

Scarning Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Dereham Road, Scarning, Dereham, NR19 2PW

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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 make good progress and standards in Year 6 this year are above the latest national average.
- Teaching has improved rapidly over time and is now consistently good.
- Achievement in writing is good because pupils have developed the stamina to write at length.
- Across the school, pupils supported by additional funding (the pupil premium) make good progress in line with their peers.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They say they feel safe in school.
- Year 6 pupils set a good example to the others and are always willing to help.
- The relatively new leadership team has been successful in driving improvement so that teaching quality has risen and pupils' achievement has increased.
- Governors know the school well and hold senior leaders to account for its performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Marking of pupils' work in mathematics is not as helpful as it is in writing.
- Teaching assistants have not all received specific training to support the full range of pupils' learning needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 23 lessons or parts of lessons, including 13 jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Members of the inspection team heard pupils read and, with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including: development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and subject materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with: senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, a National Leader of Education and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke informally to parents in the playground. They also considered two letters from parents.
- The inspectors considered the 37 staff questionnaires returns that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Linda Lyn-Cook

Additional Inspector

Jane Ladner

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which in this school provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also average.
- The school has recently expanded to having two classes in Year 1 and Year 5. It will take in two classes in Reception next year.
- A new deputy headteacher and mathematics leader have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school is supported by the Scarning School Foundation, an endowed charity, which funds transport costs for visits and other activities that enrich pupils' experiences.
- There are links with a National Leader of Education in Bedford.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment by the end of Key Stage 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching outstanding by:
 - making sure the advice given to pupils about their work in mathematics is as effective as that given to them about their writing
 - giving all teaching assistants the specific training they need to support the full range of learning needs represented among pupils in the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join Reception with skills and aptitudes mainly in line with those expected for their age, but below in their understanding of number, language and personal and social development. They make good progress because they are fully engaged in a wide range of stimulating activities.
- Children are happy to try out new experiences in Reception because the very positive relationships with staff give them the confidence to explore. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- In 2013, the proportion of Year 1 pupils who met the required standard in the national check on phonics (the sounds that letters make) was average, but boys did better than girls. The current Year 1 pupils have made stronger progress this year and are working above last year's national standard. There is no marked variation between the performance of boys and girls.
- Year 2 pupils have made the nationally expected rate of progress and standards are in line with last year's national average. This year group has not made good progress because of changes in staffing. The rate of progress has accelerated as the year has moved on because of the additional support the school has put in.
- Pupils make consistently good progress in Key Stage 2 and standards in Year 6 are above the latest national average. The quality of teaching has improved rapidly over time, resulting in pupils making faster progress.
- The current Year 6 pupils have achieved very well since Key Stage 1, so that the proportions making good or better progress compare very favourably with the 2013 national data.
- The school benefits from a large number of reading volunteers who have been trained well to support pupils. Younger pupils use their phonics skills to read unfamiliar words. Older pupils say they enjoy reading and read widely. The school's library is centrally located and used well.
- Attainment in writing has risen following the introduction of sustained writing sessions, which have given pupils greater stamina to write at length. The school identified that pupils' skills in grammar, spelling and punctuation needed to improve. It has focused on widening pupils' vocabulary and giving them structured support in spelling and grammar. This has brought about rapid improvement this year.
- The introduction of a whole-school calculation policy has boosted pupils' confidence in solving problems in mathematics. Pupils are able to reflect upon their learning and take a more systematic approach to applying their skills in a range of situations.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because support is adapted to meet their needs and their progress is tracked at frequent intervals. This has resulted in some pupils making exceptional progress. They do not all make outstanding progress because some teaching assistants have not received sufficient training to support more complex learning needs effectively.
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 supported by additional funding (the pupil premium) in 2013 to comment on their attainment without identifying them. Across the school, pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress in line with that of other pupils. The pupil premium is

spent well on additional teaching and enables eligible pupils to keep up with their peers.

- In 2013 at Year 2 and Year 6, boys achieved better than girls. The school's data show that this is not a trend, but that there are variations between different year groups. Boys are a little behind the girls in their attainment in Year 6 this year, even though they still make good progress.
- The more-able pupils are challenged well and reach the higher levels of attainment in each year group.

The quality of teaching is good

- Rigorous checks and effective coaching have brought rapid gains to the quality of teaching this year. It is now consistently good.
- Learning is well planned and sets out clearly in each class what pupils are going to learn and what will make their learning successful. Teachers explain this well to pupils, so that they know exactly what they are doing, and can discuss their learning with visitors. Consequently, learning is challenging for all pupils and they achieve well.
- Pupils like to get involved in activities and find learning interesting and fun. For example, when the teaching assistant made a mess on the floor, Year 1 pupils had to try out different materials to find out which one would mop it up the best. They called this 'absorption'. Teaching in Reception is also consistently good.
- Teachers are quick to find out how well pupils are learning and to adjust their teaching accordingly. They use questioning effectively as one way of doing this. For instance, a teacher in the computer suite was able to help a group of pupils correct a misunderstanding they had about how to use an art tool.
- Teachers and teaching assistants all manage pupils' behaviour well. This makes learning productive and purposeful, as there are no interruptions through low-level disruption.
- Books show that there has been good progress in most year groups in mathematics and writing, and sometimes this has been very rapid. Work includes lots of interesting activities to encourage pupils to write extensively.
- Marking, while mainly good, is more consistently so in writing than it is in mathematics. Occasionally, teachers do not show pupils sufficiently how to move on in their learning and this restricts how well pupils' work improves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They engage well with learning and are enthusiastic. They behave well in class and around the school. Pupils are ambitious to do well. One Year 6 pupil said, 'We were pushing ourselves to the limits to get good grades in our SATs.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders make sure that access to the school is secure and staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment. Pupils say there is no bullying. Several parents commented on how supportive and sensitive the school was to pupils facing difficulties. Pupils are very tolerant of difference. They get along together well.

- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They know how to keep safe. Visits from 'Childline' and a safety workshop with the emergency services help pupils to keep safe in their daily lives.
- School records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and that the good behaviour seen during the inspection is typical. Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school and the school's hard work to reduce absence.
- Year 6 pupils take pride in earning their special fleeces, which identify them as helpers for younger pupils. Pupils take responsibility as reading 'buddies', helping in the salad bar in the dining hall and around the school. The head boy and head girl have reported to the parish council.
- Behaviour is not outstanding yet because sometimes the play can become a little boisterous outside, especially when footballs are involved.

The leadership and management are good

- The school has improved rapidly this year. The relatively new leadership team has got into its stride and has created a strong momentum for change. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and mathematics leader show great ambition to take teaching and achievement further forward.
- Senior leaders have sought high quality external support to assist them in improving teaching and raising standards. They are linked to a National Leader of Education in Bedford, an arrangement which has proved very beneficial. The school is also part of Norfolk's helpful 'Good to Great' initiative, which has opened up several fruitful opportunities for sharing best practice.
- The school has tightened systems to track pupils' progress. Staff check accurately at frequent intervals of how well pupils are achieving. This enables them to identify promptly anyone who is in danger of falling behind, and arrange additional support. Meetings with teachers review each half term how pupils are performing and hold staff to account for their progress.
- Systematic checks on the quality of teaching and learning mean that provision has become consistently good this year. This is evident in teachers' planning of learning, behaviour management and pupils' good progress.
- The role of subject and other leaders, including in Reception, has developed well. The English and mathematics leaders provide excellent role models to other staff in how to bring about rapid improvement in their subjects. The leadership of special educational needs is also very strong.
- The management of teachers' performance has been strengthened with clear targets for improvement linked to whole-school priorities and pupils' progress. The school has been successful in helping teachers to become more effective in promoting good learning among pupils.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and their strategic plans set the right priorities for improvement. They outline clear measures by which success can be assessed and are overseen by nominated governors.
- The range of subjects and topics is relevant and interests pupils. It includes plenty of visits. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example,

Reception children have been finding out about caring for yourself, and Year 3 pupils have learned about the moral dilemmas facing those people who went through the Blitz during the Second World War. The educational charitable trust has funded an amphitheatre in the grounds, additional science resources, and made it possible for all pupils to go swimming. This has enriched pupils' experiences.

- The sports premium is being spent appropriately on additional coaching for pupils and training for teachers. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in new sports, such as archery and bowling. More pupils are getting involved in sport, to the benefit of their health and well-being.
- The school ensures all pupils are fully included and have equal opportunities to succeed. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because many of the measures for improvement are quite recent and have not yet been sustained over an extended period.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very knowledgeable about the school and bring a broad range of skills to support it. They analyse pupils' performance and how it compares with that in other schools. They know what the quality of teaching is across the school. They hold senior leaders to account well for driving improvement forward. They make sure the management of teachers' performance is robust and that pay rises are justified by pupils' progress. They understand the impact of the pupil premium and sports funding spending on pupils' achievement. They visit the school often to find out for themselves how well it is doing. They are actively involved in checking its work, for example through the standards committee. Governors have undergone extensive training to improve their effectiveness. They ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet 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	121067
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	442036

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	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Salter
Headteacher	Grahame Chambers
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2012
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