

Elmsett Church of England VC Primary School

The Street, Elmsett, Ipswich, IP7 6PA

Inspection dates 2–3 July 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics, and standards are rising.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers track pupils' progress closely and plan lesson activities that build on what they already know and can do.
- Pupils requiring additional support because they are disabled or have special educational needs, and those supported by extra government funding, make good progress.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are unreservedly polite and courteous. They welcome visitors and show care and consideration for others.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are well cared for and feel safe.
- The school promotes good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its wide range of subjects. A variety of clubs and activities, including residential trips, support pupils' growing maturity and confidence.
- The headteacher has received good support from governors, staff and parents to successfully address the issues raised at the previous inspection. This has resulted in better teaching and raised achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always check carefully how well pupils are doing during lessons. As a result, they sometimes do not move pupils on in their learning as quickly as they could.
- Marking does not always help pupils to improve their work.
- Although pupils make good progress in mathematics, they are not challenged as much as in reading and writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four lessons. One of these observations was completed jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also observed pupils at breaks and lunchtimes, and attended registration.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, governors, the headteacher and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 39 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as correspondence from and conversations with parents. She also took account of the four responses to staff questionnaires.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress, the school's development plan and view of its own performance, minutes of governing body meetings, records of any poor behaviour, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, and observed reading support lessons and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. This is additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- 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 above average.
- There were not enough pupils in Year 6 in 2013 for the government's floor standards to be applicable.
- The school is part of the local 'pyramid' of schools and participates in the Suffolk and Norfolk Initial Teacher Training scheme.
- The headteacher was appointed in February 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by:
 - challenging pupils more in mathematics lessons
 - ensuring that marking shows pupils how to improve their work, and checking that pupils make corrections
 - checking pupils' understanding carefully during lessons so they are moved on to harder work more promptly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills and abilities typical for their age. School information shows that across all key stages, current pupils are making good progress and are set to reach above-average standards by the end of the year.
- Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children well for entry to Year 1. Children leave the Reception class with good skills and abilities.
- In 2013, an average proportion of pupils reached the required standards in the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. The proportion that was successful in the retakes in Year 2 was above average. The school has improved the teaching in phonics so that it is consistently good. Pupils understand and use letters and sounds with greater accuracy and confidence. The vast majority of current Year 1 pupils are on track to exceed the expected standard in 2014.
- At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2013, pupils attained broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. School information shows that the current Year 2 pupils are reaching higher standards this year.
- The 2013 Year 6 test results in reading, writing and mathematics showed that pupils had made better progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. The school has improved the quality of teaching, which is leading to better achievement in reading and mathematics. Year 6 pupils are on track to reach higher standards in 2014.
- In 2013, the proportion of pupils who made expected progress did not compare favourably with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Regular tracking of progress is now used well to identify pupils in need of additional support to help them meet their targets. Current progress information shows that the vast majority of Year 6 pupils are making good progress and working at higher levels than last year.
- The quality of teaching and additional support available to pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs, and those eligible for pupil premium funding have improved. These pupils make good progress. In 2013, there were no pupils in Year 6 eligible for the pupil premium.
- The most able pupils make good progress. They have opportunities to work with older pupils and complete challenging work, and they attend specially arranged classes across the pyramid of schools.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan stimulating learning activities, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In a lesson about magnets, the Reception class developed curiosity, gained good knowledge and understanding, and increased their language and communication skills through a range of indoor and outdoor learning activities.
- Classroom displays support learning because they are vibrant and include a wide variety of pupils' work. The quality of work on display helps to set high expectations and pupils aspire to having their own work on display.

- Phonics is taught effectively. Recent training in phonics has improved knowledge, understanding and skills, so adults are better placed to teach with accuracy and confidence. Learning is planned well and activities build on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise blending letters and sounds, and to apply these skills to reading and writing.
- Teachers are highly skilled in behaviour management. Adults and pupils have positive relationships and consistently apply the school's values in all they do. Rewards are used effectively to motivate pupils and keep them interested in their learning. Consequently, classrooms are calm and purposeful, and pupils work hard and value learning.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from carefully planned support within the class setting and in small-group sessions that address specific areas of difficulty. As a result, gaps in knowledge and understanding are closing and these pupils make good progress.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide support for eligible pupils. As a result of booster classes, small-group teaching sessions and one-to-one tutoring, eligible pupils are overcoming challenges and make similar progress to their classmates.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ask pupils questions to promote reflection, probe understanding and encourage recall. Pupils are keen learners; they respond to questions with spontaneity and enthusiasm. Their answers show sound reasoning and the ability to recall and apply learning correctly. Sometimes during the lesson, teachers do not use the feedback about what pupils know and can do to move them on in their learning. This results in pupils not progressing as quickly as they could because they do not have the right level of work to do.
- Reading, writing and communication are taught well. Pupils develop a range of skills in information technology and reach good standards. Recent training about how to teach reading and writing more effectively is resulting in better progress for pupils. Mathematics is not taught as effectively as reading and writing. The school recognises this and has begun to address it. In general, resources are used well and learning challenges pupils appropriately, so they make good progress.
- Teachers set high expectations. They encourage pupils to take pride in their handwriting and presentation. The marking of classwork and homework is regular and accurate. Teachers apply the school's marking policy consistently well. However, they do not always include helpful comments to show pupils how to improve their work, or check that pupils make corrections.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. From the earliest years in the school, pupils are unreservedly polite and courteous. Visitors are warmly welcomed to the school and pupils are keen to share what they have learnt. The school achieves its aim to help pupils become curious, confident, resilient and respectful learners.
- Pupils' values are well developed. They show respect, care and consideration for others. Pupils hold doors open and step aside to let others pass by.
- Pupils have a growing awareness of cultural diversity through the school's good promotion of this aspect. Links with a school in London and the Gambia help to broaden pupils' view of life and prepare them for life in the 21st century.

- Shared values and the team system promote a sense of belonging which help to make the school a harmonious and peaceful community. Pupils are aware of a wide range of global issues that affect people. They organise and participate in raising sums of money for charities each year, including Water Aid. Pupils have a growing understanding of the world and the value of human life.
- Attitudes to learning are outstanding. Across all year groups, pupils have a thirst for knowledge and work hard in lessons. They respond well to the high expectations teachers set. They listen respectfully to each other and patiently take turns to speak when they work with talk partners, in small groups, or in whole-class activities. Pupils are attentive and respectful to adults, following instructions quickly and sensibly. On entry to Reception, children settle quickly and embrace the high expectations and established routines. Their eagerness to learn supports their good progress.
- Unacceptable behaviour is rare. The school uses good procedures to record and report inappropriate behaviour. There have been no exclusions. Partnerships with parents and carers, and external agencies, are effective. Good strategies successfully support pupils to gain the skills to manage their own behaviour. Case studies show that pupils who have challenging behaviour develop good self-management techniques and learn to take personal responsibility for their actions and modify their behaviour over time.
- The rewards system helps to promote outstanding behaviour. Pupils are enthusiastic. They enjoy receiving team points and a variety of certificates for their good effort and achievement. Pupils spoke proudly about the certificates they receive for good work and effort. They welcome the democracy in the school and opportunities to sit on the school council and eco council. Many pupils welcome the opportunity to take on leadership roles as team captains, sports captains and subject captains.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in school. They understand how to keep themselves safe when they are out in the community and when using the internet. Visitors to assemblies support personal, health and social education through presentations on road safety and healthy living.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, and attend punctually so classes start on time. Attendance is above average and the school investigates all absence from school. The pupil premium is used to promote the good attendance of eligible pupils. Families are supported to secure good attendance.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong. They understand bullying and know that sexist, racist and cyber-bullying are wrong. Pupils are confident that when name-calling or unkind treatment is reported, staff will help them to resolve matters. Pupils are encouraged to manage conflict by themselves in the first instance.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school well. She has strong support from governors, staff and parents. Since the previous inspection, good progress has been made with the key issues identified in the report. This has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Leaders and managers know the school's strengths and areas for development. Senior and

subject leaders monitor the progress made against specific targets. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good.

- Pupils study a broad range of subjects linked to British and other cultures. They have access to residential trips, educational visits and a variety of sporting and artistic clubs. These opportunities, along with the emphasis on developing pupils' values and beliefs, promote the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and prepare them to be caring, responsible, United Kingdom and global citizens.
- The sports funding provided to primary schools is being used effectively to broaden pupils' experience of sport and improve the quality of teaching, particularly gymnastics. A sports coach has led sessions for pupils in football and tag-rugby, and worked with teachers to strengthen these aspects of physical education.
- The local authority arranged for the school to develop a partnership with Ravenswood School in Ipswich to help improve the quality of teaching and learning. This has been beneficial in strengthening leadership and management, as well as teaching and learning. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and achievement is rising.
- The school is popular with parents and carers. They expressed a good level of support for the school through conversations, correspondence and responses to Parent View. A tiny minority of parents felt that the school could improve its communication with parents following a resolution of conflict. The inspector found that the school provides a range of opportunities for parents and carers to communicate with the school. For instance, the headteacher provides a regular surgery, and staff are available in the playground at the beginning and end of each school day.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well. Pupils are free from discrimination and bullying. Pupils from all backgrounds and abilities make good progress. The pupil premium is used effectively to provide enrichment opportunities and a range of academic support for eligible pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Recently, the governing body has been reorganised so that it operates more effectively. Governors are committed to school improvement and have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Regular and accurate reports from the headteacher regarding the quality of teaching and pupils' progress ensure they are well placed to provide good support and challenge to the school. They understand their roles and responsibilities, and spoke of the benefits of recent training.
 - The governors manage staff performance well. They set challenging targets for the headteacher's performance which are linked the school improvement plan and drive all other staff targets. Governors make sure staff must meet challenging performance targets to receive pay rises.
 - Finances are managed prudently. Governors know how the pupil premium is spent and they can explain what impact this is having on the achievement of eligible pupils.
 - The governors make sure the school's safeguarding arrangements meet all current national 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	124695
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	442063

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	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Smyth
Headteacher	Elaine Burdiss
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2012
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