Southwold Primary School
Cumberland Road, Southwold, Suffolk, IP18 6JP

Inspection dates
12–13 March 2014

Overall effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous inspection:</th>
<th>Requires improvement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This inspection:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Requires improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Achievement of pupils
Requires improvement 3

Quality of teaching
Requires improvement 3

Behaviour and safety of pupils
Good 2

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

- Pupils’ progress varies too much between year groups and subjects.
- Achievement in mathematics is not as good as it is in English. Pupils do not understand and successfully draw on the different methods for solving mathematical problems.
- Marking is not used effectively to help pupils make good progress.
- The homework set for mathematics is not helping pupils to make good progress in this subject.
- Work is sometimes too easy for more-able pupils.
- Actions by subject leaders are not bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching quickly enough.
- Leaders do not enable good practice to be shared within the school to help teachers improve their effectiveness. They have not provided sufficient training in teaching mathematics.
- The actions taken by leaders and governors have not led to teaching and achievement that are consistently good.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is improving in English, and pupils now make good progress in their reading.
- There have been improvements in pupils’ behaviour and their attitudes to learning. As a result, behaviour is now good and pupils feel safe in school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well in communication, reading and writing, and their personal, social and emotional development is good.
- The school promotes pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons, all of which were seen jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspector reviewed pupils’ work and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector held meetings with pupils and school staff, including senior leaders and subject leaders. A meeting took place with a representative from the local authority. A meeting was also held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors.
- School documents were also reviewed, including those relating to safeguarding, information on pupils’ achievement and school improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of 35 parents through the Parent View website. The views of 10 staff were considered through the responses to an inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

| Peter Lacey-Hastings, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
Full report

Information about this school

Southwold Primary School is much smaller than average. Pupils are mainly taught in three mixed-age classes: a Reception and Year 1 class; a Years 2 and 3 class; and a Years 4, 5 and 6 class.

Last year was the first year that the school had pupils in Year 6 following reorganisation of schools across the local authority.

The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than average.

The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the Pupil Premium is above the national average, although the number of pupils in most year groups is very small. In this school, the additional funding helps pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.

The government’s current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils’ attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, do not apply because the number of pupils in Year 6 was small.

The school has worked in partnership with Barnby and Northcove Primary School for two years. The two schools currently share the same headteacher, who divides her time equally between them. The schools are about to enter into a formal federation, when the current headteacher will become executive headteacher and the schools will be governed by a single governing body. These changes in governance were imminent at the time of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Improve the quality of teaching to raise achievement, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that:
- pupils know how they can improve their work, and that they respond to teachers’ marking
- more-able pupils are set more challenging work
- pupils are helped to apply their mathematical knowledge and draw successfully on the calculating skills they are taught
- homework is set regularly in mathematics to develop pupils’ knowledge and key numeracy skills.

Improve the effectiveness of leadership and governance by ensuring that:
- subject leaders support other teachers to improve their teaching
- teachers are provided with further training opportunities in the teaching of mathematics
- leaders provide opportunities for staff to observe and share best practice within the school and beyond in order to improve the quality of teaching.
Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils varies between year groups and between subjects. It is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress in reading is good. Progress in writing and mathematics requires improvement.

- The first set of results for the small group of Year 6 pupils in 2013 reflected notably weaker progress in mathematics than in reading and writing. Their attainment in mathematics was a year behind that in reading.

- Rates of progress have accelerated, but they are not yet consistently good. Pupils are not taught methods of solving number problems well enough and this means their knowledge, skills and understanding are not as high as they could be.

- More-able pupils make slower progress than they should because they are sometimes set tasks to complete that they have already mastered when they could have been stretched to achieve more.

- The achievement of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that of other pupils. There were too few eligible pupils in Year 6 in 2013 to comment on their attainment without identifying individuals.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. Some have made good progress because of carefully planned help and guidance. More-able pupils generally make similar progress to other pupils.

- Children join the school with knowledge, understanding and skills that, overall, are typical for their age. However, their personal, social and emotional development, and their communication and language skills are not as good as their mathematical and creative skills. The children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage in personal, social and emotional development and in developing their communication, reading and writing, such that by the time they start Year 1, their knowledge, understanding and skills are broadly average in all areas of learning.

- Achievement by the end of Key Stage 1 varies. Too few pupils make good progress, especially in mathematics. Attainment in reading and writing has risen in each of the last three years and, although the data should be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils involved, it is now above average and higher than in mathematics. In the Year 1 check on phonics (the sounds that letters make) the proportion of pupils who exceeded the expected standard has been above national averages for the last two years.

- Pupils enjoy reading. They mostly read with fluency and expression. They use a range of techniques to help them, including good phonic skills, picture clues and deducing words from their context. Older pupils say they enjoy reading and can say what kinds of books they like to read, and who are their favourite authors. The books they read are mostly at an appropriate level of difficulty.

- Pupils make good progress in developing their sports skills. This is because physical activities are taught well by teachers and specialised instructors. This contributes well to pupils’ health and well-being.
The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although the teaching is improving and has brought about good progress in reading, the quality varies too much, especially in writing and mathematics.

- Pupils’ work is marked regularly, but the guidance provided in teachers’ comments is not always sufficiently specific, and even when it is, teachers do not always make sure pupils respond by making corrections and learning from the advice given.

- Sometimes pupils are also helped to understand what makes a good piece of work through reviewing and assessing their own work and that of classmates. However, their understanding of how to improve work is not consistently good across the school.

- The teachers provide clear guidance and instruction about what pupils need to do in lessons. Lesson activities and the level of work set mostly take account of the amount of challenge that more-able pupils require, but this is not always the case. When teaching is most effective, teachers check these pupils’ work carefully and set them harder tasks.

- The use of assessment sheets and ‘writing progress books’ is starting to improve the pupils’ writing. This is because pupils can clearly see how they are making progress. In mathematics, pupils are less clear about what they need to do to improve.

- Homework is used effectively in English. Regular tasks, such as reading at home, help pupils to practise and learn new skills. Homework is not used as effectively to develop and consolidate knowledge and skills in mathematics.

- Teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils’ learning, particularly when working with small groups, when they ask questions that prompt pupils to think for themselves.

- Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps children to make good progress in reading and language skills; this prepares the children well for their next stage of learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well around the school and in lessons. Pupils are courteous, polite and welcoming to each other and to adults. Relationships are good, and the school has a culture that promotes high standards of behaviour.

- Pupils show a positive attitude to learning and this has improved since the previous inspection. They concentrate on their work and apply themselves well to tasks set by teachers. Lessons run smoothly and there is very little low-level disruption. Pupils arrive to lessons on time and have their equipment ready, such as pencils and rulers.

- Adults encourage and demonstrate high expectations of behaviour, and this contributes to the school’s positive atmosphere. As a result, pupils play well together in the playground, line up in an orderly way and are considerate to each other.

- Pupils know the school rules and why they exist. For example, they know they are not allowed to play rough games. The playground ‘buddies’, who wear bibs so they can be easily seen, help others to play cooperatively and contribute to good behaviour. Older pupils also care for younger ones, such as by organising the distribution of snacks at playtime.
The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils understand different forms of bullying, including racism and through the use of technology such as the internet. Pupils say there is no bullying because pupils behave well.

Attendance has improved. For the last two years it has been average. There have been no exclusions.

The leadership and management requires improvement

Leaders have not been rigorous enough in ensuring that teachers use marking consistently to help pupils to improve their work, or that the most-able pupils are always sufficiently stretched. Leaders have not ensured that teachers set homework in mathematics that is as effective as that in reading and writing, in developing pupils’ knowledge, skills and understanding.

Training in the teaching of mathematics is insufficient.

Leaders actions, including their work so far to improve teaching and in checking teachers’ work, are starting to increase rates of progress, especially in reading. Appointments of new staff in the last three years have helped to improve the quality of teaching. However, this is not yet bringing about consistently good achievement across different year groups and subjects.

The leadership arrangements between the two schools the headteacher leads are helping to bring improvements to both schools. Subject leadership is shared and teachers plan together. However, this has not yet brought about good progress across the school.

Leaders set targets for teachers to improve the quality of their teaching. These are suitably linked to pupils’ achievement, the national Teachers’ Standards and pay rises and promotion. Teachers are given training to improve their skills, but as yet the school is not drawing sufficiently on the best teaching it has, or high-quality teaching elsewhere, to help other staff improve.

Teaching is monitored regularly and weak teaching in the past has been tackled appropriately. Subject leaders attended training and have a better understanding of their roles. However, they have not used the knowledge and understanding gained well enough to help others improve their teaching.

The school works with the local authority to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement. The local authority has also provided support and training for teachers while the school has been growing to take pupils up to Year 6.

The new funding for primary school sport is used for training staff and the employment of specialist teachers to work directly with pupils. This is starting to have a positive impact on pupils’ physical education through an increase in the numbers of pupils who attend a growing range of activities such as archery and fencing.

The school has prepared appropriately for the start of the new National Curriculum in September 2014, with suitable timescales and detailed plans for literacy and mathematics.

Pupils have good opportunities to improve their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The very wide range of learning opportunities includes a visit by a steel band, pupils taking part in a music festival, and pupils growing, cooking and eating their own food.
British culture is recognised, for example, by celebrating Saint Edmund’s day. Other religions and cultures are also recognised and respected.

- All statutory safeguarding requirements are met. This includes checks on adults working with pupils, first aid training and training for staff on child protection.

- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors know the school well, including the quality of teaching and pupils’ performance, and contribute to its improvement plans and self-evaluation. They also check on their own effectiveness and create plans to improve how they work, identifying training needs. For example, they have attended courses on safeguarding, using information on pupils’ achievement, and safer recruitment. They manage and challenge the performance of the headteacher appropriately. They make sure staff performance targets are linked to pupils’ achievement and to pay rises. The governors know how much Pupil Premium funding they receive and how it supports eligible pupils’ achievement. For example, they fund a variety of learning resources and extra support. They receive information about pupils’ achievement across the school and use this to challenge leaders, but not yet sharply enough to promote faster rates of progress over a sustained period of time.
What inspection judgements mean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Grade</th>
<th>Judgement</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Requires improvement</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>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.</td>
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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.
School details

| Unique reference number | 124610 |
| Local authority         | Suffolk |
| Inspection number       | 425288 |

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 | 64 |
| Appropriate authority   | The governing body |
| Chair                   | Keith Meldrum |
| Headteacher             | Ruth Nixon |
| Date of previous school inspection | 19 January 2012 |
| Telephone number        | 01502 723137 |
| Fax number              | 01502 723137 |
| Email address           | admin@southwold.suffolk.sch.uk |
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