils have the depth of knowledge, skills and understanding needed for good achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Parents are very supportive of the work of the school and are pleased with the recent changes to teaching and senior leadership.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 last year made good progress as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils are very positive about the relationships that they have with teachers and with one another.
- Educational visits, visitors and specialist teachers for French, learning to play musical instruments and physical education enhance the curriculum.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector informed the headteacher of this inspection on the day before the inspection started.
- Parts of seven lessons were observed and additional visits were made to evaluate the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' past and present work was scrutinised alongside assessments of their achievements over time.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the two other teachers, the two teaching assistants, the office manager to look at the single central register of checks on staff, five governors and the school's improvement adviser from the local authority.
- Informal discussions with pupils during lessons and break times were supplemented by formal meetings with four groups of pupils, and some pupils read to the inspector.
- The inspector took account of the 14 responses on the online survey, Parent View, and the questionnaires completed by nine members of staff.
- During this inspection, the inspector asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Heather Yaxley, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a small primary school with three classes.
- Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- During the week of this inspection, the 11 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attended full time for the first time.
- A few disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported at school action or school action plus. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for a few pupils. This is additional funding for particular groups such as those known to be eligible for free school meals and children in the care of the local authority.
- Following the change from a middle school to a primary school in 2011, last year was the first time that pupils completed Key Stage 2. There were too few pupils in this year group to make a valid judgement of their achievements against the government's current floor standards.
- The school was run by a part-time acting headteacher since the previous inspection until the end of August 2013, and the new headteacher (previously the senior teacher at the school) took up the appointment 10 days before this inspection.
- The headteacher teaches one of the classes each morning. The two other teachers started at the school 10 days before this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all pupils make at least good progress by:
 - providing good quality, systematic and daily teaching of phonics
 - teaching pupils an agreed whole-school approach to handwriting
 - providing good opportunities for pupils to develop resilience and independence
 - completing the assessments of gaps in pupils' current attainments in literacy and numeracy
 - assessing and targeting achievements across a full range of subjects
 - completing the improvements to provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - planning activities that specifically challenge more-able pupils to do their very best.
- Improve pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing well-planned, high-quality teaching activities that:
 - develop a good awareness of ways of life and beliefs that are different from pupils' own
 - develop a good understanding of cyber- and prejudice-based bullying, including sexual orientation and race.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders by:
 - focusing all plans and monitoring of actions on measuring how effective actions are in improving academic outcomes for pupils
 - reviewing the way that the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is led and managed so that the needs of these pupils are carefully targeted and checked
 - reviewing the curriculum so that teachers have clear guidance to plan lessons that cover all knowledge, skills and understanding in sufficient detail, especially for pupils' personal development and science.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are generally at least in line with those expected nationally. Early indications are that the new intake has well-developed speaking and counting skills, and creative ability.
- Following the previous inspection, the acting headteacher and senior teacher identified that assessments of pupils' attainment were inaccurate and judgements on rates of progress were overinflated, and that some pupils had underachieved.
- As a result of effective actions to improve teaching, the rate of progress for most pupils in each year group over the past two years has been generally as expected nationally, although it was too late for Year 6 pupils who left in 2012 and they underachieved.
- For some pupils, where teaching is routinely good, progress has accelerated and underachievement eradicated so they are now back on track to make at least the levels expected by the end of Key Stage 2. For example, current Year 6 pupils are in a good position to do well because they made good progress last year and some of those who have just moved on to high school reached Levels 5 and 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those supported by pupil premium funding make expected progress from their individual starting points but few do better than expected.
- More-able pupils make the same progress as others but have not been targeted to reach higher standards in the past.
- Although pupils now make expected progress, teachers are still finding gaps in what they can do in literacy and numeracy. This is particularly the case for their knowledge of sounds and their understanding of what they read. Pupils appear to read well but quickly get stuck when they need to sound a word out, spell a tricky word or make sense of a complex sentence. Nevertheless, pupils of all ages are confident to read aloud.
- In Key Stage 1, progress has not accelerated as quickly as for other pupils. Pupils currently in Year 3 did not do well enough in the Year 1 phonic check in 2012, when none met the national standard. This year, the current Year 2 pupils generally met the standard and current Year 3 pupils have made up most of the ground that was lost.
- There is little assessment or documented evidence of pupils' achievement in subjects other than literacy and numeracy.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Not all pupils have had the benefit of good teaching over time and this has slowed their progress.
- The teaching of reading and spelling has not been systematic enough or of high enough quality to make sure that all of the youngest pupils achieve good literacy skills. As a result, some pupils in Key Stage 2 struggle to read and spell accurately.

- There is no whole-school approach for teaching handwriting and this hampers pupils in presenting their learning and thinking well.
- More-able pupils have not always been challenged to achieve higher standards of work than others and they have completed work that is less than their very best.
- The pupil premium funding is used for the right pupils to supplement teaching support and resources and this, together with assessment of their performance, helps to make sure that these pupils do as well as others.
- The two new teachers have already made a good start in finding out the gaps that remain in pupils' knowledge and skills, and plan their teaching to fill those gaps.
- The environment and teaching for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved and staff now use ongoing assessments well to tailor the teaching and activities to meet pupils' different needs and interests, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Reception children have settled well and show great curiosity and enjoyment of the activities on offer.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are rising to the challenge of the staff's high expectations to concentrate on improving their reading and handwriting.
- For pupils in Years 3 and 4, good teaching over the past two weeks is already helping them to fill gaps in their learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson an activity was very well chosen to help pupils work out the best strategies to work out how to get a set of numbers to add up to different amounts. Pupils of different abilities were very well motivated, concentrated well and achieved well.
- In Years 5 and 6, staff have high expectations that pupils will be ready at any time to show how far they have got with the task and then use this information to set the next challenge or to go over things that need to be clarified, as seen in a lesson to improve the content and structure of paragraphs.
- The two teaching assistants make a good contribution to the quality of teaching. They make sure that they are well informed about what will be taught and what pupils will be expected to do. Their contribution makes sure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs focus on the teachers' input and that work is completed independently.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- While social behaviour is often good and pupils are well behaved towards staff and to one another, their attitudes to learning are not as well developed.
- Pupils are not used to concentrating hard enough on their work, or for sustained periods of time, and in past, not all teachers have given pupils the opportunities for this to happen enough. As a result, some pupils rely too heavily on prompts from staff to focus on what they are doing or for suggestions about how to go about the task, rather than doing this independently or taking the initiative to stretch their thinking further.
- Raising money for charities is a regular activity and done with enthusiasm and thoughtfulness. This helps pupils gain an appreciation of the needs of others but their wider understanding of

how people live in different countries, cultures and circumstances is not well developed.

- Pupils keep themselves and others safe around school. They know that bullying by saying unkind things can be as bad as physical intimidation but they do not know enough about different forms of bullying such as homophobic bullying. They know that using the internet can be used to bully people but are not clear about all forms of cyber-bullying.
- Attendance is generally above average. There have been no exclusions for some time.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Previous weaknesses in teaching, compounded by inaccurate assessments, have been appropriately addressed. As a result, most pupils now make nationally expected progress.
- The quality of teaching improved as a result of appropriate actions taken by the previous (acting) headteacher, the new headteacher (previously as the senior teacher) and local authority advisers to support literacy and mathematics teaching.
- It is too early to judge the impact of the appointment of new teachers and the changes to the environment on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- The quality of assessment has improved so the headteacher, the governing body and class teachers now have accurate data to use to judge if pupils' achievements are good enough. Work is still underway to make sure that teachers have a full picture of where gaps in pupils' prior knowledge and skills still exist.
- The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has rightly identified that assessments do not yet involve parents enough.
- The curriculum is sufficiently broad but not organised well enough or detailed enough to make sure that all subjects are covered well, particularly for pupils' personal development and for science. This means that pupils do not have good knowledge of cultural differences, bullying, staying healthy or scientific enquiry.
- The school website has some useful information for parents, especially about the curriculum, but does not provide all the required details about policies and pupils' achievements.
- The headteacher is about to undertake a review of pupils' physical well-being and provision for physical education to decide how best to use the additional government money for sport. Currently, pupils take part in a range of competitions and a sports specialist takes all pupils for lessons on Friday mornings, and some pupils swim at the local pool once a week.
- There is a new leader for the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. In the past, this leadership has not been strong enough to provide staff with good guidance or strategic leadership. Targets are not smart enough and reviews of progress are not kept in enough detail for staff to make good use of them in their lesson plans.
- The headteacher has an accurate picture of how far the staff have come in making the necessary improvements and what still needs to improve.
- The high ambition to make sure that pupils' achievements are good as soon as possible is a

priority for the headteacher and governing body, although their plans and checks do not make clear how this will be measured.

- Support from local authority advisers for education and human resources has been timely and appropriate, and played an important part in the improvements in teaching and pupils' achievements. This includes a review of the school's performance in November 2012 and securing interim leadership while the governing body considered federating with other schools.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- over the past year, new governors have been appointed and others are new to their roles, including the Chair
- the governing body knows about the performance of staff and, together with senior staff and the local authority, actively seeks to make sure that the quality of teaching improves
- since the previous inspection, the governing body has improved its interrogation of data because governors have more information from senior staff and are better informed about what to do with it, but they do not yet carry out enough checks for themselves
- governors check how the pupil premium funding is spent and the difference that it makes, and have recently asked for more details so that they can check on how well it is targeted for raising academic attainment
- current national guidelines for safeguarding children are followed appropriately.

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	124608
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	425287

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Ashdown
Headteacher	Louise Spall
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2011
Telephone number	01502 730503
Fax number	01502 730503
Email address	off.somerleyton.p@talk21.com

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