

# Magdalen Village School

Park Crescent, Magdalen, King's Lynn, PE34 3BU

## Inspection dates

7–8 November 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.

- Pupils make good progress in reading and writing because teaching is particularly good in these subjects.
- Information about pupils' progress is used more effectively than at the time of the previous inspection.
- The school is fully inclusive because it meets each pupil's individual needs. One parent stated: 'At Magdalen they make the school fit your child, not your child fit the school.'
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they are given more and more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.
- The school rightly has a good reputation for enabling disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to settle and make the progress of which they are capable.
- Parents confirm the school meet its aim to create 'a happy learning environment' with a 'warm and friendly atmosphere.'
- The curriculum is imaginative and relevant to pupils' everyday lives. They say they like the interesting activities.
- Pupils say they enjoy 'federation days' when pupils from both schools work together on a wide range of activities including 'careers' day.'
- The school has responded well to the issues from the previous inspection.
- School leaders and governors continue to improve pupils' achievements year-on-year.
- Most teachers are innovative and good improvements to teaching have been introduced since the previous inspection.
- Pupils say, and parents confirm, that they feel safe in the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Good teaching techniques are not all used throughout the school so pupils do not benefit uniformly.
- Mathematics activities are not woven into other subjects enough for pupils to always see their relevance.
- More-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some mathematics lessons, nor do teachers' questions regularly probe, clarify or extend their thinking.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons. The majority were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, governors, parents and carers, and a representative of the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to enable consideration of them. The inspector therefore met with eight parents and carers. The responses to 13 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, the school's self-evaluation, 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 much-smaller-than-average primary school.
- A relatively large proportion of pupils come from outside the school's catchment area and join other than at the usual time of entry, most through parental choice.
- Most 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 and other groups) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is high.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes: Reception and Year 1, Years 2 to 4, and Years 5 and 6. From time-to-time some pupils are taught in the 'Rainbow Room.'
- It is not possible to make a valid judgement against the current government floor standards, the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, as there were not enough pupils in Year 6 in 2012.
- Since January 2007, the school has been part of the Wiggshall Federation with St Germans Primary School. The schools have the same leadership team and governing body.
- An independent pre-school meets on the school site and is housed in the Early Years Foundation Stage area.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - Sharing the best practice that already exists in the school
  - eradicating inconsistencies through more rigorous monitoring to hold teachers to account.
- Raise the attainment in mathematics, particularly for the more able, by:
  - linking mathematics more effectively to other subjects so pupils have more relevant activities in which to practise and develop their skills and apply what they know in problem-solving
  - using questioning more regularly to probe pupils' understanding and encourage them to think more deeply
  - checking that pupils are not given work that is too easy for them.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Over the last few years, children have started school with a range of skills and experiences that range from below expected levels to expected levels. Knowledge and understanding of number is weakest.
- Reception children make good progress in reading and writing. Over the last few years progress has been at the expected level in number because the school has given greater emphasis to literacy, particularly in adult-led activities. This has been addressed and is currently better balanced.
- Good progress continues throughout the school. Because of the low pupil numbers and the variation of ability when pupils join the school the overall attainment levels at the end of Year 6 vary considerably from year-to-year. School data show that in 2012 and 2013 all pupils who started school with expected levels reached above average levels at the end of Year 6.
- Key to the good progress is that teachers themselves now analyse information and present it to the rest of the staff. Any pupil not making the progress expected is discussed, everyone's ideas shared, and extra help planned. Later success is measured and, if necessary, changes made.
- More-able pupils do well in reading and writing and reach higher levels, because all teachers have the skills to challenge them. This is a good response to the previous inspection. However, in mathematics, while all reach the expected level, very few exceed this. This is because sometimes the activity given does not enthuse and interest them. Even when given problems to solve, some, particularly the more able, are given so much help before they start there is too little for them to tackle and 'get their teeth into.'
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress generally because the school is very effective at meeting their different needs. As appropriate, these pupils work with their class or with additional adults in the 'Rainbow Room.'
- How to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics) is taught methodically. Good use is made of technology to 'grab' pupils' interests so the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required standard in the annual screening check is broadly average.
- There are not enough pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding to comment on their attainment without identifying them. Additional funding is spent appropriately to give these pupils any extra support they need. Throughout the school, unless they have significant special needs, they do as well or better than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Basic skills are generally good because there is a strong emphasis on teaching them at the beginning of each school year, in preparation for the work to follow. Once taught, literacy skills are carefully practised throughout the school in other imaginative tasks, such as 'My Dream Book', where pupils take pride and produce thoughtful responses of good quality. Numeracy skills have not yet been linked as effectively to other subjects.

### The quality of teaching is good

- In every classroom, excellent relationships between staff and pupils create a positive

atmosphere that is the basis for good learning.

- Lessons get off to a good start because teachers use 'I can....' statements to explain what pupils should know by the end of the lesson. Pupils say this uniform style of teaching helps because no matter who teaches them, they know what to expect and what they are expected to do.
- Questioning is generally used effectively. The level of difficulty of each question is usually matched to the pupil the teacher asks, so it is neither too difficult nor too easy. This is less so for some more-able mathematicians.
- Technology is used effectively throughout lessons; to 'grab' pupils' interest at the start, to reinforce a key teaching point, and for the pupils to practise themselves.
- Helpful 'tools' aid pupils' learning well. For example, 'pyramids' show them how their skills develop and 'steps to success' give them clear objectives to meet to succeed in their learning.
- Staff constantly evaluate their work and consider innovations to improve their effectiveness. For example, an afternoon 'surgery' gives individual help to any older pupil who has struggled. Pupils say this is helpful because they overcome any problem while it is fresh in their minds.
- Reception children make good progress because activities are well taught and carefully planned so every moment is used well. For example, 'snack time' is now used to discuss and explore number and concepts such as 'more than' so mathematical understanding is deepened.
- Elsewhere, mathematics' teaching is variable. While activities are interesting, some leave too little challenge for more-able pupils particularly to practise and hone their skills, or take responsibility for their own learning.
- Whether helping individuals or groups, teaching assistants make a very positive contribution because they are well prepared and they know how to get the best out of their pupils.
- Key to successful teaching is the strong focus on pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils are generally given opportunities to develop learning traits, such as perseverance, vital to their future success.

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

- Pupils behave well. The small number of pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their own behaviour are given very good support from staff who know them well.
- There have been no incidents of bullying recently and pupils are confident staff would quickly deal with any concerns they have. In the playground all pupils, old and young, boys and girls, play together equally harmoniously. Older pupils take care of those younger than themselves.
- Pupils are very welcoming of those new to the school and quickly help them to feel welcome and settle in. As a result, these pupils generally do well.
- The majority of pupils show good attitudes to learning and the school is doing much to improve this further, such as effective 'circles' to focus pupils on taking more responsibility for how they approach their own learning.

- Pupils say they are comfortable with the routine of each day, that they like knowing what is coming up, for example the daily 'circles' when they discuss any important topics.
- Pupils have a good understanding of safety, including when using the internet.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils say they enjoy working with those from the federated school and the extra opportunities such as residential visits.
- Parents overwhelmingly believe their children are safe and happy at school. They like that the school is small, the relatively high staff numbers and that all staff know their children well.
- Attendance is good because pupils enjoy coming to school. One parent stated, 'As soon as the car stops, he's off!' Punctuality is good and efficient school procedures see both are checked daily and any necessary support quickly put in place.

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

- School leaders, at all levels, and governors work closely together and have a shared vision of how the school and federation will develop.
- The systems for leading and managing staff are good and have led to the introduction of improvements. Training is linked closely to staff needs identified by effective monitoring of their performance. However, even though some of the improvements are described as 'non-negotiable', they are not found consistently in all classrooms.
- The curriculum is effective because it relates to pupils' own experiences. Whether in Reception or Year 6, they respond with fascination and care to questions about their own life journeys. Visits and visitors enrich and extend what is taught in school.
- Additional primary sports funds are allocated through a clear action plan including parents' and pupils' views, with a clear process to check effectiveness. However, changes have not yet begun.
- The partnership with parents is good. All parents spoken to said the school will always listen to any concerns they have. They like the recently-introduced 'forums' and the opportunity to contribute their ideas.
- Partnerships with other schools are also effective. Pupils say they enjoy meeting and working with pupils from the federated school. Staff say they benefit from collaboration, too. The wider group of schools work together well too, for example to agree a common attendance policy.
- The school offers equal opportunities to all pupils by analysing their needs and putting in place systems and support to meet them, so pupils can be successful. The school is particularly effective at enabling pupils who have struggled elsewhere to settle and succeed. The school also has good procedures to tackle discrimination.
- The local authority agrees the school is doing well and therefore has little input.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors use individual expertise well and their impact on teaching and learning in the school is good. They use governors' expertise well and have supported leaders in maintaining the school as a good school. They understand the use of monitoring and know how teachers are

set targets in order to eradicate underperformance. However some inconsistencies in teaching remain because governors are not rigorous enough in following up the outcomes. They use information well to question the school. Finances are allocated carefully and there is a clear, longer term plan to secure the school's viability, particularly important given the small pupil numbers. Pay is linked to performance. Governors check national requirements are met, including safeguarding.

## 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>	120892
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	425406

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>	53
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Alford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Hughes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 July 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01553 810326
<b>Fax number</b>	01553 810326
<b>Email address</b>	office@wiggenhall-st-marymagdalen.norfolk.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

