

Walpole Highway Primary School

School Road, Walpole Highway, Wisbech, PE14 7QQ

Inspection dates 3 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Over a long period of time, the achievement of pupils has been well below that expected.
- Despite recent improvements in teaching this has not yet resulted in enough pupils making better than expected progress from their low starting points.
- Pupils are not yet achieving well in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.
- The behaviour of a few younger pupils sometimes disrupts learning and prevents other pupils from making the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' attendance remains below the national average, as it has been for the past two years.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, supported by the governors, has secured rapid improvements to teaching and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The work of teaching assistants is effective. Good relationships, and strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, ensure that pupils who need extra help with their learning are supported effectively.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals have made good progress in mathematics and English. As a result, the gap in performance between them and their peers has closed considerably.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited five lessons, or parts of lessons, with the headteacher. This included observing pupils being taught phonics (the links between letters and sounds).
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff, pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. A phone call was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans, achievement information and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector looked at the work in pupils' books.
- The inspector spoke to some parents and carers at the end of the school day.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- Walpole Highway is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in two classes.
- Almost all pupils are White British and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding to support pupils eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority) is around the national average.
- The school became part of a federation of schools on 1 June 2014. The federation shares an executive headteacher (referred to as the headteacher in this report), governing body and leadership team with three other schools: West Walton Community Primary School, Terrington St John Primary School, and Tilney St Lawrence Community Primary School.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan effectively to close the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in all subjects
 - improvements are made to the quality of writing in subjects other than English.
- Improve behaviour and safety by ensuring that:
 - the poor attitudes and behaviour of a few younger pupils are addressed and resolved
 - attendance is at least in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards at the end of Year 6 have been below average in reading, writing and mathematics for the past three years. Although rates of progress are improving, not enough pupils are making better than expected progress, particularly in mathematics in the early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. As a result, there are still some gaps in pupils' learning, and attainment in some year groups remains low.
- Most children start at the school with skills and knowledge that are below that which is typical for their age. They now make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy, and are well prepared for their work in Year 1.
- The effective teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has helped to raise pupils' skills in reading and writing. As a result, pupils develop better literacy skills and most pupils in Year 2 are now performing at or above the expected level in reading and writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving and by Year 6 more pupils are now reaching the expected levels. In Key Stage 2, pupils study a wide range of mathematical topics and are provided with good opportunities to use mathematical skills in practical situations. Because teaching in the past has been weak there are still gaps in pupils' understanding. As a result some pupils are not yet making sufficient progress in this subject to make up for previous underperformance.
- Pupils are now making better progress across Key Stage 2 in reading and writing. This is because the teaching is good, and sometimes outstanding. Written work is marked well and pupils are provided with good feedback about how to improve their work. Older pupils are also successful readers. They talk with confidence about their favourite authors and read regularly at home and at school.
- Pupils' achievement in subjects such as history, geography and science is not as good as it is in English and mathematics. Teachers' expectations about what pupils can achieve are too low and too often they accept work of poor quality without comment.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported. They now make good progress with their reading development, although their progress overall is not as rapid as that of their peers and still requires improvement. The performance of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is at least in line with that of their peers and in some year groups it is above.
- Pupils of higher ability are now provided with more challenging work and are making better progress as a result. The school's information shows that an increasing number of pupils are making better progress and reaching higher levels than previously.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection although some weaknesses remain. Pupils are making much better progress in reading, writing and mathematics but the work seen in other subjects, such as science, geography and history was not good and there was little evidence of progress.

- When teaching subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, the quality and quantity of written work is below that seen in writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils make less progress in subjects such as science, history and geography.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. They have high expectations of pupils and use questioning effectively in lessons to check pupils' understanding and correct any errors or misconceptions. When marking pupils' writing and mathematics work they provide good feedback about how well they have done and what they need to do in order to move on to the next level.
- Teachers track pupils' progress carefully. They use this information to set appropriately challenging work which is helping the more able pupils to make better progress. The information is also used to ensure that additional support is provided where required. As a result of this support, pupils in danger of falling behind, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are making better progress than they did previously.
- Teaching assistants are increasingly effective in supporting learning. They work well with teachers and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. During this inspection, teaching assistants were seen teaching phonics and mathematics effectively to groups of pupils.
- The teaching of reading has improved. Younger pupils are taught phonics well and are becoming confident readers. Older pupils have developed a love of reading and talk with enthusiasm about favourite books and authors.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved. Younger pupils are now more confident when working with numbers. In Key Stage 2, pupils are taught well and are provided with many opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills through investigative work. Nevertheless, some gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, due to previously weak teaching, remain.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because a few younger pupils sometimes disrupt learning during lessons. Although adults deal with these incidents effectively, the behaviour prevents others from learning as well as they could. As a result, pupils' overall progress is affected.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. As a result, pupils enjoy school and feel safe there. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils, built on mutual respect. One pupil described the school as being like one great big happy family.
- Most pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. Around school they are courteous, friendly and respectful. They interact well with each other and with adults and behave well in the playground and when moving around the school.
- Pupils generally get on well with each other. They say that incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with effectively by the school. Most pupils also show pride in their work, particularly in writing and mathematics where their books show work which is well presented.
- Despite the school's work to improve attendance, it remains below the national average. This is mainly due to a small number of pupils not attending regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- Since her appointment, the headteacher has been organised, thoughtful and methodical in her approach to making the improvements that were necessary. Her determination and clarity of vision have ensured that the staff team has been fully supportive of the changes she has introduced. The headteacher is now supported by a recently appointed deputy headteacher and is increasingly able to delegate to a wider management team.
- Systems for quality assuring the work of the school have been improved considerably. Regular checks are made on the work of teachers, who are now held to account for the attainment and progress of pupils in their care. Senior leaders provide good feedback to teachers on how to improve the quality of teaching. There are clear links between teachers' pay and the quality of their teaching.
- The school now tracks pupils' progress carefully. Effective systems are in place to check pupils' attainment and to identify and support those in danger of falling behind. Information about pupils' progress is regularly shared with governors and the local authority through the improvement board.
- Good professional development opportunities have been provided for teachers in order to develop their skills and improve teaching and learning.
- Resources are deployed well. The additional funding which the school receives for pupil premium is used to enable pupils to be taught in smaller groups and has also been used to provide mentoring support for pupils who are in danger of falling behind. The school's records show that an increasing number of pupils are making progress and attaining levels that are at least equal to those of their peers.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Festivals from major world religions are regularly celebrated, and pupils learn about different cultures and traditions through topic work and creative arts activities.
- The school ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements.
- The additional primary school sport funding has been used well. Pupils benefit from being taught by specialist coaches in gymnastics and athletics lessons. The funding is also being used to fund training for staff and provide pupils with the opportunity to participate in competitive inter-school sports.
- The local authority has provided good support and challenge for the school. It has provided training for teachers and teaching assistants which has supported improvements in teaching and learning. The local authority also had a key role to play in ensuring that governance arrangements were sufficiently strong to support the leadership structure which underpins the new federation. It continues to monitor the school's progress through the improvement board which was set up following the inspection in April 2013.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has been reconstituted following the school's recent federation. It now has a good range of expertise available to support and challenge the school. Appropriate committee structures are in place to ensure that there is a clear focus on standards. All

statutory responsibilities are carried out in full.

- The new Chair of the Governing Body has already developed a good understanding of the school's strengths and the weaknesses through his involvement in the improvement board. The improvement board has provided appropriate support and challenge to senior leaders. Board members know about the quality of teaching at the school and the impact that this is having on pupils' attainment and progress. They know about pupil premium and how it has helped to narrow the gap in attainment between eligible pupils and their peers. They are also aware of how pay and promotion are linked to teachers' performance through the information they receive from the headteacher.

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	120887
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	441622

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	41
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Gordon
Headteacher	Jill Davis
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2013
Telephone number	01945 880329
Fax number	01945 880329
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