

Watlington Community Primary School

Rectory Lane, Watlington, King's Lynn, PE33 0HU

Inspection dates

28–29 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Strong and determined leadership by the headteacher, has resulted in rapid and secure improvements in achievement and teaching.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has improved over the past two years. Standards by the end of Year 6 rose significantly in 2014.
- Teaching is consistently good and improving strongly. This is because well-targeted training and support have addressed the weaknesses identified at the last inspection.
- Highly qualified support staff are used very effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their education. They are helped to settle quickly. Consequently, they develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning. They feel safe and well looked after. Pupils behave well in lessons and at all times of the day. Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy coming to school to learn.
- A lively and imaginative curriculum, which engages and interests pupils, is ensuring good opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The governing body has an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to improve still further. They now hold leaders to account and make sure that the recent improvements are sustained.
- Strong teamwork amongst leaders at all levels has strengthened the school's drive to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Despite the good progress made, achievement in writing, it is not as strong for boys as it is for girls.
- Pupils do not routinely apply their mathematical skills by solving problems.
- Occasionally, the level of challenge is not sufficiently high for pupils in Key Stage 1 to achieve more.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school. The headteacher and assistant headteacher joined the inspectors in observing learning in three lessons.
- The inspectors talked with two groups of pupils, as well as individual pupils during lessons and at playtimes, to find out their views about the school. The team undertook a scrutiny of pupils' English and mathematics books to establish the quality of pupils' work. They heard groups of pupils read.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, school staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed behaviour at lunchtime, break times, around school and during assembly.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement, records of lesson observations, information on pupils' progress and the quality of writing in pupils' books. They also scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors looked at pupils' work on display throughout the school.
- The inspectors took account of the 37 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. They checked information on the school's website, and took into consideration the 22 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Heather Hann	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is around 20%, which is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for children who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is about 15 %, which is below the national average.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the time of the previous inspection, there have been a significant number of changes. A new assistant headteacher has been appointed and four new teachers have taken up post. A new Chair of the Governing Body, together with several new governors, has been appointed.
- The early years provision is full time, in a Reception class.
- A pre-school service operates from the site; it is subject to a separate inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise teaching and pupils' achievement to outstanding by:
 - closing the gap between the progress girls and boys make in writing
 - making sure that all pupils routinely apply mathematical skills in a range of problem solving activities
 - ensuring that pupils in Key Stage 1 are set work at just the right level of difficulty to help them achieve the very best they can.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is rigorous in her drive to improve the school. Governors are well-informed and effective partners. There is a deep commitment to promoting pupils' well-being and achievement. Leaders do not settle for less than good teaching. Consequently, pupils of all ages are now making good progress. The overall effectiveness of the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- Leaders at all levels have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The development plan accurately identifies priorities. Staff with allocated responsibilities are highly motivated. They ensure that new initiatives have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The appointment of new staff, including those in leadership roles has also made a significant contribution to the improvements in the quality of leadership and teaching.
- The school's checks on pupils' performance are accurate. Additional support is provided should any pupils be at risk of falling behind. This is a strong demonstration of the school's caring approach to supporting pupils and confirms its commitment to ensuring every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, including in the early years, are rigorous. All teachers and teaching assistants are set clear targets as part of their performance management. These are linked to pupils' achievement, whole school priorities and their professional development.
- The school has made a good start to implementing new assessment procedures now that National Curriculum levels are no longer used. The school is working closely with other schools to develop effective systems.
- Improvements in the way in which phonics is taught (the sounds that letters make) have been particularly successful. Topics enrich pupils' experiences and make learning purposeful and effective. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, reflecting the values and aims of the school. Through assemblies and special events, pupils extend their sense of faith and tolerance and respect for different communities. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use additional funds effectively. Pupil premium funding is helping disadvantaged pupils to learn at a faster rate. The primary school sports funding has provided more opportunities for staff to develop their skills and to increase the range of sporting activities for pupils. Consequently, more pupils take part in sports and this has contributed significantly to improvements seen in healthy lifestyles, personal development, teamwork and attitudes to learning.
- Leaders have ensured that in mathematics, there is a good focus on the development of calculation skills. They have provided staff with guidance on including a range of problem solving activities in the teaching of mathematics. However, they do not routinely apply their mathematical knowledge in a range of everyday situations to solve problems, so that they are able to make progress at a rapid rate.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school since the previous inspection through training for staff and governors. This has helped them to fulfil their responsibilities more effectively and so raise standards. School staff speak very positively about the support and challenge they have received.
- The school takes care to ensure that it has effective arrangements for safeguarding its pupils and children in the early years. All statutory requirements in this respect are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring professional expertise from their working life to challenge and hold leaders effectively to account through the scrutiny and analysis of data on pupils' progress. Through regular visits to school, they can check first hand on what is working well and what can be improved.
 - Since the time of the previous inspection, governors have supported the headteacher through a number of difficult decisions and in making new appointments to secure good teaching. Governors have an accurate view of teaching and a good understanding of performance management. They ensure that

pay awards are linked to teachers' performance.

- Governors know that the pupil premium funding is well spent and enables all pupils to play a full part in school life through, for example, participation in educational visits. They know that the funding has been used effectively to close the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school and nationally; and that the sport funding is used to extend sport provision.
- Governors check that all safeguarding requirements are fully met and effective.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Attendance is above average and this reflects the fact that pupils like school and want to be there.
- Pupils develop positive attitudes to their learning. They work hard on the tasks they are set and work together well in lessons. They are kind and supportive of one another in and around the school
- Pupils form positive relationships with staff and one another and there is a strong sense of mutual respect throughout the school. Pupils take pride in their work and the quality of display around the school is good. Pupils keep their classrooms neat and tidy and are very smartly dressed in their school uniform.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after at school. They also know who they would go to if they were unhappy or worried about anything.
- Pupils know how to keep safe outside the school and they learn about the different forms of bullying. They are very well informed about the dangers associated with using the internet and social media.
- A few parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, say they have concerns about bullying. The inspection finds the school's systems to monitor incidents are thorough and parents are informed immediately if the school or any pupils raise any concern.
- The school operates strong systems to safeguard pupils.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching, including in the early years, has improved and is now good with elements of outstanding practice evident. As a consequence, pupils make good progress and standards are rising quickly.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise that they use effectively to plan work that helps pupils build on what they already know and can do, promoting effective learning. There are high expectations of what should be achieved in lessons.
- Procedures to check the quality of teaching are effective and senior leaders identify the support and training teachers and teaching assistants need to develop their skills. This has ensured that teaching has improved markedly since the previous inspection. The role and deployment of teaching assistants is a particular strength because they are well briefed by teachers in how to help pupils and are skilled in supporting learning.
- The quality of marking has also improved and is now good in the majority of classes. Work is always marked and points for development or correction are identified. Across the school, including in the early years, pupils understand their targets and know what they need to do next to achieve more.
- Children in the early years have access to well-planned, interesting activities that encourage them to explore ideas of their own choosing as well as learning with adults. Older pupils learn in stimulating classrooms where the information on 'working walls' helps them to find key information about their

current learning. The diagrams, vocabulary and guidance on display give pupils ideas and helps them to make good progress.

- Teachers know pupils very well and ensure that activities in class are exciting and engaging. They encourage pupils to share ideas by providing learning experiences that promote curiosity and confidence. This was evident in a Year 5 English class. After exploring a wide variety of objects the teacher had placed in shoeboxes, they were highly animated as they shared with each other the story that might connect the items. Such activities, and the good impact that they have on the development of pupils' literacy skills, typify the improvements seen in teaching across the school.
- The few pupils who need more time than most receive the extra support needed to bring them up to speed. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs are identified early and receive good support to help them achieve well. Pupils at risk of falling behind for any reason are given individually-tailored activities to prevent this from happening.
- Improved teaching of phonics, carefully graded reading books, daily guided reading and older pupils reading to younger pupils has improved teaching and enabled pupils to make good progress in reading. The family reading café, held regularly for parents, including a bedtime reading café, has greatly encouraged regular reading at home.
- Writing has improved as a result of changes to the way it is taught. A focus on topics that engage boys in writing is helping the gaps between boys and girls to close. Nevertheless, although there is an improving trend, the rate is slower, especially for boys.
- The teaching of mathematics is also improving. In Year 2 for example, pupils made good progress when they looked for clues to describe particular shapes. The practical problem solving approach was skilfully used to enthuse pupils as well as reinforce their knowledge of the different shapes. However, such effective activities are not extended to pupils in all classes.
- The school's systems to check pupils' progress are accurate and reliably inform what pupils need to do next to move on. In the majority of lessons, teachers use this assessment information well to plan activities which extend and challenge pupils appropriately. Occasionally, the work that is set is too easy for them. This is particularly the case for the younger pupils.

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils are now making good progress in response to the highly effective initiatives that have led to improved teaching.
- Children enter the Reception class with levels of skills and knowledge that are often a little lower than those typical for their age. Good teaching and the good care and support that children receive from adults, helps to ensure that they make good progress. Pupils are well prepared for Year 1 in all areas of learning.
- The proportion of pupils who meet the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check is rising although it was below average in 2014. Year 1 pupils read regularly in school and discuss what they read, which deepens their understanding of authors' style and content.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 are also improving and are now broadly average in mathematics and English. They remain higher in reading than writing. Standards reached by the end of Year 6 improved significantly in 2014 and were above average in writing and mathematics. They were broadly average in reading and the grammar, punctuation and spelling test. However, the school's own data as well as teacher assessments for 2014 show that girls make better progress than boys.
- By the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils who make the progress expected for their age is now close to the average in reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils making good progress in Year 6 in 2014 was about the same as most eleven year olds in writing and mathematics and close to average in reading. Evidence in pupils' books show good progress currently being made by pupils in Key Stage 2.

Although their calculation skills are strong, pupils do not commonly practise their mathematical skills in solving practical problems.

- The school's work to challenge the most able pupils is paying off. Most are now making good progress and for some pupils in upper Key Stage 2 progress is outstanding.
- Disadvantaged pupils are also benefiting from effective support and they too are now also making good progress. This is helping to close gaps that exist within school and with all pupils nationally. There were too few disadvantaged pupils in the Year 6 cohort in 2014 to compare their attainment with others, without potentially identifying individuals.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs are provided for effectively. They are also making good progress overall, although more strongly in reading and writing than in mathematics.
- Teachers are now helping pupils to make good progress in lessons and this is helping them to catch up quickly with work previously missed earlier in their school life. However, there are variances in the rate of progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 because sometimes, pupils are not fully challenged by work that is too easy to enable them to achieve to the very best of their ability.

The early years provision

is good

- Effective leadership of the early years ensures that children enjoy learning and achieve well. The early years environment is a busy, productive, safe and happy place where children make a good start to their education. The majority are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Teaching is good and children's learning is continually assessed. Staff use questions well to consolidate children's understanding and extend their thinking well. Teachers and adults operate as an effective team and provide memorable experiences for the children.
- Regardless of their starting point, children are helped to settle quickly and develop positive attitudes to school life. Children get actively involved and thoroughly enjoy the broad variety of activities. Good teaching of key skills and the many opportunities for learning letters and their sounds, reading, writing and counting lead to good progress.
- Children's behaviour is good and the care and support for children is exceptional. A thorough check is kept on the quality of teaching, provision and children's progress. The high expectations and ambition found throughout the school are clearly evident in the drive to make sure children are kept safe, get off to a good start and make good progress.

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	120888
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	453585

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	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rosemary Kett
Headteacher	Ruth McGlone
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2013
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