

Great Waldingfield CofE Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Folly Road, Great Waldingfield, Sudbury, CO10 0RR

Inspection dates 17-18 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Not enough pupils are yet making good progress in English and mathematics throughout the school.
- There is some variation in pupils' progress between different year groups and in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Although attendance is slowly improving, it remains below average.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to enable pupils to make good progress.
- Work is not always hard enough for the most able in writing and reading.
- The changes made by the new headteacher have not had time to make sufficient impact.
- Middle leaders do not check the quality of teaching in their subjects and some do not look closely enough at progress in each year group.
- Governors do not have enough detailed knowledge of the variations in standards and progress across the school.
- Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to improve or allow them sufficient time to act on advice.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start because of consistently good teaching.
- Leaders and managers have set about improving the school in a systematic way.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and sometimes exemplary. This supports their learning well. They understand how to keep themselves safe and say that they feel very safe in school.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, two of which were seen jointly with the headteacher. The inspector made a number of shorter visits to classrooms.
- He observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, the school's plan for improvement, the use of pupil premium and sports funding, checks carried out by leaders on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspector observed break times, lunch times, the start of the school day and an assembly.
- He met with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, a group of pupils and spoke with a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- The inspector analysed 12 responses to the staff questionnaire and information from the 60 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector also looked at the school's own survey of parents' views.

Inspection team

Gavin Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2013.
- Following the re-organisation of schools in the area, this is the first year that the school has had pupils in Year 6. There are only nine pupils in this year group.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is broadly average. This is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority.
- 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 below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very small as nearly all pupils are White British and hardly any speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion leaving and joining the school, other than at normal times, is above average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a single class alongside some pupils from Year 1.
- The governing body manages a breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by:
 - making sure that work is always hard enough for the most able pupils in writing and reading
 - improving the quality of marking so that pupils know how they can improve and have time to act on the advice
 - enabling middle leaders to check the quality of teaching in their subjects and help teachers understand the nature of good teaching and put it into practice.
- Ensure that pupils make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they move through the school by:
 - ensuring that where a year group is divided between two classes, progress is checked across the year group and not just at class level
 - improving the skills of some teaching assistants and make more productive use of them in all lessons.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - the headteacher continuing her plans for improvement, at pace
 - middle leaders focusing more sharply on checking progress across the school and using this information to help the whole school improve
 - ensuring that governors receive and act upon detailed information about progress in every year group, so they can rigorously hold the school to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

- Improve attendance by making use of all sanctions to ensure that parents comply with the school's procedures and send their children to school regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement as there are differences between attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics in a number of year groups.
- Many children start school in the Reception class with knowledge, skills and understanding that are lower than is typical for their age, especially in aspects of language and literacy. They make good progress and achieve well in their time in the class.
- The good teaching of phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make) starts in Reception and continues into Year 1. It is helping pupils develop and improve their reading skills. Last year every pupil in Year 1 reached or exceeded the expected level in the national screening check for phonics. Interventions have been put in place to continue the good teaching of reading across the school but so far, the best readers amongst the oldest pupils do not all have the necessary skills to read at the highest levels by Year 6.
- Almost all pupils make steady progress, but there is too much variation from class to class in the proportion of pupils making even better progress. This reflects the inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Work in pupils' books and lessons seen in Year 6 show that standards for pupils by the end of Year 6 this year are broadly as expected for their age. This first Year 6 group is very small and only half of them have been at the school since Reception. This group make good progress as it has received good support by using additional funding over time.
- Additional pupil premium funding is used effectively, particularly to help pupils improve their writing and mathematics skills. Additional support through one-to-one work, the use of a range of interventions and booster groups has enabled nearly all of these pupils to close the gap on other pupils. In some cases these pupils achieve higher results than their class-mates.
- Most groups of pupils achieve similarly, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The school assesses the needs of these pupils carefully and good packages of support are put in place for them.
- At times the most able pupils do not always reach the highest levels. This is sometimes due to work not being hard enough or because they haven't developed sufficient skills and knowledge to tackle the work.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough is consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- On occasions, activities are not hard enough to challenge the most able pupils. As a result they do not always reach the levels of which they are capable. This can be seen in the workbooks of some of the pupils in the class for the oldest pupils.
- While teachers' marking is regular, there are not enough helpful comments to ensure pupils make progress, neither are there sufficient opportunities for pupils to act upon any advice and this limits improvements.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently effective, both by the teacher and her assistant. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children. This ensures that skills are taught carefully and children have good opportunities to put these skills into effect following their own interests. Records of checks on progress are accurate and are used effectively to plan children's next steps in learning.
- Across the school the work of support assistants is too variable. At times they work as another teacher, while at other times they are not involved enough in pupils' learning because teachers have not planned their work carefully enough. As a result, especially at the start of lessons, they are not always supporting learning.
- Learning is encouraged by the good relationships between staff and pupils resulting in happy classrooms.
- The school has a clear focus on teaching literacy and numeracy and pupils are gradually being given a good range of opportunities to use these skills in other subjects. It is generally better in support of literacy than of numeracy, although in a Year5/6 lesson pupils were weighing and measuring baby chicks accurately and recording their findings in charts.
- Pupils describe a good range of homework which builds in volume as they get older. A small minority of parents believe more is required, although evidence in books does not support this view.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They move around the school sensibly and follow the expectations that adults have of their conduct. Behaviour in the dining hall is good and well-supervised.
- Pupils' behaviour for learning is good and sometimes exemplary. They settle quickly into lessons and want to learn. This is often linked to the quality of teaching and the interest created in lessons. The youngest children showed great pride in their work as they, without encouragement, wanted to share their work with the inspector.
- Behaviour at playtimes is boisterous but not unsafe. A range of activities is set out for pupils, who can play music, dance and play games.
- In lessons, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and sanctions are rarely needed as pupils are enthusiastic about learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in school and parents agree. The school teaches pupils to keep themselves safe through advice on online safety, stranger danger and aspects of road safety, for example. There has been no evidence of any racial discrimination over a number of years.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities to act as leaders both in class and at play. Pupils work well together at classroom topics and older ones often take care of younger ones at play.
- In discussion, pupils say there is little or no bullying. They show confidence in their teachers to sort out any minor issues and there have been no exclusions for several years. A small minority of parents think that behaviour and bullying are issues, but no evidence was found to support

their concerns.

- Attendance rates are slowly improving but remain stubbornly just below average. This is often because parents continue to take their children out of school for holidays even though they know that further sanctions may be taken against them.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The new headteacher has a clear view of what needs to be improved, but has not had sufficient time to see the impact of all the changes she is managing resulting in consistently good teaching and good progress for all pupils.
- The headteacher checks the performances of teachers in their classes and has provided feedback on how they might improve. She is rigorously completing annual checks on their performance and setting appropriate targets for them to aspire. However, middle leaders have not yet had opportunities to look at the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- The school is making good use of a computerised tracking system, which gives class teachers and leaders a clear picture of achievement in each class. This information is used half-termly in newly arranged standards meetings between class teachers, the headteacher and middle leaders, in which class teachers discuss how improvements can be made for individual pupils. This is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' progress.
- Subject leaders are now required to produce an action plan, which will incorporate information from discussions in each year group, so that they might have a more accurate picture of progress for all groups across the school.
- Learning is now being supported by a range of newly purchased lap-tops which are used all through the week alongside a range of lessons. Pupils use them to help research in their topics, create spread sheets and write some of their work.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils take part in many after-school activities and a small group are well cared for at the breakfast club. Pupils have good opportunities to study other religions and cultures in their regular class work.
- The school allocates the primary sports funding carefully and employs professional sports coaches who can work with pupils and teachers alike to improve both teaching and learning. After school clubs provide good opportunities for pupils to develop further interest in sport and improve their health. In discussion with pupils, they say how much they enjoy their sport and keeping healthy. The school will also use some of the money to buy equipment for a new outside area to be developed during the summer.
- The headteacher values the support of parents and introduced a 'Tea and Talk' time regularly held in order to create an open forum for parents to discuss school issues.
- The local authority is providing an effective level of support for the school, especially at this time of new leadership in the school and the school completing the change to an all-through primary school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are highly committed to the school and some have very long relationships with it. They have a wide range of skills which enables them to fulfil their statutory duties, for example in relation to finance and safeguarding. They now make regular visits to the school in order to see the school in action at first hand. They understand the broad strengths and areas for development of the school. They receive information regularly, but do not completely understand details of progress in all years and groups in order to better challenge and hold the school to account; this is especially the case now that the school has reached its full primary size. They know about how pupil premium is used and the difference it is making. They set targets for the headteacher and know about the quality of teaching and how appraisal for all staff links to teachers' pay progression.

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	124699
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	443807

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	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Ayres
Headteacher	Tina Hosford
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 November 2010
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