

St Edmund's Community Foundation School

Kilhams Way, King's Lynn, PE30 2HU

Inspection dates

11–12 February 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.

- Children start school with skills and knowledge significantly below those that are typical for their age. They make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils' attainment has improved strongly throughout the school in the last year so that by the end of Year 6, pupils now attain broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Good teaching means that teachers use their detailed knowledge of what pupils can already do to plan interesting work which challenges most pupils.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children get off to a good start in the early years because teachers provide challenging tasks that ensure they make good progress.
- Pupils are keen to succeed and respond well to the increasingly high expectations asked of them. They work together well and are keen to discuss and help each other in lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and there are very good relationships between staff and pupils.
- Pupils feel safe, are exceptionally proud of their school and enjoy coming to school because of the wide range of interesting learning activities.
- The school has improved since the last inspection because school leaders understand how well pupils are learning. The quality of teaching, through regular and effective checks, is now good.
- Members of the governing body have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They offer a high level of challenge to school leaders and are ambitious for continued improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give the most able pupils work which is hard enough for them to ensure they make maximum progress.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always show them how to improve.
- Progress in mathematics is not as good as in literacy because pupils do not have enough opportunities to solve problems.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 13 lessons and part lessons, including two joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work from a selection of their exercise books.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked about their work and experiences. Meetings were held with staff, including leaders of English, mathematics, the Early Years Foundation Stage and special educational needs. Meetings were also held with governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation. This included evidence relating to safeguarding, pupils' behaviour, attendance, the management and performance of staff, and the school's checks on pupils' progress.
- There were no responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors analysed the school's own recently completed questionnaire and talk to parents at the beginning of school. Inspectors also scrutinised questionnaires submitted by 26 members of staff.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Debra McCarthy

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- About 45 per cent of pupils at the school are eligible for pupil premium funding. This is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is around 30% which is above average.
- Nearly half of pupils are of various ethnic minority heritages and more pupils than average, over 40%, speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in two classes, a Nursery class and a Reception class. Children in the Nursery attend part time and those in the Reception class attend full time.
- There have been a number of changes to the teaching team since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching outstanding in order to raise achievement further by:
 - ensuring that the most able always have a sufficient level of challenge in their work
 - improving the quality and consistency of marking and feedback by clearly showing pupils how to improve their work
 - providing more opportunities to solve problems in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The very effective headteacher has an accurate view of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to be even better. Action plans specifically identify the key priorities including aspects of teaching that need improving. These plans are checked and evaluated regularly to ensure improvements are being sustained and that support for teachers is effective. These checks use a wide range of different evidence.
- Subject and other leaders check the quality of teaching regularly, taking into account what they observe in lessons, the work that pupils produce in their books, and how well pupils progress over time. They are aware that weaknesses remain in the quality and consistency of marking and are supporting any teacher who finds it more difficult to show pupils how to improve their work. All teachers have challenging targets that are linked to how well pupils achieve in their classes. Only teaching that leads to pupils making good or better progress is rewarded financially.
- Subject leaders benefit from the training available through well-developed partnerships with different schools and the local authority. They have played a significant role in raising standards and ensuring the quality of teaching is good.
- The commitment towards equal opportunities for all pupils is demonstrated in the good progress over the last year made by all groups and the ways in which the school works with others or uses its funding to make sure no group is disadvantaged. The school's programme for learning is well planned and effective in ensuring pupils make good progress. It makes a good contribution to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education.
- The safety of pupils is of paramount importance and a constant focus for the school. As a result, arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements.
- The curriculum motivates and interests pupils. Regular visits to places of interest and the way subjects are grouped using a common theme help pupils to make connections between subjects and develop creative writing and thinking skills. Leaders ensure that pupils learn effectively about British values. For example, they are encouraged to apply for their 'jobs' in school and undergo assessment before being appointed to their posts. This helps to develop their sense of fairness and democracy.
- The government's primary school's sports funding grant has been used to extend the opportunities for all pupils to be involved in high quality sports activities led by sports specialists and to give training opportunities for staff. It has been effective in promoting pupils' physical development and developing healthy lifestyles and has increased teachers' skills and confidence.
- The local authority provides effective and frequent support, for example by conducting a review to check how well the school is doing, most recently during the autumn term. This is used alongside the school's own systems for checking the quality of education to make informed and accurate decisions about future improvements.
- Those parents who spoke to inspectors greatly appreciate the work of the school and the care and support given to their children. Parents are welcomed into the school as partners to work with their children.
- The school has a clear strategy to support disadvantaged pupils. It makes effective use of pupil premium funding. This not only provides eligible pupils with additional support in their classroom learning, but also enables them to take part in out-of-school activities and attend visits to enrich their learning. The local authority has recently helped teachers to improve their understanding of the progress made over time by this group of pupils.

■ The governance of the school:

Governors access high-quality training in the analysing of assessment information, child protection and safeguarding. As a result, they are highly skilled and offer good levels of challenge and support to the headteacher. Governors identify appropriate priority areas for development, build action plans, and check progress against these rigorously. Finance is monitored carefully, and they make good use of extra funding such as the pupil premium and the additional school sports funding, and monitor their impact well. Governors understand the quality of teaching rigorously through monitoring visits, regular reports from the headteacher and quality assurance from the local authority. They understand teachers' accountability for pupils' progress and know what is done to reward good teachers and tackle underperformance.

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

- Pupils behaviour is good. They are consistently polite and eager to do well. Pupils talk confidently about their learning. They share ideas and support each other. They respond to instructions promptly and soon settle down to their work. However, there are a few pupils who find it hard to regulate their own behaviour. These pupils are supported well by adults and their behaviour is steadily improving.
- Pupils move about the school sensibly and purposefully. They play and work together with consideration for others. Pupils are respectful of school equipment and ensure this is returned to the correct place in the classroom.
- Pupils look after their school environment well and respect each other's property. They play well together in the playground. Older pupils were observed on a number of occasions spontaneously playing games with younger pupils and very sensibly helping them use the play equipment.
- Pupils thrive on the additional responsibilities provided such as being monitors and 'peer mediators'. Members of the school council represent their fellow pupils well. Pupils raise funds for different national and international charities.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding processes meet all statutory requirements and effective policies and practices are followed by all staff and pupils.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying. They said that they look out for classmates who are unhappy at break and lunchtimes and ensure no one feels left out. Although they said that bullying is rare in the school, pupils feel confident that they know a person that they could go to if they needed to.
- Pupils' attendance has improved significantly. It is now above average. This is due to the highly determined and effective action by the headteacher.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is significantly enhanced by the very good relationships between staff and pupils. Classroom displays celebrate children's work and are used extensively to extend learning. For example, the 'working walls' are used well to highlight strategies that pupils can use to write a well structured story.
- Teachers plan appropriately challenging activities for most pupils because they have a secure understanding of what pupils can already do. They are working hard to ensure that this level of challenge is always provided in all subjects. However, tasks for the most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenging to make them continuously think hard enough.
- Teachers make lessons enjoyable for pupils because they are enthusiastic and choose exciting resources and tasks which capture pupils' interest. For example, Year 1, pupils wrote very good quality sentences.

They used their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) extremely well to spell complex words, one pupil saying, 'that word has a split sound'.

- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. They sometimes provide helpful comments so that pupils know what to do next. Marking is particularly helpful in literacy books, but it is not always as comprehensive in some classes, especially in mathematics. Pupils do not always respond to the marking, so teachers are not fully clear whether recommended improvements have been understood.
- Key skills are taught well in all parts of the school. Pupils read widely and often at home and throughout the school. Pupils use a wide range of communication and mathematical skills effectively in different subjects to help make connections across a common theme.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics and improve pupils' skills quickly. These skills are used effectively in a wide range of subjects and the good progress made is evidenced in the work seen in books and practical sessions. Teachers put a good emphasis on explaining answers but do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop their problem solving skills in mathematics.
- Teaching often probes and teases out pupils' knowledge and understanding so that pupils are consistently challenged. This was evident in a mathematics lesson where pupils were investigating numbers. Opportunities were taken to question in order to raise pupils' awareness of the different ways of adding and subtracting and to address any misconceptions encountered by the pupils.
- Pupils' workbooks indicate that literacy is taught well, with many opportunities to use pupils' writing skills in other subjects. Pupils' skills are strengthened by the many tasks that ensure they write for different purposes and at length. Pupils also use discussion to provoke and fire their imagination.
- Teaching assistants are highly effective across the school in helping pupils to make good progress with their learning, including those learning English as an additional language. They work in close cooperation with teachers to captivate pupils' interest and build on skills learnt in previous lessons.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school with skills and understanding below those typical for their age in all areas of learning. A stimulating environment and good teaching ensure they make good progress. Strong progress in reading is a feature throughout Key Stage 1. The good teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) means that more pupils than was the average in 2014 are set to reach the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2015.
- Attainment in Key Stage 1 has been low in the past but is now rapidly rising because teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. This is ensuring that teachers prepare pupils well for learning in Key Stage 2. Until last year, the results in the annual national tests were below average. This was because teaching at the time was not effective enough to promote the progress needed to improve standards. School assessments and work in pupils' books indicate that attainment is on track to be broadly in line with national averages in 2015 and progress is good.
- Progress in each year group in Key Stage 2 has quickened since the last inspection and is now good. In Year 6 pupils' attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics because teachers have good subject knowledge in these subjects as well as in other curriculum areas such as history and geography.
- The most able pupils typically do well in most classes and the school is increasing the number who are working above the levels expected for their age. There are still a few occasions when teachers do not provide them with work that makes pupils think hard enough, however, and this can limit their progress.
- Pupils across the school have an eagerness to read. They enjoy talking about their books and favourite authors and understand what they read and how books support their learning in other areas. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening test in 2014 was

below the national proportion. The teaching of early reading skills has improved rapidly and pupils are set to reach the national average in 2015. This is helping pupils to read and write more confidently throughout Key Stage 1.

- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive effective support from skilled classroom assistants in small group and individual sessions. As a result, across the school they make the same good progress as their peers.
- Pupils who are eligible for additional funding make good progress and overall the gap in attainment between this group and other pupils at the school has narrowed over the last two years. In the 2014 national tests, Year 6 pupils from this group reached higher standards than in the previous year. They were over four terms behind their classmates in reading, writing and maths in 2013 but in the 2014 tests they were about two terms behind other pupils in the school. School assessment information analysed by inspectors indicates the gap for current Year 6 pupils is also closing rapidly. This is because the leadership has responded quickly to support this group with extra staff that provide effective help in lessons and one to one support.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are identified at an early stage and they receive appropriate support so that they settle quickly and learn well. Teaching assistants provide especially valuable support, for example, when working with small groups of pupils. They explain new vocabulary to those who are at the early stages of speaking English so that they can play a full part in activities.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds learn well and make similarly good progress to other pupils throughout the school. Pupils receive additional support and respond very positively to this and they are making increasingly strong progress as they move through the school, especially in reading.

The early years provision

is good

- Good teaching enables children to make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. From much lower than typical starting points a minority, but rapidly rising proportion, reach a good level of development. Staff use their observations of what children can do to plan exciting and highly creative activities to move them forward in each area of learning.
- A significant proportion of children join the school with weaker speech and writing skills. These children are well supported and make good progress. The confidence and learning attitudes of all children are nurtured well.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to be part of their children's education and helped to understand how the school improves the children's skills. For example, parents are invited to join the staff at the 'story café' where stories are retold and discussed while sharing a cup of tea and a cake.
- Teaching meets children's needs well and makes good use of the stimulating outside environment, as well as indoors. Children of all backgrounds and abilities happily participate in a wide range of activities because they feel valued and secure. Those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. This is because the school identifies their needs early and provides effective support.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Any concerns that a pupil may be struggling are picked up quickly by teachers and supporting adults.
- Children behave well in the early years because activities are interesting and fun, and children are busy. Classroom and outdoor areas are well organised and tidy, so that children can play happily and learn well although occasionally a few children are not fully stretched in their writing because there are more limited opportunities to practice their skills.
- Adults work closely with children and provide good levels of support during activities. Staff are particularly

effective in promoting children's speaking and listening skills as they show children how to use language by their own speech, and question them about what they are doing.

- Leadership and management are effective and ensure that children work and play in a secure, safe and purposeful environment where each child is known well. Good systems are in place to track children's progress and any under achievement is quickly and successfully addressed.

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	120876
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	454777

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Veronia Welham
Headteacher	Lisa Cook
Date of previous school inspection	9-10 July 2013
Telephone number	01553 772018
Fax number	01553 776975
Email address	office@st-edmunds.norfolk.sch.uk

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