

# Blakeney Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Wiveton Road, Blakeney, Holt, NR25 7NJ

**Inspection dates** 8–9 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Standards by the end of Year 6 have been low over time for some pupils. Pupils have not made enough progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities to practise writing across a range of subjects. Some pupils have poorly-formed handwriting.
- The teaching of phonics is not sufficiently effective.
- Outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is underdeveloped.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve.
- Pupils do not produce written work of a consistently high standard.
- Teaching assistants are not consistently effective in accelerating pupils' learning.
- The use of individual targets for pupils to promote better learning is not consistently implemented.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently positive, particularly when teaching does not motivate or interest them.
- Staff changes have adversely affected the efforts of senior leaders to improve the effectiveness of pupils' learning.
- The recently-appointed acting senior teacher has not had sufficient time to develop her role.
- Despite improving outcomes, particularly in literacy, the current curriculum lacks breadth.

### The school has the following strengths

- Current senior leaders have implemented many initiatives which have had a positive impact upon pupils' learning, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Attendance has improved significantly and is now broadly average.
- The school is calm and orderly. Pupils feel safe and secure.
- Effective collaborative working with other schools is a developing strength. Staff are now well supported.
- Gaps in attainment between pupils supported by additional funding and other pupils are reducing.
- Governors are effective. They both support the school and hold it to account.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in seven lessons, all of which were seen together with the school's senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the school's senior leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector also looked at the school's own survey of parents' views, conducted in 2014.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documents, including local authority reviews and action plans and records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching. He also considered minutes of governing body meetings, and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of pupils' progress. He also looked closely at pupils' written work for the current school year and listened to pupils read.

## Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Blakeney Church of England (Aided) Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- 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 also above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium, (additional funding for pupils known to be entitled to free school meals or those looked after by the local authority), is above average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- For some years the school was in a partnership with Hindringham Primary School. From April 2013, they federated with two other small village primary schools, at Kelling and Walsingham, to form The Pilgrim Federation, under a new Executive Headteacher and a single governing body. This arrangement has facilitated co-operative working across the four schools.
- There are two classes. One provides for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The other includes pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- The school had experienced considerable turbulence in leadership for several years up to the formation of the Federation. Subsequently, there has been significant instability in staffing and long-term absences. Both class teachers have joined the school within the last few weeks.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
  - teachers across the school show consistently high expectations by setting work that builds on what pupils already know and can do
  - pupils produce consistently high quality written work
  - current efforts to improve the impact of teaching assistants on pupils' learning are sustained
  - school expectations in relation to the use of individual targets is fully implemented.
- Further accelerate pupils' progress across the school in order to raise standards, particularly for the most able pupils, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 by:
  - ensuring that the teaching of phonics is more effective in enabling a higher proportion of pupils to reach the expected level by the end of Year 1
  - ensuring that opportunities to accelerate learning in the outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage are fully developed
  - ensuring that pupils develop greater depth of understanding and make more rapid progress in mathematics across the school
  - implementing a systematic programme for improving handwriting, especially for older pupils
  - planning more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in different subjects.
- Improve pupils' attitudes to learning by:
  - ensuring that the level of challenge for pupils, and the quality of teaching, engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm.

■ Improve leadership and management by:

- sustaining efforts to ensure that teaching is consistently good, so that pupils' achievement is improved further
- ensuring that recently-appointed acting senior teacher has the opportunity to develop her role and to have a positive impact on improving pupils' achievement
- ensuring that the new curriculum provides pupils with an appropriate breadth and depth of experience across all the required subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- In recent years, pupils' progress across the school has not been rapid enough to support good overall achievement. Standards by the end of Year 6 have typically been low. Progress in mathematics has been, and remains, slower than in reading or writing. Pupils have not had a sufficient grounding in mathematics to enable them to progress more rapidly.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils attaining the expected standard in the screening check in phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) was below the national average in 2013 and is lower still in the current year. This is contributing to the slower development of pupils' reading skills.
- Children enter Reception with skills and understanding that are often well below those expected. Few children have access to pre-school provision. Despite some turbulence in the teaching, children have made at least the progress expected although standards remain below average as they prepare to enter Year 1.
- While pupils make mostly expected progress in Years 1 and 2, their attainment at the end of Year 2 is below average and has shown little overall improvement in the last two years, particularly in mathematics. The potential of the most able pupils is yet to be fully realised.
- Changes in the current year are contributing to much better progress and rising standards in Years 3 to 6. Attainment at the end of Year 6 was low in 2013. However, higher expectations and more effective teaching, despite staff changes, has ensured that pupils are now making up lost ground rapidly, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are securely on track to reach at least average standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 6. Current attainment in mathematics is not yet quite as strong because the accrued gaps in their learning and understanding have been greater.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs have typically made relatively slow progress. As a result of better support, their current progress has improved, although it is not yet good.
- There were few pupils supported by pupil premium funding in Year 6 in 2013 and none currently. The achievement of these pupils has, however, typically been similar to that of the others, often showing significant gaps in learning. Recently, with much improved support, their progress has accelerated considerably and the gap in attainment is closing rapidly.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Weaker teaching in the past has adversely affected learning and progress. Current leaders have resolutely tackled weak teaching and, despite further staff changes, it is now more effective. However, even now, there is not enough sustained good teaching to ensure that all pupils are consistently making the progress they should.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations. For example, pupils' written work, early in the year, was often poorly presented. However, current written work shows significant improvements. The work of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is adversely affected by poor handwriting.

- Teachers do not always ensure that work set, in these multi-year classes, offers sufficient challenge for all pupils, particularly the most able. Learning is often adversely affected by unnecessarily long introductions.
- The impact of teaching assistants on pupils' learning is variable. Some excellent practice was observed. However, in some lessons they do not respond quickly enough where pupils would benefit from their help.
- Current inconsistency in the teaching of phonics is leading to slower progress in developing pupils' reading skills.
- The effectiveness of checking of pupils' progress to establish what they need to learn next varies. Recently-appointed staff have not yet fully engaged with the established school systems. The use of targets and check sheets, previously in place, is less evident currently. Pupils are not always clear about current targets. Some good practice in marking shows pupils the necessary next steps to move their learning on.
- Some aspects of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, when activities provide appropriate challenge. However, staff do not fully build upon potential learning opportunities in the outdoor area.
- The progress of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is now tracked carefully. This information ensures that support is targeted with increasing accuracy.
- In some lessons, learning is very effective. In a literacy session in Key Stage 2, pupils were creating a travel log, using vivid adjectives. The introduction had suitable pace and energy and quickly captured pupils' interest so they were keen to get on with their writing. Searching questioning encouraged pupils to reflect on their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently good. They occasionally lose interest when teaching does not challenge them, leading to some low-level disruption. Turbulence in staffing has affected the continuity of learning. Pupils do not always take enough care over their written work.
- Around the school, poor behaviour is a rarity. There have been no recent exclusions. Effective behaviour management systems ensure a consistent response to any issues. The school has a very positive ethos. Lunchtime is calm and orderly. Parents have not expressed any concerns about behaviour.
- Pupils are keen to undertake responsibilities within class and outdoors, thereby contributing to the efficient running of the school community.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe, confident that adults will respond quickly to any issues. The school works hard to support pupils who are experiencing difficulties.
- Pupils have a good awareness of risk. They recognise that bullying, although rare, may take various forms. Older pupils understand the dangers of cyber-bullying. Pupils feel that the school

supports them well in recognising potential risk.

- Attendance was low for several years. It has improved significantly this year to be broadly average.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Pupils' achievement has been adversely affected over time by a lack of sustained leadership, limited monitoring, accountability or staff development and an underlying culture of low expectations. Although staff turnover has been high this year, the school now has the structures, and the leadership, to limit the negative impact on pupils' achievement. Despite this, teaching still requires improvement.
- The recently-appointed acting senior teacher has not yet had the opportunity fully to develop her role.
- The curriculum is focused on securing improvements in literacy and numeracy skills. Recent initiatives to promote improvements in reading and writing are helping pupils to make better progress. Beyond these core areas, the curriculum lacks breadth. The school has prepared well for the new curriculum. However, currently, there is limited recorded work in science, geography or religious education. Opportunities to develop writing skills across the curriculum are underdeveloped. This affects pupils' progress in writing.
- The executive headteacher and her deputy, who work across all four schools, have shown exceptional commitment to addressing the weaknesses in the school. They know exactly what needs to be done. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is thorough. Senior leaders now hold staff fully accountable for pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders track the progress of groups and individuals rigorously, including those with additional funding, and identify gaps in their knowledge and understanding. They regularly adjust the additional teaching so that it is effective in closing gaps in pupils' learning.
- The potential of the federation structure is being creatively developed to support the efficient sharing of good practice and training. Opportunities are now provided, for example, for pupils of a similar age to come together to work in larger peer groups than is normally possible.
- The knowledgeable co-ordinator of special educational needs works across all four schools. This provides consistency of practice and ensures high quality provision in all the schools.
- Systems for setting teachers' targets so that they improve their practice are now secure. This ensures a close link between teachers' performance and pay progression, so that only effective teachers qualify for higher pay levels.
- Use of the primary sports funding is appropriately planned. This is improving the quality of sports coaching and pupils' health through the development of staff coaching skills, alongside new activities in the multi-skills club.
- Since the federation was established, the local authority has provided good support. This has helped to accelerate improvement.
- The promotion of pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is good. Community links and

partnerships are actively developed. Effective links within the federation and with other cluster schools help to improve practice in this school. Links with parents and carers are good.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance was extensively reviewed and completely restructured when the federation was established. Governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They play a very active role in setting a direction for the school and provide good challenge for school leaders. They have undertaken training to enable them to contribute fully to self-evaluation and development planning. They ensure that all four schools get a fair proportion of their attention.
- Governors have a good understanding of school data and can relate their knowledge to national trends. They are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and promoting good relationships. They understand the current quality of teaching well and ensure that the links between staff salaries and teachers' effectiveness are accurate.
- Governors understand the impact of pupil premium funding on closing gaps in pupils' attainment.
- Governors ensure that all statutory duties are met, including the procedures relating to safeguarding pupils.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121108
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	430776

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	46
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Burrows
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Dolan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 July 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01263 740531
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