

# Northgate Infants School, Great Yarmouth

Northgate Street, Great Yarmouth, NR30 1BP

**Inspection dates** 1–2 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- From very low starting points, pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics, so that most have attained nationally expected levels when they leave.
- Teaching is consistently good. School leaders closely check the quality of teaching, and use staff training to improve it further.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They have good relationships with adults. Their behaviour is well managed, and they feel safe in school.
- Children settle quickly into school and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The curriculum offers a wide range of learning experiences for the pupils, and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Leaders and governors know the school well and ensure that pupils' achievement continues to rise.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough of the more able pupils reach higher levels of attainment, and the school does not always focus well enough on their progress.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching to secure rapid progress for all pupils.
- Potentially higher attaining pupils' achievement in problem solving is not as good as it could be, because they do not have enough opportunities to practise and refine their skills and knowledge in real-life situations.

### Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils’ learning in 12 lessons, some of them jointly observed with school leaders, and made brief visits to others. They looked at the work in pupils’ books.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, regarding safeguarding, child protection, attendance and behaviour policies, as well as records of pupils’ attainment and progress.
- Inspectors reviewed the school’s improvement plans and notes about the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors considered the responses to a questionnaire completed by 33 staff.
- There were not enough responses on the Parent View website for them to be seen by inspectors. However, inspectors listened to the views expressed by parents as they brought their children to school.

### Inspection team

Stephen Palmer, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Additional Inspector
Susan Heptinstall	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is slightly lower than the national average, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is much higher than average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is higher than average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than the national average.

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

- Increase the number of pupils who reach higher levels of attainment by:
  - increasing the amount of outstanding teaching, in particular by increasing the level of challenge and support for more able pupils
  - improving higher attaining pupils' ability in solving mathematical problems by creating more opportunities for them to practise and apply their skills and knowledge
  - ensuring that there is more effective monitoring of the achievement of more able pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have developed a strong culture of care for all pupils, including the very large proportion who enter school with levels of skills and knowledge which are much lower than those expected nationally, and who often have emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- Leaders encourage all pupils to develop their self-esteem and perseverance to achieve ambitious aims. They also expect that teachers will have high standards of professionalism so that over time the quality of their teaching improves, and as a result has a positive impact on pupils' skills and knowledge. School leaders ensure that teachers receive the right training to help them develop their skills.
- Improvement plans are accurately focused on helping pupils to make more rapid progress. They correctly identify what success will look like and which members of staff are responsible for each aspect of the plans.
- The pupil premium funding is spent effectively; eligible pupils are well supported, and are achieving well. The funding also offers them more opportunities to participate fully in after-school activities and holiday clubs.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is managed well. Teachers and teaching assistants receive training so that these pupils receive effective support and make good progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Teachers ensure that all children entering school, especially those with levels of skills and knowledge which are much lower than those expected nationally, are given good support to help them gain confidence and achieve well.
- The school has planned well for the introduction of the new National Curriculum. Teachers have written a scheme of topics for the whole year, in which there is a strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills. For example, in a topic about Lord Nelson pupils wrote about their feelings as if they were sailors on board his ship. These topics are enhanced by visits to local places of interest, which gives pupils, who often have limited experiences of the world, greater knowledge and understanding. The school is adapting its approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels.
- Through these topics, as well as in assemblies, pupils are encouraged to develop respect for each other, while being given the opportunity to make choices of their own. They learn about right and wrong, and the need for fair rules. While developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of British values and traditions, teachers promote tolerance and respect for people of other cultures and faiths. As a result, the pupils are quickly acquiring positive attitudes about living in a modern democratic society.
- Activities are often planned to engage parents as well as pupils. For example 'The Reading Cafe' is a regular event where an adult, possibly a parent or a member of the local community, reads aloud a well-known story to pupils and their parents. Through activities such as this, parents have the opportunity to be fully involved in their child's learning.
- The topics, as well as the programme of assemblies, offer pupils opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and feelings, and give many opportunities to consider what is right and what is wrong. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Nearly all of the parents interviewed are supportive of the school; they feel that their children are happy, safe and making good progress.
- The school uses its primary school sport funding effectively to broaden the range of sporting experiences; as a result, many pupils now participate in inter-school sports competitions and a large number, including some who may have been reluctant at the start, engage in purposeful physical activity during playtimes.

- The local authority has provided effective support, which has resulted in improvements to the ways in which data on pupils' achievements are analysed, and consequently to better teaching.
- Subject leaders have a generally good overview of how well pupils are doing. They give advice to colleagues about how to improve the quality of their teaching, and are therefore effective in raising levels of achievement and contributing to school improvement.
- Leaders rigorously check the progress of most pupils and groups so that they can ensure that the school is doing as much as it can to help them. As a result, pupils who are at risk of falling behind are given extra support. Consequently, most pupils reach their full potential. However, leaders do not always rigorously track the progress of the more able, to ensure they too are making the maximum progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are improving their capacity to hold school leaders to account. They regularly check performance data to ensure that pupils are making good progress.
  - Governors make regular visits to classes and talk informally to pupils. They make notes of these visits so that their experience is shared with other governors. As a result, they have a good understanding of the impact of the school's work.
  - They are aware of the plans that leaders have made to introduce the new National Curriculum.
  - Governors have an overview of checks on teachers' performance and understand that only teachers who meet the targets set for them may progress along the pay scales. They effectively manage the performance of the headteacher.
  - They regularly issue questionnaires to gather the opinions of parents, so that they may be prompt in their response to the issues raised by them.
  - Governors make sure the school's arrangements for safeguarding children fully meet the current national requirements. They also ensure that all adults who work with pupils are checked for suitability, and that pupils are kept safe.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Around the school buildings and at playtimes, the adults manage pupils' behaviour well so that they behave in a considerate manner towards others, and show respect. As a result, the school is an orderly place in which effective learning can occur. Pupils and parents agree that behaviour is good.
- The systems for managing behaviour are effective. All staff receive regular training on managing challenging behaviour. Pupils understand that there are rewards for good behaviour and attendance, and that the sanctions for poor behaviour are fair.
- The school offers good support to pupils with challenging behaviour, so that the disruption to their learning is minimised. While there have been a few fixed-term exclusions, these are fewer than the national average, and have been appropriate.
- Pupils want to do their best, and are keen to show their work to others. They work well in groups, and often try to help each other. However, on a few occasions, pupils can be rather slow to respond when a teacher asks for silence when wishing to address the whole class.
- Pupils' attendance is improving, and is now only slightly below the national average. Despite challenging circumstances the school promotes good attendance well with a range of effective strategies, including immediate checks on any unexplained pupil absence.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.

- Pupils say that bullying is very rare, and when it does occur it is dealt with well by adults. Pupils have a good understanding of what to do if they feel they are being bullied.
- All pupils learn about road safety and what to do if approached by a stranger. As a result, pupils are beginning to have an understanding, appropriate to their age, of how they can keep themselves safe.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- In most lessons teaching engages pupils and much of the work set for them is at the right level to get the best from them. Pupils are encouraged to work hard in lessons and most achieve ambitious aims, regardless of their abilities and starting points. Teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs enables them to make good progress in line with their peers.
- Teaching of disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as a second language is good. Teachers and teaching assistants plan targeted support for those pupils who may need more help.
- Teachers create many opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. For example, in one lesson which followed on from writing about trains, pupils were asked to talk to a partner about a journey they had made, and the kind of transport they used. Teachers monitor pupils' work effectively, and use questions and comments well to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, especially when developing the language skills of pupils who enter school with limited experiences of speaking and listening. Phonics is taught well, and as a result even the less able readers can tackle unknown words. Most pupils are keen and confident readers. Teachers offer pupils many opportunities to develop their skills in calculation, but do not give them enough opportunities to apply these in real-life situations.
- The records of the frequent lesson observations carried out by school leaders show that teaching over time is consistently good. On the very rare occasions when teaching is judged to be less strong, school leaders put in place intensive support, and make subsequent, unannounced observations to ensure that improvements are made and sustained.
- Work in pupils' books is plentiful and well presented. Teachers encourage pupils to work hard, and pupils' work indicates that they are making good progress.
- Although teachers plan well to ensure that most pupils make good progress in lessons, they sometimes do not plan challenges for the more able pupils that are hard enough. As a result, these pupils do not always make all of the progress they are capable of.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills which are much less developed than those expected for their age. For example, many begin school with very poor speaking and listening skills, some cannot use a pencil, and many from disadvantaged backgrounds have very limited life experiences. Good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables most children to narrow this gap. However, when they begin Key Stage 1, their skills and understanding are still below what would be typically expected.
- Pupils make good progress as they mature, so that, by the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils who attain nationally expected levels is broadly average in reading and mathematics, although a little lower in writing. Provisional results of the 2014 National Curriculum assessments indicate that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Of the pupils who entered Key Stage 1 with levels of achievement in line with those expected for their age, a higher proportion than average reached nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 in

2014. Pupils who entered Year 1 with levels below those expected for their age, about two thirds of the cohort, also made good progress and attained nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2.

- The increased proportion of pupils who reach nationally expected levels and beyond is due to improvements in the quality of teaching. The current consistent good rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics show that pupils are on course to reach higher levels of attainment by the end of Year 2 than previous cohorts.
- The pupils eligible for the pupil premium benefit from well-tailored, one-to-one and small-group activities provided by the additional funding. As a result, these pupils achieve well, and are making as much progress as their classmates. The gap between the performance of eligible pupils and that of their peers is narrowing; on average these pupils are less than one term behind their classmates by the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics and about a term and a half behind other pupils nationally.
- From starting points which are often very low, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do well because teachers identify their needs swiftly and accurately and give them good support and guidance. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
- Progress in reading is good, and many pupils, including the less able, say that they enjoy reading. Pupils show confidence in tackling unknown words by applying their knowledge about the sounds that letters make.
- Evidence from pupils' books show that they write for a wide range of purposes; they apply and develop their writing skills well in their topic work.
- The most able pupils were well supported through extra small-group teaching to ensure that they attained higher levels in mathematics in national tests in 2014. While teachers effectively develop pupils' skills in using numbers to calculate, they do not always give them enough challenging opportunities to apply mathematical skills, such as measuring and estimating, in real situations. As a result, although the progress of these pupils is good, it is not as rapid as it could be.

### **The early years provision** is good

- Early Years provision is led and managed well, and as a result of effective planning children experience a wide range of learning activities during the course of each day. Many of these activities are carefully designed to develop children's speaking and listening skills, as many children arrive in school with levels below those expected for their age in using language.
- Children are encouraged to develop their social awareness by sharing, taking turns, and being polite and respectful towards others. Children are encouraged to take on difficult tasks, and to persevere when they have setbacks. As a result, children gain self confidence to take on new challenges.
- Many children begin school with little or no experience of being away from home. There also a number of children who arrive with little understanding of English. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively to ensure that these children settle in as quickly as possible, so that they may begin to acquire new knowledge and skills with confidence.
- Disabled children and those who have special needs receive additional support, and consequently make good progress.
- Adults make day-to-day assessments about what the children have learned, and these contribute to half termly summaries. This ensures that tasks are set at an appropriate level.
- By the end of the last academic year, children had made good progress from their very low starting points. Nevertheless, in comparison with national expectations a lower proportion of children reached a good level of development. However, the majority of pupils gain enough skills, knowledge and

understanding to be ready to undertake the work expected of them in Key Stage 1.

- Teaching is good and enables children to learn well, especially in the classrooms. However, staff do not always make the most effective use of the outdoor area as a place for effective, practical learning.
- Leaders in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet current 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120981
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	448525

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	269
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Patricia Marsden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lindsay Hanger
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01493 856515
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