

Woolpit Community Primary School

Heath Road, Woolpit, Bury St Edmunds, IP30 9RU

Inspection dates 27–28 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school. Consequently, pupils do not make good progress, especially in mathematics, and their achievement requires improvement.
- Work is not always planned to make sure that the most-able pupils' work is challenging and helps them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Provision in the Reception class requires improvement. Insufficient emphasis is placed on making sure children learn and follow the routines and listen carefully to staff. The more- and less-able children do not always have the right level of task or support to ensure good progress.
- Governors do not have a clear understanding of pupils' behaviour, particularly that which is unacceptable.
- Teachers are not always setting high enough expectations for pupils to work at a good rate. As a result, Reception children and pupils in Years 1 to 3 often take too long to settle to their tasks.
- Although safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements, pupils' safety requires improvement. Pupils feel that over-boisterous behaviour at playtimes, especially at lunchtimes, is not dealt with firmly enough to stop it recurring.
- Almost all of the senior team are very new to their roles. Consequently, monitoring, feedback and support given by leaders and managers to help teachers improve their skills are not yet effective enough to ensure that teaching and pupils' achievement improve at a good rate.
- Governors do not routinely get senior staff to explain why some groups of pupils make slower progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has an accurate overview of the school's strengths and the weaknesses in pupils' achievement. He has analysed school data and has prioritised improvements well.
- The leader for Key Stage 2 has already brought about changes in how key subjects are taught.
- Relationships between teachers and their pupils are good, particularly in the older year groups. Behaviour in Years 5 and 6 is better than in other year groups.
- School councillors take their responsibilities seriously. They have a good impact on helping all pupils to put forward their views.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 12 lessons. They also observed pupils working in small groups with teachers and teaching assistants. Some of the observations were carried out together with the headteacher.
- Inspectors visited playtimes, an assembly and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, governors and staff. Inspectors spoke with separate groups of pupils from Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6, as well as the school council, and many pupils during playtimes and in lessons when appropriate.
- A telephone discussion was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documentation, including: the school's own evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan; and information about pupils' progress and the support given to pupils who have special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium funding. Inspectors also looked at records of leaders' monitoring of teaching, and those relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in all year groups and heard some pupils from Year 1 read.
- Not all pupils of Gypsy/Roma heritage were in school at the time of the inspection but their workbooks were seen.
- This inspection was part of Ofsted's Parent View (online questionnaire) pilot for free-text comments from parents and carers. The views of the 28 parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were taken into account, along with the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors also spoke with some parents at the assembly.

Inspection team

Cheryl Thompson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Heptinstall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is a little smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has seven classes, one in each year group, including Reception, where pupils attend full time.
- The school has changed from a first school to an all-through primary school. From September 2014, the school has its first Year 6 group. The increase in the school roll has necessitated an extensive and extended building programme.
- Most pupils are White British. Around seven per cent of the pupils are of Gypsy/Roma heritage, which is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, at approximately 20 per cent, is above average.
- A very small number of pupils attend a pupil referral unit (PRU) for part of the week. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, at around one quarter of the school roll, is broadly average. These pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which is extra funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been an almost complete change of teaching staff and senior leaders, including headteachers. In 2012, the school formed a federation with a nearby school and shared a headteacher. This federation arrangement ceased at the end of the 2013/14 academic year. The current headteacher had been the acting headteacher from September 2014 until two weeks before this inspection when he was appointed the headteacher.
- The school works in partnership with three other nearby primary schools.
- The school has a breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement, especially in mathematics by ensuring that teachers:
 - raise their expectations of how pupils should behave and apply themselves to their work and make these expectations very clear to them
 - provide suitably challenging work for all pupils, especially for the most able.
- Improve the impact of leaders, managers and governors on raising pupils' achievement by:
 - undertaking regular and rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' attitudes to learning
 - providing training for newly appointed subject and other leaders in how to check on the quality of teaching and provide effective feedback to colleagues
 - allocating subject and other leaders time to check on learning in lessons and in groups working with teaching assistants
 - the governing body checking on pupils' progress regularly and holding the school to account for increasing the rate of progress, especially that of the most able.
- Improve pupils' behaviour so that it is at least good, by:
 - consistently taking a firm line in dealing with unacceptable behaviour
 - making sure that the behaviour of a few pupils does not spoil playtimes for the great majority
 - following, consistently, the advice provided by outside agencies in how to manage the behaviour of some pupils
 - the headteacher checking rigorously on behaviour at playtimes
 - ensuring that governors have a clear understanding of the standard of pupils' behaviour.
- Improve provision for children in the Reception class by:
 - making sure that all staff set high expectations for children's behaviour and attitudes to their learning, and ensuring that these expectations are consistently met
 - setting much higher expectations of what the children can do, especially the most able
 - providing carefully structured learning opportunities which build on what the children already know,

understand and can do

- making sure that the teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills is carefully matched to children’s abilities
- deploying teaching assistants to have the most impact on children’s progress.

An external review of governance 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 school is emerging from a period of considerable change. Leadership and management require improvement because senior leaders and managers, including subject and other leaders, are very new to their roles. They have not yet had sufficient time to ensure that teaching is consistently good and pupils are making the good progress of which they are capable. In addition, training has not been completed to assist all staff to understand how to measure the impact their teaching has on pupils' achievement.
- Parents and pupils confirm that the school is not always a harmonious community in which good behaviour can flourish. The main reason for this is that, with the exception of Years 5 and 6, teachers are not setting high enough expectations for good behaviour and accepting nothing less and leaders do not routinely check on pupils' attitudes to learning.
- The behaviour of a small number of pupils is not being managed effectively, especially at playtimes. Consequently, these pupils sometimes disturb the learning and play of others. The headteacher has secured outside agency support and advice but, as yet, staff are not consistently following the advice provided for helping these pupils to manage their behaviour.
- The 'topic-based' curriculum and a wide range of first-hand experiences fires pupils' interest. Teachers make good links between subjects such as history, geography and writing so that, for example, pupils have interesting ideas to write about, such as how it feels to be evacuated to an unknown village. Older pupils' homework demonstrates that they are keen to follow up and research their interests. Additional activities, such as gardening and learning to play a musical instrument, contribute to pupils' learning and enjoyment of school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement. Teachers do not exploit fully the opportunities present in a range of subjects including, for example, history and geography, to promote pupils' personal development. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for life in modern Britain. Older pupils are aware of different faiths represented in Britain but do not have a good understanding, for their age, of how cultural traditions and faith influence how people choose to live their lives.
- The headteacher and governors demonstrate the determination and skills to bring about improvement. Their vision is for a good school at the heart of its community. In a short time, they have gained a clear picture of the improvements needed. Improvements are already evident in the older classes; for example, in behaviour and teachers' marking. These show the school's capacity for improvement.
- The Key Stage 2 and mathematics leader has scrutinised pupils' books and school data about pupils' progress. She has identified where improvements are needed to overcome the gaps in pupils' mathematical understanding. As a result, the school has begun to use an appropriate programme of work to help pupils develop their mathematical knowledge systematically.
- Teachers' assessments are accurate and inform the school's tracking of pupils' progress. Until very recently, however, the rate at which pupils make progress over time was not checked closely enough. The headteacher now has a good understanding of where, and in which year group, pupils' progress needs improvement and plans are in hand to address these.
- The arrangements for managing teachers' performance are based on the national *Teachers' Standards*. Teachers take advantage of the good opportunities for attending courses through the local authority provision and the joint training arranged between local schools.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively. For example, extra funding such as the pupil premium has been used to help disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to that of their classmates and ensure that they have similar opportunities to join class trips and residential visits. Good links with the local authority Traveller Support Service ensures that the school can access support for pupils, staff or families if needed.
- Sports funding has been used to widen the range of sporting activities on offer. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the range of sports clubs on offer and there is a high rate of pupil participation.

- Since the previous inspection, when the school was judged to be good, the local authority has provided the school with limited support. Since the appointment of the headteacher, they have ensured that he has a headteacher of a successful school as his mentor. Staff and governors have taken advantage of the local authority courses open to them.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. Staff and governors are suitably trained and well aware of child protection and risk assessment procedures. School leaders have good communication with the providers of education for the very small number of pupils who are educated elsewhere for part of the week. Both parties know how well the pupils are making progress in managing their behaviour, and if there is good attendance.
- **The governance of the school:**
Governors have been keen to undertake a wide range of training. They have given leaders their full support through the many recent changes. They are aware of how well pupils are doing and the impact of teaching but are not yet sufficiently rigorous in holding the school to account using data to check if pupils can do better. They are well informed about how the pupil premium is spent and the impact of this spending. Governors adhere to the requirements related to the management of staff performance and recognise the importance of promotion and salary increases being linked to pupils' progress. Governors are diligent in making sure that the school's safeguarding procedures and the school website meet statutory requirements. They are not checking the school's incident logs or checking with pupils to see if they feel safe in school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' behaviour is directly related to their teacher's expectations. In Year 6, for example, pupils are expected to stop, listen and do as they are asked, and they do. By contrast, in the Reception class, when all the children sit together, they continue chatting to each other and do not give their teacher their full attention.
- In formal and informal discussions with pupils, a common theme was that the annoying behaviour of a small number of pupils spoils playtimes for others. Some younger pupils feel that the behaviour of a few in lessons stops them working hard.
- In response to the headteacher's high expectations, pupils say that behaviour in assemblies has improved. Evidence of this improvement was evident in an assembly presented by pupils in Year 4 to share their work about the First World War; pupils' behaviour was outstanding.
- School councillors take their responsibilities seriously and take pride in contributing to school life. They help pupils to understand the democratic process of putting forward ideas for others to consider and vote for example, when deciding which charities they will support each year.
- The behaviour of pupils who attend the PRU is checked on appropriately and they are kept safe successfully.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure require improvement. Discussions with parents and their written comments in responses to Parent View, indicated that many have concerns about the behaviour of a few pupils making others feel unsafe impacting on the majority.
- At lunchtime playtimes, especially, pupils consider that although pupils are spoken to by staff and expected to apologise for their unacceptable behaviour, this does not stop them doing the same things again. They say that sometimes they feel unsafe when the younger children run after them and kick out.
- Older pupils have a very clear idea of what bullying is. They say that there was bullying last year but now there is little or none but there is 'a lot of irritating behaviour' that is not dealt with to their satisfaction.

- Pupils have a good idea of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They also understand about cyber-bullying and the best ways of dealing with this.
- Attendance is below average but it is improving. It is particularly affected by the number of Gypsy/Roma children who miss school. The school works well with the Traveller Support Service to encourage regular attendance and their punctuality has increased considerably. The school provides work for pupils to do when they are travelling.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been good enough, especially for the most-able pupils. This is because teachers are not always expecting enough from these pupils and do not challenge them to do better.
- The teaching of literacy requires improvement. The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make and how to use these to spell and read) requires improvement. Phonics sessions are taught in small groups by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are grouped according to the stage they are at in acquiring phonic skills. Insufficient attention is paid to checking pupils are in the right teaching group to help them make the best progress.
- The teaching of mathematics requires improvement, particularly in the younger classes. Teachers are not making the best use of their accurate assessment to provide pupils with the right level of work. For example, the most-able pupils are expected to do easy work before they can make a start on work which is at a more appropriately challenging level. This wastes a little of their time and does not promote a keenness to learn.
- There have been recent improvements in the marking of pupils' work. In the older classes, pupils are told how to improve their work and given time to do this.
- Throughout the school, relationships between teachers and their pupils are good. Pupils are confident that their teachers care about them.
- Teachers take advantage of the many training courses organised by the partnership of schools to develop their professional expertise. Teachers from different schools check the accuracy of each other's assessments of pupils' work and this has been particularly profitable for staff.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- When children start in the Reception class, their levels of knowledge, understanding and skills are broadly typical for their age. As they move through Reception, and Years 1 and 2, pupils are not making good progress because teachers are not consistently expecting enough of them.
- At the end of Year 2 in national teacher assessments, attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. In most years, fewer pupils attain the higher Level 3 than found nationally.
- The school's data indicates that by the time they reach Year 6, pupils have mostly made the progress they should in reading and writing but not in mathematics. In mathematics, pupils have some ground to make up because they have gaps in their learning; for example, they are not secure in their understanding of multiplication tables. Few pupils have made better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and this includes the most-able.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils requires improvement because they do not always have work to challenge them in order to move them on in their learning at a good rate. Consequently, they do not always make the progress of which they are capable, especially in mathematics. The school's data show that not enough of these pupils make good progress.

- This is the first academic year that the school has had a Year 6 cohort. According to the school's data, the attainment levels of pupils currently in Year 6 are broadly average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils in the main, make expected progress. In Year 2, over time, disadvantaged pupils generally achieve at broadly similar levels to their classmates and all pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In some classes, there are very small numbers of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The achievement of these pupils needs varies in each year group. The school's progress data indicates that over time they make better progress than their classmates and in others they do not. These differences are attributable to inconsistency in teaching over time and whether support from outside agencies has been sought and implemented promptly.
- The books of pupils of Gypsy/Roma heritage show that they have extra support and make reasonable progress when they are in the school.
- The very small number of pupils educated for part of the week at the pupil referral unit (PRU) are beginning to make progress in managing their behaviour and learning. There are good links between school staff and staff of the PRU.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children start in the early years with levels of knowledge, understanding and skills broadly typical for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, attainment is similar to the national picture and so achievement requires improvement. Children are suitably prepared with the right skills for their age to start in Year 1 but some do not reach the levels of which they are capable. Children do not have well-developed skills for learning, for example, listening carefully to their teacher and doing as they are asked quickly or taking care of books and equipment and tidying up sensibly.
- Children are enthusiastic and keen to come to school. However, their behaviour and attitudes to learning require improvement because staff do not consistently set high enough expectations for such qualities as listening carefully, taking care of books, being kind and considerate to one another, and respecting each other's ideas.
- Teachers do not always make sure that the learning activities are at the right level of difficulty for groups of different abilities. Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively in sessions; for example in whole class sessions, they sometimes sit and watch rather than work with specific children to help them practise or reinforce their learning. Some activities are not challenging enough to fully engage children and make sure they make good progress.
- The teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills requires improvement. Insufficient attention is paid to ensure that children have the right level of task and support through structured activities to help them reach a higher level of skill. For example, children who struggle to learn letter sounds do not have enough opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning. There is often insufficient challenge for more-able children.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Leaders' checks are not rigorous enough to help teachers refine their teaching and the organisation of the learning opportunities they provide in order that children can make good progress.
- Relationship between staff and children and their parents are good. Parents are fully involved in knowing how their children are developing.

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	124549
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	448559

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Dinley
Headteacher	Shaun Holland
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2010
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