

Tacolneston CofE Primary School

Norwich Road, Tacolneston, Norwich, NR16 1AL

Inspection dates 4–5 June 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from a wide range of different starting points. Their progress has rapidly improved since the last inspection due to consistently good teaching.
- Attainment is above average by the time pupils leave the school.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is exemplary and their excellent attitudes to learning have a very positive impact on their progress. The school's work to ensure pupils' safety is excellent.
- Teaching is good because the staff create a strong climate for learning. They make excellent use of the school's outdoor areas and resources.
- The headteacher's strong leadership has ensured the school's strengths in teaching and achievement have been maintained through a time of significant change, particularly in staffing and governance.
- The newly federated governing body has been securely established and works effectively; governors provide good levels of challenge and support for leaders and systematically check the effectiveness of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length and for different purposes.
- Pupils do not possess the breadth of imaginative vocabulary needed to produce consistently high quality written work.
- Teachers' skills in teaching about computing and new technology are underdeveloped and there are too few high quality resources to support pupils' learning in this subject.
- Teachers do not have enough opportunities to observe and learn from the best practice.
- Teachers do not monitor pupils' learning sufficiently in lessons. The targets they set pupils are often too wide ranging and numerous for pupils to identify the steps they need to take to achieve them.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in eight lessons. A number of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors, pupils, staff, parents and a representative of the local authority.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined. Some pupils read books to the inspector.
- The inspector took account of the 36 responses to the online survey, Parent View, as well as the school's own parental questionnaire.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' progress and attainment produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, the school's own evaluations of its work, reports to the governing body and leaders' plans for raising attainment.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Tacolneston Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary is a below average-sized primary school.
- The school has been in a partnership with another small local school, both led by the same headteacher. Two days prior to the inspection, the schools federated and now have a single governing body.
- There have been significant changes to teaching and other staff since the previous inspection.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well-below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is well-above average.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The number of pupils in Year 6 last year was too small for the government's floor standards to be applicable.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in writing to help more pupils reach the higher levels by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to write at length and for different purposes
 - identifying ways of developing pupils' vocabulary so that they are able to write with greater imagination and depth.
- Make more teaching outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers monitor the pupils' learning in lessons more closely so they can adapt their teaching if necessary
 - ensuring that, when setting targets for pupils, teachers make clear the steps pupils need to take to achieve them
 - improving both the resources and teachers' expertise for teaching computing
 - providing teachers with more opportunities to observe and work alongside high quality practitioners, either in their own school or elsewhere.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When they start in Reception, a significant proportion of the children have levels of knowledge and understanding which are below those typical for their age, especially in their communication skills and personal, social and emotional development. Their physical skills are much better developed. Children make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage especially in developing good learning habits and attitudes towards school. This is supported by the views of parents, one of whom said that the children in Reception are 'excited by learning'.
- The results of the 2013 national check on Year 1 pupils' skills in linking letters and sounds (phonics) were well above average, and they made excellent progress. The current Year 1 pupils are on track to achieve a level close to that achieved last year. This reflects the good-quality teaching of phonics and reading younger pupils receive.
- The 2013 national tests at the end of Year 2 were above average and pupils made good progress from their different starting points. Pupils currently in Year 2 have made progress that is well above that expected this year, especially in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing is good but lower than in the other subjects.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is consistently above average. This was the case even though there have been frequent changes in staffing and some inadequate teaching in the past. This has been addressed by firm leadership. Current pupils are making much improved progress that is often well above that expected. For example, boys' reading and girls' mathematics have improved at a rate more than double that expected. An above-average proportion of the pupils are on track to exceed the national average in reading, especially for the higher levels. However, progress in writing remains slower than that in other subjects.
- Progress in reading is good throughout the school. Pupils who read to the inspector were reading a range of books, including non-fiction, and could talk happily about their favourite stories. A Year 1 pupil, for example, talked confidently about the use of the contents and glossary in her book about whales. Older pupils enjoy books and read widely. Even so, there are too few opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills.
- The progress made in writing is often good and standards are improving rapidly. However, activities used to introduce writing tasks are seldom sufficiently effective in developing pupils' vocabulary so that their writing becomes imaginative or inspiring. The school is aware that the progress and attainment in writing, especially that of boys, lags behind other subjects. In mathematics, good achievement is evident throughout the school and the pupils' skills in problem solving are well-developed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive effective extra help, and this is reflected in their good progress. The school's data show that there are no significant differences in the achievement of other groups, including the most able, and all groups achieve well.
- The small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium across the school make good progress, which is often better than that of their classmates due to the good support they receive. However, numbers are too small in any one year group to allow reliable comparisons between their attainment and that of their peers in school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. Leaders have a clear ambition to make more of the teaching consistently outstanding. Weaknesses in achievement arising from frequent changes in staffing and weaker teaching in the past have been effectively addressed by the headteacher and governing body. However, teachers have not had enough opportunities to observe and work with outstanding practitioners, within the partnership or in other schools, so that high quality teaching skills can be spread more widely.
- Teachers ensure pupils' attitudes to their learning and their interest in their work are outstanding across the school. Pupils talk positively about how they enjoy lessons, especially how the teachers make the lessons interesting, and that 'each day there is something new to learn'.
- Teachers' use of assessment information and other data has improved since the last inspection. Because of this, they are more aware of how well every individual in their class is learning over time. This helps them check on the progress of those eligible for the pupil premium, for example. However, teachers do not always check closely enough on how well pupils have understood what they are learning in lessons. Because of this, misconceptions are not always identified or addressed and some teachers do not adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs quickly enough.
- The regular marking of pupils' work provides them with clear suggestions for improvements and is constructive. Pupils talk positively about how helpful they find teachers' marking and respond readily to the comments they are given to evaluate how well they are learning and improve their work. They also enjoy the projects set for homework. For example, pupils made good models of super heroes using a wide variety of materials as part of a home-school topic. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed showing their homework books to the inspector. These showed good quality research done at home in a range of subjects.
- There are insufficient opportunities for teachers to develop pupils' computing skills in sufficient depth because there are too few computers and related resources and teachers often lack the skills to use them effectively.
- Teaching assistants work effectively to support the learning of pupils in their care. Small-group work and one-to-one sessions are used very effectively to support pupils who find learning difficult and those who are eligible for pupil premium funding.
- Specialist teaching is used effectively in physical education. Sports coaches support the development of teachers' skills and sessions provide good learning opportunities for all age groups. For example, the cricket skills of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 were extended in ways appropriate for their ages and skill levels.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. In all lessons observed and around the school, behaviour was exemplary. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning and they openly shared these feelings when talking to the inspector. They talk about how kind the teachers are and how they welcome pupils at the start of the day. They are very keen to learn, and this has a major impact on their good progress. Throughout the school, pupils thoroughly enjoy their work.
- Children in Reception start the day happily and productively, quickly settling into routines. This is supported by parents' positive views about how much their children enjoy school and how well

they are learning.

- Pupils talk positively about aspects of school life which they enjoy. In particular, the outdoor learning and also the sports coaching they receive. They have excellent opportunities to take on responsibilities. There is a very active school council.
- Pupils show genuine concern for others. In one excellent example during a lunchtime break, a girl approached a boy who was walking alone, unprompted, to see if he wanted someone to play with.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils explain why they feel safe in school, and all the parents who completed the questionnaire confirmed this view. Pupils are very confident that there are adults in school they trust and would confide in if worried or concerned about anything. They say bullying is non-existent and there has been none in recent years. They are aware of the different types of bullying, such as through the use of computers or mobile phones, and know how to keep themselves safe while using new technology.
- On the rare occasions when pupils have been excluded from school this was carried out correctly, the actions were appropriate given the circumstances and had positive outcomes. The support for all pupils facing challenging circumstances is very effective. Case studies show these pupils are well-supported and make good progress.
- Attendance is above average. Any patterns of regular absence are well tracked by the school. Persistent absenteeism has fallen significantly and is limited to a very small number of families. The vast majority of the parents appreciate the importance of full attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body provide a strong direction for the school with a clear focus on accelerating pupils' progress and ensuring more of the teaching is consistently outstanding. Subject leadership is under review following the establishment of the new federation and plans include more sharing of expertise across both schools.
- Staff and governors talk very positively about how well the school is led by the headteacher. All staff say they are proud to be a member of staff at the school. The school's view of its successes and areas for improvement is accurate and leaders know what remains to be done to improve further. The school improvement planning is detailed and contains appropriate priorities to direct work across the federation and specifically within this school.
- The monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning is carried out effectively by leaders and governors. Where leaders' observations highlight areas for improvement, they provide extra training and additional support for teachers. This has had a positive impact, for example, through staff attending training on specific special educational needs, enabling them to better support the progress of particular pupils.
- Assessments of pupils' work are regularly checked between staff, and with staff from other schools, to make sure they are accurate. This data is used in regular meetings between leaders and staff to track the achievement of individual pupils, enabling any underachievement to be quickly recognised and addressed. Effective aspects of the school's practice, such as that in the provision for pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs, are shared with other schools.

- As a result of the school's positive previous inspection, the local authority has provided appropriate levels of support. In addition, the school has sought extra support from local authority staff and a local teaching school to help develop teachers' and leaders' skills.
- Funding available through the pupil premium is used to help eligible pupils to take a full part in school life and benefit, where appropriate, from specific resources and additional help from adults. The good progress being made by these and other pupils is monitored closely by the headteacher and governing body.
- The money available to promote physical education and sporting opportunities is used well. Pupils are taking part in more sporting activities with other schools and this is having a positive impact on their well-being.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Staff are working hard to ensure the school is ready for the imminent changes to the way subjects are planned and has shared details of the new curriculum with parents. Well-planned enrichment activities, especially the use of visiting authors and illustrators, are having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The school council's excellent enterprise scheme has helped extend their understanding of the world of work and business.
- Strong partnerships with other local schools have had a good impact on opportunities for pupils to take part in more sporting events. The school has extensive and well-equipped outdoor areas and these are used very effectively to support learning. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 helped Reception children build well-constructed and imaginative dens out of a range of materials.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Just before the inspection, the governing body joined with governors in the partner school to make a formal federation. This has been done efficiently and there are firm foundations among a knowledgeable group of governors to take the school forward and improve it further.
 - Since the last inspection the governing body has undergone a lot of changes. Even so it has continued to hold the school to account through a range of monitoring activities. There are regular visits and meetings with, and reports from, the headteacher and other staff. Because of this, governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and know how to use data to check pupils' progress. Governors regularly take note of the views of pupils through their links with the school council.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the system used to determine teachers' effectiveness in enabling pupils to make good progress. Decisions about teachers' pay are appropriately linked to performance and responsibilities and, where weaknesses have needed addressing, the governing body has been fully and appropriately involved.
 - Governors track finances well and are fully involved in decisions about how to spend additional money, such as the pupil premium and sports funding.
 - Governors ensure all safeguarding requirements are met in full.

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	121060
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	444113

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Hamilton
Headteacher	Lisa Blowfield
Date of previous school inspection	28 March 2011
Telephone number	01508 489336
Fax number	N/A
Email address	office@tacolneston.norfolk.sch.uk

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