

St Nicholas Priory CofE VA Junior School

St Nicholas Road, Great Yarmouth, NR30 1NL

Inspection dates 11–12 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 during their time at the school. When they leave school, pupils have achieved the academic and personal skills they need for the next stage in their education.
- The quality of teaching in the school is good. This is because the leaders and managers have worked hard to help teachers to improve. Teachers now know how to help pupils to learn well.
- School leaders have successfully secured improvements to achievement. They act quickly and effectively when they identify any areas of underachievement.
- The school knows how to help pupils to develop a love of learning. Pupils behave well in lessons, and also help one another to learn well. Pupils are safe in school.
- The headteacher has developed a strong leadership team who share his clarity and vision. They know how to make the school even better.
- More pupils are now attaining the highest standards in mathematics and English.
- The school is successful at developing writing. Pupils are encouraged to write at length.
- Pupils, staff and leaders now have a relentless focus on improving reading, writing and mathematics.
- The curriculum is interesting and stimulating. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is strong, and this prepares pupils for their future lives.
- Pupils take pride in their learning. Work in books is carefully presented.
- Governors now know how to effectively challenge and support the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress that the youngest pupils make is not as rapid as it could be. Sometimes they are given work that is too easy.
- Teachers do not routinely check whether the work that they give pupils helps them to make rapid gains in their learning.
- Marking does not yet consistently help pupils to quickly and efficiently make corrections and improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons, of which ten were observed jointly with senior leaders. An inspector and senior leader looked at reading interventions across the school. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about reading. With senior leaders, the inspectors looked at pupils work in their exercise books.
- Inspectors met with pupils across the school. A meeting was also held with pupils who are learning ambassadors, and/or members of the school council. Inspectors also met with senior leaders and subject leaders. They took account of 27 questionnaires from staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the Chair of Governors. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Documentation covering safeguarding, behaviour and safety, the work of governors, and the school's own evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan were scrutinised. Inspectors also looked at the school's own checks on pupils' attainment and progress, and the school's monitoring and management of the performance of staff.
- Homework documentation was scrutinised and discussed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, one letter, and talked informally to parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Teresa Kiely, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Neil Stanley

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized junior school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is well above average. In this school, this extra funding is for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils who come from other ethnic groups is average.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that class teachers rigorously check the quality of the progress that their pupils make whether they are working in class or with a named adult in another room, so that pupils consistently make rapid gains in their learning
 - providing pupils with activities that stretch and challenge them to make outstanding gains in their learning
 - making sure that pupils can regularly make amendments and improvements to their work following feedback from teachers and other adults.
- Raise the achievement of the youngest pupils by:
 - making sure that, from the time they start the school, these pupils have work that builds on what they have already achieved
 - ensuring that pupils make rapid gains in their learning by moving them quickly on to new learning when they are ready.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The gap in performance between boys, who have not done as well as girls in English, and girls, who have not achieved as well as boys in mathematics, is now beginning to reduce. Boys and girls are now in line with each other in reading across the school. All groups of pupils are now making good progress across the school.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium are now making better progress. The school's own data shows that the gap between their attainment and that of others is reducing. However, in some years, the achievement of these pupils is still a term behind their peers. In 2013, attainment for this group of pupils in English and mathematics at Level 4, was slightly better than others in the school and above average.
- Results in national tests in 2013 showed that, in mathematics and writing, the 2012 improvements have been broadly maintained. The current Year 6 pupils are making good progress across all the subject areas. Reading results for Year 6 pupils in 2013 showed a dip. The school has put in a number of strategies to support reading across the school. Reading achievement is now good. Accelerated reading progress is evident in the majority of year groups.
- Performance in the 2013 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test was below national standards. As a result of better teaching, pupils are now achieving higher standards, and the school expects some pupils to achieve the highest levels of attainment in the 2014 results.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. The school has worked hard to remove the barriers to learning for this group. As a result, fewer numbers of pupils need this additional support, as they get older. The 2013 test results for this group, although below average, represent good progress for this group of pupils, many of whom had complex needs.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because of the support that they receive, particularly when they first arrive at the school.
- The school has worked hard to develop the achievements of more able pupils. As a result, a larger number of pupils are now achieving better standards, and this is seen in the accelerated performance of some older pupils.
- Some of the youngest pupils do not make enough progress from their starting points. This is because teaching does not build quickly on what pupils already know and have already achieved. Too much time is spent going over work that has already been understood. This slows and limits pupils' progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school has worked hard to improve teaching and it is now good. Teachers are now consistently applying the school's guidance for good teaching. As a result, achievement has improved.
- Teaching assistants, and teachers who support pupils in small groups and individually make a valuable contribution to pupils learning. In a mathematics lesson, the teacher assessed carefully

what pupils had learnt and then used other adults to help those pupils who still needed more support. Pupils said that when this happens it helps them to learn better.

- Pupils are encouraged to produce extended pieces of writing. Teachers spend time developing pupils' vocabulary so that they will be successful when they start to write.
- Pupils say they enjoy reading. They regularly use the school library at lunchtime and have access to electronic books. When pupils still need to develop phonic skills (the sounds that letters make), they have a planned programme of support that helps them to make good progress.
- Teachers are not yet rigorously assessing well enough whether the activities they provide in-class, or when pupils are working with other adults, is producing rapid learning for all their pupils.
- The work in pupils' books is marked consistently. There are examples of marking that enables, particularly more able pupils, to think deeply and respond carefully to the questions that teachers have posed. However, teachers' marking is not always rigorous. In English, teachers do not always clearly ensure that pupils make corrections that will improve their learning. In mathematics, when pupils have achieved well in their learning, they are not then consistently encouraged through marking, to extend their learning further.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good and incidents of poor behaviour have reduced considerably over the last few years. The school has successfully developed a range of ways to help pupils to behave well in school.
- Good behaviour is especially noticeable in lessons, when pupils show how much they want to learn by their positive attitudes to learning. They show good levels of interest, cooperation, and engagement in their work.
- Pupils behave well during playtime and at lunchtime. The school encourages pupils to make choices about when and where they will eat, and where they will spend their playtime. As a result behaviour around the school is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school, and take pride in their work. They are polite and respectful to each other and to visitors to the school. Through school initiatives such as the school council, and the contribution that the learning ambassadors make, pupils are responsibly helping one another to learn well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The premises are regularly checked and staff are carefully vetted prior to appointment. There are robust procedures in place to keep pupils safe.
- The school actively meets the diverse needs of its pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe in the school. They are taught carefully about the different forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying, and know what to do if this should happen. Pupils say that, although occasionally pupils call one another names, this does not often happen.
- The school's breakfast club encourages pupils to eat healthily and socialise with one another.

- Attendance is broadly average, as a result of the school's actions to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows how to improve the school to make it the best it can be. He is the driving force behind the leadership team, who share his vision. Leaders, managers and governors now have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is a robust plan in place to improve the school further.
- Subject leaders have developed English and mathematics by paying close attention to developing teachers' subject knowledge. Leaders and governors know that the regular meetings that are now being held with all teachers are helping all the pupils to 'stay on track' and make good progress.
- The school's leaders accurately know the quality of the teaching in the school. Teachers are now consistently implementing the school's own teaching guidance.
- The school has developed a rich and thought-provoking curriculum. Computers and other electronic aids are used well to support pupils learning across all subjects. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is at the heart of the school and supports the good behaviour that is evident in the pupils.
- Pupils achieve well in physical education and games, and as a result their health and physical wellbeing has improved. The impact of the Primary Sports Funding is being seen in the increased expertise in teaching sport. Pupils participate in a wide range of sporting activities.
- The school works hard to involve its parents, and parents are supportive of the work of the school. A small number of parents think that homework is not well set. The school has been able to convincingly show that topic homework is enabling more pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- The local authority now provides 'light touch' to the school. Staff and governors say that local authority training has been useful to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - As the result of advice and support from an external review of governance, governors now know how to effectively challenge and support the school. The school improvement committee has grown in expertise and now understands the school's performance better. Governors now ask relevant questions, particularly about the progress that the youngest pupils are making during their first year in the school. They know how leaders are improving the quality of teaching in the school. They have been part of the development of the school's performance management of its teachers. They know which teachers are the strongest in the school. Governors have been involved in decisions taken about the spending of the pupil premium, and know that the progress of less well-off pupils is improving. Governors ensure that statutory safeguarding arrangements are met.

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	121093
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	442054

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	381
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Wright
Headteacher	Mark Adams
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2012
Telephone number	01493 843552
Fax number	01493 858710
Email address	head@st-nicholaspriory.norfolk.sch.uk

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