

Wortham Primary School

Bury Road, Wortham, IP22 1PX

Inspection dates 15–16 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Across all year groups, the vast majority of pupils make, at least, good progress and many make outstanding progress, including in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are ahead of national results, but slightly lower in writing than in other skills.
- Teaching captivates pupils' interests and motivates them to achieve exceptionally well.
- Teachers use the information they have about pupils' progress to make learning challenging through many creative and stimulating learning experiences. They do not always check closely that pupils make the corrections called for in the marking of work.
- Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those eligible for additional funding and the most able, are equally successful. Many make outstanding progress because of the highly effective support and challenge provided.
- Pupils are unreservedly polite. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They speak enthusiastically about their learning and the enjoyment they derive from learning new things. Attendance is above average and reflects pupils' enthusiasm for school. Pupils are invariably punctual.
- The headteacher's outstanding leadership ensures rigorous school self-evaluation and identifies the correct priorities for improvement. Leaders make sure that teaching and achievement are outstanding and rigorously checked against the challenging targets set for pupils' progress.
- Governors are committed to the school and highly skilled. They provide focus and direction for school improvement. Governors effectively use the management of staff performance and the school development plan to drive improvement forward and raise achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons. Two of these observations were 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 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of conversations with parents. She also took account of the 16 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, reports of local authority visits to the school, records of any poor behaviour, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, and observed reading 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 pupils are White British, and no pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Very few pupils are eligible to the pupil premium. This is additional funding for pupils in 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 well-below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well-below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is part of the local 'pyramid' of schools. The headteacher is a 'challenge partner' and as such, she provides support to other local schools through the local education authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils make outstanding progress and achieve above national averages by:
 - strengthening pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and writing so that writing is as strong as reading and mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers always show pupils how they can improve each piece of work and check that pupils make the corrections and improvements required so their learning improves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. The quality of teaching supports pupils' good progress so that they achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. This prepares them well for entry to Year 1.
- Pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills quickly. They use and accurately apply phonics (letters and sounds) to their reading and writing. Recent training for teachers in phonics and its application to writing has considerably improved the quality of teaching. Pupils' have a high level of confidence, knowledge and skill in reading, which is demonstrated in the exceptionally high outcomes in the latest phonics screening check. In 2014, results in the phonics screening were significantly above the 2013 national expectation.
- In 2013, at the end of Year 2, pupils attained standards in reading, writing and mathematics that were broadly average. Improvement in teaching has led to better learning in Key Stage 1 and pupils' higher attainment. In 2014, preliminary results for pupils at the end of Year 2, show attainment well ahead of 2013 national standards, particularly in reading.
- In 2013, Year 6 pupils made good progress and attained ahead of national standards in reading, writing and mathematics. As in Key Stage 1, better teaching has led to higher results in the current year. In 2014, school information and inspection findings show that progress is, currently, at least good and often excellent. Consequently, Year 6 pupils' 2014 results are well ahead of 2013 national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Occasionally, lapses in pupils' spelling, punctuation and writing skills prevent them from reaching even higher standards, similar to those achieved in reading and mathematics. The school is already working to improve this aspect of achievement, but it is too early to evaluate the impact of the action taken.
- In Year 6 in 2013, there were too few pupils eligible to additional funding to report their attainment without identifying individuals. Additional funding is used well to support eligible individuals throughout the school, who achieve as well as their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, given their starting points. This is due to well-directed help, which provides effectively for individuals, and equips each pupil with appropriate knowledge and skills.
- The most-able pupils make, at least, good progress and the vast majority make outstanding progress. They are challenged to work hard and achieve their potential for learning.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers have a love for their subjects and successfully communicate this to pupils. They use their extensive subject knowledge, their understanding of how pupils learn best, and the information they have about pupils' progress and attainment to challenge them to learn. Consequently, lessons include stimulating learning activities and engage pupils' interest and commitment. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment, and make rapid progress.
- Learning is effective both indoors and out. Pupils are highly engaged by all learning

opportunities. For example, one pupil told the inspector how he created a picture using natural resources and as many different angles and shapes as possible. Pupils are keen to consolidate their classroom learning through practical activities. In the Reception class, for example, the children in the 'wellie walk' to the park created a map using grid squares on the whiteboard. They then learned to plot coordinates and locate landmarks.

- Teaching in the Reception class is consistently good and supports pupils' progress well. Children's 'learning journeys' are an attractive and comprehensive record of their progress in all areas of learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants effectively plan and assess pupils' learning together to maximise achievement. They skilfully use questions to check pupils' understanding, challenge their thinking and encourage high levels of speaking and listening skills. Adults use a good range of vocabulary and pupils quickly acquire technical language. For instance, in a joint Years 5 and 6 science lesson, pupils quickly acquired knowledge and understanding of scientific terms linked to an experiment about solvent and soluble materials, and accurately used them in their writing.
- Teachers establish good rapport with pupils. They treat pupils with respect and set good examples through their actions and speech. Teachers and pupils work together very well and exemplify the school's motto of 'together we achieve'. A positive atmosphere filled with focused energy, calm and purpose is evident throughout the school.
- Classrooms are vibrant and wonderful places in which pupils learn. High-quality displays of pupils' work grace the walls and corridors. Work on display shows marked pieces including teachers' comments, as well as work which are the end product of pupils' extensive effort towards completing a final piece. Pupils are challenged to achieve high standards and keen for their own work to be granted the privilege of being on display.
- Teachers manage behaviour skilfully. They set high standards and expect pupils to work hard. They make sure that pupils understand the purpose of the learning and know what is expected of them by the end of the lesson. The school's high expectation for the quality of presentation of work and handwriting is applied consistently well by staff. Pupils respond by presenting work that shows care, and good effort to use cursive script neatly in written work.
- Reading, writing, mathematics and communication are taught to a high standard across all subjects. Pupils use well-chosen writing techniques and number skills in their work. Information and communication technology skills are applied in their research and presentation of graphs, tables and written work. However, the teaching of writing is not, currently, as effective as that of reading and mathematics. Sometimes pupils lack strategies to help them to spell and punctuate accurately in developing their writing.
- Marking is consistently good. Teachers apply the school's policy and mark classwork and homework accurately and regularly. Teachers include constructive comments which recognise pupils' achievements and effort. However, they do not always show pupils what they should do to improve their work or check that pupils respond to their comments and make the corrections required. Consequently, occasionally, this restricts how well pupils' work improves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are always polite and go out of their way to be friendly and speak about their learning. They are courteous and considerate. Even the youngest children demonstrate confidence and engage with visitors. In the Reception class, routines are well established and pupils respond to teachers' requests promptly and sensibly.
- Attitudes to learning are outstanding. Pupils are enthusiastic learners with a thirst for acquiring knowledge. They told the inspector that they enjoyed coming to school because they loved learning new things. Pupils demonstrate a willingness to work hard and persevere with challenges. When given a choice about the level of challenge to take on in a science lesson, almost all chose to work at the most demanding level and produced good outcomes. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are supporting their rapid progress.
- Pupils listen well to one another and to teachers, taking turns to share their ideas. They collaborate maturely when working together, and negotiate skilfully with each other when deciding the best points to present to others.
- Helpful opportunities are available to pupils to develop leadership skills – including roles as house captains, e-safety officers, road safety officers, eco council representatives, school council representatives, learning council officers. Volunteers help to set out the lunch trolley, provide support with equipment in assembly, take responsibility for playground equipment, and are 'buddies' to younger pupils. There is something for everyone to do. Pupils are proud of their school and want to contribute to making the school a place where they and adults 'achieve together' in both spirit and practice.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in their above-average attendance. Effective systems follow up any absence. Effective partnership with the county's education welfare officer provides support for pupils and families where there are concerns about attendance. Additional funding is used effectively to support the attendance of eligible pupils whenever there are concerns.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Leaders make sure that the school's work to keep pupils safe meet statutory requirement. Pupils engage in a range of learning activities to help them stay safe – for example, 'bike ability', e-safety and road safety. Visitors to the school attend lessons and assemblies to support pupils' personal, social and health education. The use of the e-safety notice board and pupil e-safety officers help to promote safe use of the internet through quizzes, games and other activities.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They treat others with kindness and incidents of unacceptable behaviour are rare. Pupils understand that bullying in its various forms is wrong. The school is free from sexist, racist and homophobic bullying. Pupils are confident that if name calling occurs it will be dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff. Adults encourage pupils to resolve occasional differences by themselves in the first instance.
- Systems for maintaining records of unacceptable behaviour are rigorous. Incidents are carefully investigated and parents are contacted. The school's behaviour policy, including the 'behaviour ladder', home-school agreement and 'learning behaviours' for the classroom, support high expectations and consistent behaviour management from staff. Good use of praise and rewards are motivational and pupils aspire to achieve house points, stickers and certificates in lessons and assemblies. There has not been any permanent exclusion. Fixed term exclusion is rare.

- Case studies provide evidence of the school's successful work with a range of pupils who experience difficulties, either with learning or behaviour. Good links with external agencies support pupils and families in developing strategies to support these pupils. Consequently, they gain the skills necessary to succeed in learning, manage their own behaviours and become responsible citizens.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has clear insight and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. School self-evaluation correctly identifies priorities and actions to improve the school and raise achievement. Continuous improvement occurs because identified priorities form the school's development plan and staff-appraisal targets.
- Progress towards the targets identified in the school development plan is checked rigorously by senior leaders.
- Pupil-progress meetings are held each term. They enable staff to reflect on each pupil's progress in the light of the challenging targets set at the start of the year. Where pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding, or require stretching to meet their potential, extra help is applied. For example, several Year 6 pupils have been helped to attain Level 6 in the national tests.
- The local authority has successfully worked with the school to improve teaching and learning. It has helped to strengthen leadership of governors, headteacher and subject leaders. Governors have attended helpful training sessions in data analysis. The headteacher works as a 'challenge partner' to local schools requiring support and her efforts are much appreciated. Subject leaders participate in local authority subject leaders' meetings and training sessions to enhance their leadership skills.
- Subject leaders are effective. They share lesson observations with the headteacher to confirm their judgements on the quality of teaching and learning. They also check pupils' exercise books to gauge the quality of learning, presentation, and attitudes to work. Staff receive constructive feedback following lesson observations. They are all keen to engage in dialogue about the quality of their teaching and how this can be improved.
- Pupils have many learning opportunities. Staff carefully work together to plan learning to prevent repetition and to share exciting approaches to topics. The wide range of after-school clubs, trips and residential visits help pupils to gain many skills and experiences. These contribute to their growing maturity, appreciation of the world and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The sports premium is used to give pupils a wider range of sports and improve the quality of physical education teaching. The funding has been used to train staff in relevant skills. Outside expertise has helped pupils and teachers. For example, pupils have been energised by a specialist tennis coach, and have succeeded in national and local tournaments.
- Parents are supportive of the school. There are good links with parents. The school's informative website, regular newsletters, subject workshops – including phonics, the 'maths café' and 'maths and munchies' – make partnership strong. Further support for parents with home learning is through the school's virtual-learning environment. Parents generously support the school through the 'Friends of Wortham' and many volunteers come into school to read with pupils and accompany them on visits.

- Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The school meets all statutory equality requirements. All groups of pupils make, at least, good progress and are free from any kind of discrimination and bullying.

- The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure children achieve well.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have an accurate overview of the school. Their effective support for the headteacher's drive for improvement has resolved the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.
- Governors promote equal opportunity for all pupils because they carefully monitor the school's tracking of pupils' behaviour and academic progress against set targets to ensure all are successful. They interpret and understand the data on pupils' progress and attainment because they receive effective training in this and other areas of governance.
- Governors understand that effective teaching secures good and outstanding progress and attainment for pupils. They ensure that staff pay is linked to pupils' progress.
- Additional funding is managed effectively. Governors can account for all spending and its impact on achievement. The school's finances are managed prudently.
- Governors visit the school regularly and possess an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for development. They monitor progress towards initiatives identified in the school development plan, including the quality of teaching and learning. They are further informed by thorough reports from the headteacher.
- The headteacher's performance is closely managed by governors. The headteacher's own targets form the basis of targets for all staff, and are a focus to drive school improvement.

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	124620
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	439633

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Paine
Headteacher	Julia Humphrey
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2009
Telephone number	01379 898484
Fax number	01379 898484
Email address	admin@wortham.suffolk.sch.uk

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