

Weasenham Church of England Primary School

Common End, Weasenham, King's Lynn, PE32 2SP

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2014

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.

- Pupils' achievement is good, particularly in reading and writing.
- Teaching makes a good impact on pupils' progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make learning fun.
- Teaching assistants are well directed and support pupils well.
- Pupils' good behaviour helps them learn effectively. They take pride in their work and are keen to show what they have learned.
- Pupils feel safe and are very caring of each other. They are well looked after by staff.
- The activities and subjects provided interest the pupils. The strong focus on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a significant impact.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for improving the school further, which is shared by all staff. Teaching is led well and is carefully checked to ensure it leads to good learning.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. Together with the headteacher's determination, this is creating an aspirational culture.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is not as strong as in reading and writing because teachers do not routinely relate the skills they are teaching to 'real life' mathematical problem solving.
- Teachers sometimes do not make clear to pupils how much work is expected of them in lessons.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Pupils do not always have the opportunity to choose activities to support their learning.
- Teaching is not outstanding. Teachers do not yet have opportunities to observe outstanding teaching in this school and elsewhere.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, including eight jointly with the headteacher. She listened to pupils read, looked at their books and also met with a small group of pupils.
- Discussions were held with school leaders, including subject leaders and three members of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and reviewed various documents, including the school's own view of its effectiveness, its tracking of pupils' progress and records of staff appraisal. She also considered documents relating to safeguarding, school development and pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- There were 16 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) which the inspector took in to account together with a letter from parents. She also spoke with a number of parents informally. The six responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Joan Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Pupils from Reception to Year 6 are taught in two mixed-age classes. The number of pupils in each year groups is always below 10.
- Very few pupils are supported by the pupil premium, compared with the average for schools of this type. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children that are looked after by the local authority and children of service families.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is in line with the national average, the proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above with the national average.
- Since the previous inspection the school has entered in to a federation with another local primary school. There have been several staffing changes, including a new headteacher, who is executive headteacher of both schools. Subject leaders for mathematics and English have also been appointed.
- There are too few pupils to report on school performance against the government's floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding in order to raise pupils' achievement further, especially in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - there are more opportunities for pupils to learn about mathematics through 'real life' problem solving and to use and apply their mathematics skills in other subjects.
 - teachers ensure they explain clearly their high expectations of all pupils and what they expect them to complete and understand in the time available
 - there are more opportunities for Early Years Foundation Stage children to choose activities which can support their learning.
 - teachers are able to observe and learn from the outstanding practice in their school and in others.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most pupils make good progress from their various starting points and some make outstanding progress. Their ready eagerness to learn undoubtedly contributes to this.
- Attainment varies because the very small year groups comprise pupils with significantly different starting points. However, pupils typically enter the Reception year with skills that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress as a result of good teaching and by the end of the Reception year most are closer to, although still below, the standard expected for their age. The children benefit from working alongside their older class mates, who provide caring support and set a good example in modelling the right behaviour that helps pupils learn.
- Good progress continues into Key Stage 1. In the check of how well phonics (linking sounds with letters) is understood, almost all the pupils reach the required standard and all make good progress from their starting points. By the time pupils take the Year 2 national tests, they have caught up with the standard most children achieve nationally.
- Progress has accelerated recently at all levels. In 2013, all of the Year 6 pupils made at least the levels of progress in line with their age in reading and writing, and for some, progress was more rapid. This is a higher proportion than nationally. In mathematics the picture is not quite so strong, but shows an improving trend due to the very effective support that children who are falling behind in mathematics are given and the good quality training that staff have received. . School tracking data show that the good progress has continued this year. This is supported by work in books.
- The very small cohorts mean that reference to the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and reference to the attainment of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, and the more able, would potentially identify individuals. However, all make good progress from their individual starting points. This is because any particular requirements, to enable them to learn as well as others, are identified at an early stage and they are quickly provided with the right challenge, help and support. The impact of the spending and support is carefully checked.
- Reading shows the most significant improvement. . Pupils read fluently. They have good skills in using phonics to read any unfamiliar words. Older pupils talk confidently about their favourite authors and show obvious enjoyment of reading.
- Pupils' writing skills are developed systematically. They have many opportunities to write for extended periods and lots of interesting experiences to draw on.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and develop good relationships with pupil that gives them confidence to learn. This contributes to pupils' consistently good attitudes to their work.
- The very small class sizes mean that all staff know individuals very well. They use this knowledge to make sure each pupil, including the most able, are given activities and challenges that are just at the right level to enable them to learn well and make good progress.

- The interesting activities captivate pupils' attention. They show great delight in being asked to work with each other and rise to their teachers' high expectations. Marking their work regularly is helping pupils to improve their work. In a Key Stage 2 activity where pupils were writing mystery stories, marking provided detailed feedback on work from the previous day. The teacher's comments enabled all pupils to improve their work and make good progress.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning in the mixed age classes. They regularly lead sessions with small groups within each class. This enables pupils of all abilities to have individual help to make good progress. In a Key Stage 1 phonics session, the teacher worked with the Year 2 pupils revising their knowledge of letter sounds while the teaching assistant worked with the Reception and Year 1 children. This enabled all pupils to make good progress because they all benefitted from work just right for their ability. This good quality teaching of reading to younger children lays the foundations for developing fluent reading skills across the school.
- The classrooms are well set out with pupils' work on display, challenges to stretch thinking and plenty of support for learning.
- Homework provides good support for the work in class through 'challenge tasks', which deepen and extend learning and receives enthusiastic response from the pupils. Pupils take pride in their work and presentation is generally of a high standard.
- While teaching has many strengths, just occasionally, the youngest children have too little opportunity to choose activities that would deepen and extend their learning.
- The quality of mathematics teaching is not as consistently good as that of reading and writing. The teaching does not always provide opportunities for pupils to work out problems that they might encounter in 'real life' or to use and apply the mathematical skills they have learned, in other subjects. However the school has identified how this should be addressed and the mathematics subject leader is already driving improvement in this area.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is a consistent and typical quality in lessons and around the school. Pupils' enthusiasm and eagerness to learn help them to make the good progress evident. They are eager to learn and strive to produce their best work. Very occasionally when unclear of what is expected of them, or how much time they have to work on a task, concentration lapses.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents endorse this. The school provides a nurturing environment and all pupils are very well cared for. Pupils' understanding of how to avoid risks benefits from the school's work with outside agencies such as the police and cycling proficiency officers, coming in to speak to them.
- Pupils develop good social skills. A benefit of the mixed age classes is that younger pupils learn from the older pupils. They help to look after younger pupils in class and around the school and all are kind and respectful to each other. Pupils take a pride in all aspects of the school environment and help to look after this.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different types of bullying, including name calling, physical and cyber bullying. They say that any form of bullying is extremely rare. School records and parents views confirm this. Pupils are confident that if bullying did occur it would be dealt with swiftly.

- The school has worked hard to improve attendance which is now above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher provides purposeful leadership. Her determination is shared by all staff.
- The partnership with the federated school has a good impact in promoting pupils' achievement. Subject leaders for mathematics and English, and other staff with responsibilities, work in both schools. They have received appropriate support to carry out their roles and do so conscientiously and enthusiastically. They know what needs to be done and are driving improvement in their areas.
- The development plan identifies appropriate priorities for development because the school knows its strengths and weaknesses well.
- The sports funding is spent on a range of initiatives and there are clear plans to check the impact of these. Pupils are benefitting from new sports equipment. Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy attending the local high school each week for specialised physical education tuition. They also attend the local sports centre and learn to use the full range of fitness equipment. They enjoy participating in competitions against other schools. Teachers are being supported to improve their skills so that the improved focus on sport carries on after the funding ceases.
- The good progress all pupils make shows that leaders are committed to promoting equality of opportunity. They keep a close and accurate track of how well each individual and group of pupils are doing. Any pupil identified as at risk of falling behind receives prompt additional help to enable them to catch up.
- The emphasis is on developing pupils' literacy and mathematics skills but all subjects taught effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Subjects are brought together in topics that capture pupils' imagination. Pupils also benefit from specialist music tuition. They were observed to enjoy learning about rhythm, and how to make loud and soft sounds, with a range of instruments during a good Key Stage 1 music session.
- Parents are frequently involved in their children's education. For example the 'curiosity' and 'story' cafes provide opportunities for parents to join in with their children's learning. Parents are also encouraged to go to the library with their children to choose books. Regular coffee mornings and celebration assemblies have been introduced. Parents comment that they like these.
- The local authority recognises the quality of this school and contributes when requested. This has included induction for the new headteacher.
- The headteacher has forged strong links with other local schools and uses these to check the work of the school. However enabling teachers to share their ideas and strengths with other schools and develop their understanding of how to draw outstanding progress from their pupils, is not as well developed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective and knowledgeable. Governors have a good understanding of how well the school is doing and what needs to happen to improve it still further. They regularly review data about pupil's progress and rigorously hold the school to account. They

hold the headteacher to account for ensuring that staff salaries and teacher's performance are closely linked. Governors help to formulate plans for school improvement and set robust targets for the headteacher's performance. They attend the school not just for meetings but also to see what is going on in the classrooms, to be there for parents on parent's evenings and at a range of school events. Governors make sure that the school finances are well managed, including additional funding for pupil premium and sport. They ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements.

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	121064
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	431258

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanna Brown
Headteacher	Belinda Allen
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2008
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