

Salhouse Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Cheyney Avenue, Salhouse, Norwich, NR13 6RJ

Inspection dates 10–11 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Reading and writing standards are above average because the way they are taught is now much more consistent throughout the school.
- Mathematics standards have improved over the last two years and are now above average because the school has corrected the weaknesses in how mathematics was taught.
- Fundamental to recent improvements has been the improvement in teaching, which pupils respond to very well.
- Pupils' progress is better partly because staff regularly check how they are doing and make changes if they are falling behind. If extra help is given, this is checked too.
- The school has a good reputation for nurturing any pupil struggling with school so they thrive.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils say they feel safe in the school, and very well cared for.
- Parents and carers' support is strong; staff say parents and carers will do anything to help the school.
- The headteacher and governors have received excellent help and advice from the diocese and, particularly, the local authority to bring about the better teaching and raise pupils' standards since the previous inspection.
- Very regular monitoring by the headteacher, subject leaders and governors checks standards do not slip and continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Outstanding teaching techniques are not explained to other teachers so they benefit.
- Some pupils lose concentration when activities go on for too long.
- The school does not have clear enough arrangements for checking that its spending of primary sports funds gives value for money.
- Parents and carers would like better ways to communicate with the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons. Nearly all were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils reading.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, governors, parents, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 22 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to approximately seven parents individually. He also considered the 34 responses to the school's own questionnaire sent out by governors in Summer 2013. The responses to 15 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 monitoring documentation; the school's view of its own performance; 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 slightly smaller-than-average primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (the extra government funding for pupils looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and some other groups) is low.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are taught in four classes, each with mixed-age groups.
- The school runs a breakfast club, after school club, holiday club and afternoon pre-school.
- The school is part of a federation, working in partnership with other local schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - better sharing of the existing outstanding practice in the school
 - making lessons more engaging.
- Make better use of the primary school sport funding by defining more precisely how the impact of this work can be judged accurately.
- Improve communication with parents and carers by:
 - reviewing current systems and procedures
 - seeking the views of parents and carers about how communication could better meet their needs
 - using email and the internet more effectively for communication.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school in Reception with skills and experiences that vary greatly but are generally a little below those typical for this age. Those with no or little previous experience quickly understand what is expected because of the firm nurturing guidance they receive. Those ready for school also do well because they learn from those in the class older than themselves.
- Progress through the rest of the school has improved over the last two years and is currently good. Over the last two years, pupils made at least the expected progress, and often above that. This is continuing this year.
- Progress has improved in reading because the basic skills are taught better and parents and carers are more involved and informed. For example, pupils make better progress in their understanding of phonics (how to link letters to the sounds they make) because they are taught with those of the same level of understanding now, not those of the same age. Imaginative 'reading cafes' help parents and carers learn new techniques in an interesting way so that they can help their children read at home.
- Progress has improved in writing because the school has recognised a weakness in the way it taught grammar and punctuation, and corrected this.
- School leaders identified progress in mathematics had lagged behind and have corrected this so pupils are doing well. Time was spent making sure that all staff taught calculation in the same way, so pupils were not confused. A whole-school approach means that, no matter what class they are in, pupils learn at the right level for them.
- There are not enough pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding to comment on their attainment without identifying them. Last year, all those eligible pupils in the school who did not also have special educational needs made good progress and generally closed the gap in attainment or were already beyond their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have also begun to make faster progress and do well because the teacher responsible for them is fully trained to the national standard so she checks what support they need, puts it in place, and then checks it is working.
- More-able pupils generally achieve well. Occasionally, they move up a class in the subject they excel at and work at a more advanced level. This is beneficial. When asked to divide, an able Year 6 pupil chose to work with decimals and challenge herself. Generally, however, pupils are not given these opportunities to take on harder work.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good but is not outstanding because teachers do not routinely have opportunities to share best practice with one another.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very close. One pupil said, 'I get a homely feeling about the school because I never feel left out or as if I don't belong.'
- Pupils like the clarity of knowing what they are expected to do and how they will know they have

succeeded. They say it helps them focus and learn.

- Pupils fully understand the marking system and feel it helps them to see where they have succeeded and where they need to try again.
- Lessons are planned well. For example, while Reception children use robots to develop directional language, Year 1 pupils do so outdoors. Both activities lead to good discussion.
- Pupils say that drama is used well because it helps them to understand the character, or the scene better, and that this helps them to write better descriptions.
- Federation means more collaboration. Teachers have a clear grasp of different styles and types of questioning, learnt from the partner school. They mostly use them to good effect.
- Very effective teaching assistants support learning well in many ways because they are trained well and form good teams with teachers so they contribute to the good progress and smooth running of lessons.
- In some lessons, teachers keep pupils together for quite a long time without changing the activity. When this occurs, some pupils lose concentration so the pace of their learning drops.
- Pupils are beginning to have opportunities to assess the quality of their own work. They are becoming reflective and better able to understand themselves as learners. They enjoy the opportunity to have a say about how to extend learning when they finish the task given, and what they may use to judge it. This is not yet fully established, however.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils generally behave very well both in the classroom and elsewhere in the school. Pupils care for, and about, their school. There have been no exclusions from the school.
- The school nurtures and cares for pupils very well, maintaining that a pupil who feels safe and secure is ready for learning; that if emotional needs are met, they are best able to learn. When appropriate, pupils benefit from counselling.
- Staff know their pupils well because most spend two years with the same pupils and build very positive relationships.
- Pupils have a good understanding of safety. They speak knowledgeably about internet safety, for example, because important information is presented clearly. Parents, too, are informed and involved well.
- Pupils particularly enjoy opportunities in 'circle assembly' to talk about issues important to them, and say that staff listen and act on what they say.
- Attendance and punctuality are good. Parents say their children look forward to coming through the school gate each morning.
- The school has taken the first steps to offering care out of school hours, and pre-school. Pupils are well cared for in this provision. Parents say they find this service very helpful.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good, although attention can slip when activities go on for too long.

The leadership and management are good

- The school benefits from a strong leadership team. The headteacher recognised the potential of the subject leaders, and training was given so these skilful teachers could make an impact on learning. For example, they use information about pupils' progress to check each pupil does well.
- The leadership and management of teaching are generally good. Training is seen as key; many high-quality opportunities have raised staff competence and expertise. The staffing structure is imaginative; teams of teachers work on families of subjects, so no-one feels isolated and collaboration and teamwork are strong.
- Pupils like the fact that different subjects of the curriculum are linked so they feel they make more sense. Cohesion between classes is strong; for example, pupils in the same year group but different classes learn the same concepts and practise the same skills.
- The primary school sports funding is used to give a wider range of opportunities to pupils. At the moment, the school has not worked out how to evaluate the impact this is having.
- Parents give their time willingly. They greatly appreciate many aspects of school, such as the clear termly report cards. However, they feel, and inspectors agree, that the school's communication with parents could improve. In particular, parents and carers feel that greater use could be made of information and communication technology, including the website. With this and traditional systems, such as letters, they feel the school is not always up-to-date with information. They also feel that it is difficult sometimes to give their views on aspects of school life important to them and their children.
- The partnership with the local group of schools is productive. All these schools agree a common attendance policy and publish it to parents. Pupils benefit from visits to the high school and learning from their expertise and specialist equipment in subjects such as science.
- The federation is equally effective and of growing benefit. Pupils work together closely and enjoy opportunities that may not otherwise be possible, such as residential visits. Staff benefit in many ways; for example, the opportunity to work with another teacher teaching the same age group.
- The local authority and diocese have given short-term, intensive support that has guided improvement and made significant impact on many aspects of school life, particularly teaching and learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - While making sure the school runs smoothly, governors have also spent time 'visioning' what the federation should look like, correctly setting high aspirations. Pupils are to be involved but no decision has been made about parents. Fundamental to governors' effectiveness is that they regularly train so that they better understand the working of the school. One governor leads the rest through the information available to them, giving a useful commentary and explanation. This ensures that all have a common understanding of what the school does well and what needs to improve, including the quality of teaching. Regular visits give first-hand information that is also shared with all governors so everyone has a clearer idea of how the school is doing. Governors have paid a full part in challenging underperformance and have

ensured that pay is linked to performance. They check national requirements are met, including for 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

Unique reference number	121053
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	425418

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Jefford
Headteacher	Karen Dukes
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2010
Telephone number	01603 720402
Fax number	01603 720402
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