

# Pot Kiln Primary School

Butt Road, Great Cornard, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0DS

**Inspection dates** 9–10 October 2014

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement        | 3        |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Requires improvement</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good                        | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Early years provision          |                      | Good                        | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils do not make sufficiently rapid progress in Key Stage 1. Standards remain below average by the end of Year 2.
- Despite recent improvements, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and the others has not yet been sufficiently reduced.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs have not, until recently, made sufficiently rapid progress.
- Teaching does not always provide sufficient challenge to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Reading books are not always accurately matched to the reading skills of individual pupils.
- Marking does not give sufficient guidance as to how pupils might improve their work. Targets are not used effectively to accelerate pupils' learning.
- Governors do not hold leaders sufficiently to account for the deployment of funding to support disadvantaged pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Provision for Early Years children in Nursery and Reception is good.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6 because of the consistently effective teaching in those years.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 made at least the progress they should in the last school year.
- The school is now making better provision to cater for more-able pupils.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and feel very safe in school.
- The new headteacher has a clear view of what the school needs to do to improve and has already initiated improvements.
- Relationships with parents are strong and positive.
- The school is well-prepared for the implementation of the new curriculum.

### Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons, six of which were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils’ written work for both the current and the last school year, and they listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors and with the school’s senior leaders. Telephone discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 67 new responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also considered the comments left by parents as part of the Parent View survey.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and evaluated a range of school documents, including local authority reviews and action plans, and records of the school’s checks on the quality of teaching. They considered minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of pupils’ progress.

### Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Lacey-Hastings

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Pot Kiln School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years unit provides for both Nursery and Reception-aged children. Current Nursery children attend only in the mornings. A further intake in January will attend in the afternoons.
- The school roll has increased in recent years, following the reorganisation of schools locally. Formerly a first school, with pupils up to Year 4, Pot Kiln now provides for pupils up to Year 6. The first cohort of Year 6 pupils left the school in the summer of 2014.
- The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action in 2013-14 was above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs was well above average.
- The school did not have any Year 6 pupils in 2013, the last year for which validated data is available. Consequently, it is not possible to make a judgement on the extent to which the school meets government floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be entitled to free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is well above average.
- The school offers a breakfast club which provides for pupils who arrive at school early.
- The previous headteacher and the deputy headteacher both left the school at the end of August 2014. The current headteacher joined the school in September 2014 and had been in post for four weeks at the time of the inspection. The school anticipates appointing a new deputy headteacher for January 2015.

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

- Further improve teaching by ensuring that:
  - teachers have high expectations of what pupils might achieve and set work that is consistently challenging, particularly for the most-able pupils
  - the marking of pupils' work offers clear guidance as to how pupils can improve their performance
  - more effective use is made of the individual targets teachers set for pupils in order to accelerate pupils' progress.
- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and for the more able, by ensuring that:
  - teaching provides a consistently high level of challenge
  - additional provision to support disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs is accurately targeted to the specific learning needs of individuals or groups of pupils
  - reading books are always appropriately matched to the capabilities of individual pupils.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - the deployment of additional funding provided for disadvantaged pupils is appropriately targeted on eligible pupils to ensure that they make rapid progress
  - governors hold school leaders fully accountable for the effective use of this additional funding.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- The monitoring of the impact of funding to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has not in the past been sufficiently rigorous, nor has the deployment of that funding been sufficiently well focused to ensure maximum impact.
- Although the current headteacher has been in post for only a short period, she has quickly and accurately evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the school and implemented a well-judged action plan to address those areas which require improvement. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is, at this point, accurate, and takes into account an appropriate range of evidence. The school's performance management systems are fit for purpose, although past targets have not always been sufficiently aspirational. There is a close link, in most instances, between teachers' past performance and their pay progression. A key priority for the headteacher is the appointment of a permanent deputy headteacher.
- The school's view of itself is accurate, and improvement plans reflect the correct priorities. These centre, rightly, on the improvement of teaching and the need for consistently rapid progress. The development of pupils' oral communication and writing skills are identified as priorities.
- Subject and other leaders have a secure grasp of their areas of responsibility and a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. Priority is given to literacy and numeracy; the recent focus on the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has contributed to much-improved standards. The school is implementing the new National Curriculum and is introducing a modified assessment system to replace the use of National Curriculum levels as these are phased out.
- Extra-curricular provision is well-supported, and activities funded through the primary sport funding have increased pupils' participation in a variety of competitive sports. Appropriately targeted staff training is ensuring that these initiatives are sustainable.
- The school has received good support from the local authority, with an extended programme of support in place for the current year.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. The recent involvement in the Comenius project, which helps schools to establish links with similar schools in other countries, has given pupils an awareness of a diverse range of cultures and communities. The school held a careers fair recently, so introducing pupils to the world of work.
- The school has good links with parents and carers. They strongly support the many changes already made by the new headteacher. The Breakfast Club provides well for pupils who arrive early at school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body plays an increasingly important role in the leadership of the school. Governors are now contributing more fully to school self-evaluation. They undertake training and know how the school's performance relates to that of other schools nationally. Governors are more confident in holding school leaders to account. They are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and promoting good relationships. They have some understanding of the quality of teaching and ensure that pay and promotion are largely aligned to teachers' effectiveness. Governors have not, however, been sufficiently rigorous in evaluating the appropriateness of decisions about the deployment of the additional funding to close gaps in attainment for disadvantaged pupils, or in evaluating its impact. In other respects, they ensure, along with senior leaders, that statutory duties are met, including those for pupils' safeguarding.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are courteous and polite.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning, particularly when the teaching is inspiring, and this contributes well to their improving progress.
- Pupils eagerly undertake responsibilities around the school, including play leader roles, and contribute well to the smooth running of the school community.
- Inappropriate behaviour is rare; few pupils have been excluded for a fixed term since the last inspection. Good behaviour management systems, consistently applied, ensure an appropriate response to poor behaviour. Few parents and carers indicated any concerns about behaviour.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Thorough risk assessments are in place, and safeguarding arrangements fully meet national requirements.
- Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will manage any difficulties they might encounter.
- Pupils have a good awareness of a range of risks. For example, Year 6 pupils recognise the potential dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying. They are also pleased, as are their parents, that steps have been taken recently to make the school site even more secure.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils are aware that it may take various forms, but are certain that any incidents of bullying would be promptly dealt with by the school.
- Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now slightly above the national average.

**The quality of teaching requires improvement**

- While some pupils experience consistently good teaching, teachers' expectations, and the level of challenge they provide, vary across the school. More-able pupils, for example, are only specifically identified in teachers' planning in Early Years and in Years 5 and 6.
- Systems for checking and improving pupils' progress are inconsistently implemented. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but only occasionally indicate to pupils what they have to do next. Targets to guide pupils' progress are not used effectively to drive more rapid progress by individuals.
- While disadvantaged pupils currently make mostly expected progress, and this is carefully tracked, the school has not fully ensured that support is closely targeted to these pupils' specific individual needs. As a result, progress is not always sufficient to help them catch up when they have previously fallen behind. Learning support staff are well trained and mostly effective in supporting small groups and individuals.
- Some teachers, notably in Years 5 and 6, provide good levels of challenge. This was evident, for example, in a fast-paced Year 6 mathematics lesson, where pupils were learning to interpret and order negative numbers. The task was challenging and stimulating. Opportunities for discussion and activity all had defined time limits which helped to focus pupils' efforts. Pupils showed a high level of sustained engagement and demonstrated outstanding attitudes to learning.
- The teaching of reading has improved, although books provided do not always offer sufficient challenge. The teaching of phonics is now more effective. Pupils generally read with some confidence.
- The school has a consistent approach to the setting of homework, and both parents and pupils feel that

this is well organised and challenging.

### **The achievement of pupils** requires improvement

- Pupils do not make as much progress as they might in Years 1 and 2. As a result, the school does not build effectively enough upon children's steadily improving skills as they enter Year 1. Recent improvements, however, particularly in the teaching of phonics, have had a significant impact upon pupils' attainment, so that more pupils reached the expected level in the Year 1 screening test in 2014. In other areas, however, pupils' progress is slower. A lack of challenge, particularly for the more-able pupils, and in Year 1, means that the gradual rise in standards by the end of Year 2 has largely stalled. Consequently, attainment remains below average.
- While final data is not yet available for 2014, the school's data shows that disadvantaged pupils are making broadly similar progress to the others in reading, writing and mathematics. However, variable progress in previous years means that existing gaps in attainment are not yet being systematically closed. The school's provision is not currently targeted with sufficient accuracy to ensure that pupils' specific individual needs are met so that these pupils make the necessary accelerated progress. Currently, on average, the gap between the attainment in English and mathematics of disadvantaged pupils and others, as well as all pupils nationally, is around three to four terms.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, many of whom are also disadvantaged, are currently supported well. In general, they too have made progress in the last year similar to the other pupils. However, provisional data suggests that pupils who had special educational needs in Year 6 made much less progress than the others over their time in Key Stage 2, largely because of shortcomings in provision in previous years.
- Children start in Nursery with levels of knowledge and skill which are, overall, well below those expected for their age. Good teaching in the Early Years ensures that children make increasingly good progress. Attainment has risen significantly so that most children left Reception in 2014 attaining close to the expected levels.
- Provisional data indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2014 was slightly below average. However, pupils across Key Stage 2 made at least the progress expected. Those in Years 5 and 6, where expectations are highest, made mostly good progress. This made some contribution to countering previous underachievement. Pupils' writing remains a focus for improvement. The sample of pupils' reading during the inspection indicated that not all pupils are reading texts which provide them with sufficient challenge.
- The more-able pupils are ambitious to succeed. They are increasingly well supported in Years 5 and 6, where they are set the most challenging work.

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

- Early Years provision has improved since the last inspection. There is a greater focus on the development of writing skills, the promotion of children's speaking skills and the development of children's fine motor skills. New resources help develop children's skills in number. The indoor and outdoor environments have been improved. Early Years leadership is good.
- Improved provision and consistently good teaching have had a beneficial impact on children's learning and achievement. A much higher proportion of children achieved the expected level of development in the summer of 2014 than in 2013, although this was still marginally below the national average.
- The school has implemented further improvements to ensure that the curriculum allows children to achieve their full potential, including those who are more able or who have special educational needs. Children get on well with each other and are self-sufficient in selecting resources and settling down to activities. They are able, even early in the year, to sustain attention for extended periods. Consequently,

children are well prepared, by the end of Reception, for entry to Year 1.

- The school ensures that the youngest children are safe and well looked after. Children receive appropriate levels of attention in relation both to their education and welfare. Close links are maintained with parents and carers, who now have a much greater level of involvement in the classroom. Many attend workshops, for example, in the teaching of phonics, and support the many enrichment activities provided.
- Assessment procedures have been significantly improved. Early Years staff have a detailed knowledge of individual children. Current assessment data provides an accurate insight into children's achievements and developmental needs.

## 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> | 124536  |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Suffolk |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 449036  |

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>                     | Community               |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                    |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 239                     |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body      |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Lesley Ford-Platt       |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Toni Davis              |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 21 November 2012        |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01787 372107            |
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