

Gunton Community Primary School

Gainsborough Drive, Lowestoft, NR32 4LX

Inspection dates 17–18 March 2015

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

- The school has not responded effectively or rapidly enough to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.
- School leaders do not have high enough expectations of teachers. They are not rigorous enough when they monitor the quality of teaching and learning, the standard of presentation in pupils' books, teachers' marking and the effectiveness of staff with subject responsibilities.
- The majority of pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics.
- Leadership and provision in the Nursery are inadequate. It does not provide a welcoming or stimulating setting for children entering the school. Not all staff understand how to stimulate children's imagination and do not give parents the information they need to support their children's learning at home.
- Middle leaders have not improved learning quickly enough in their areas of responsibility. They have not received sufficient guidance or support from senior leaders.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good over time. As a result some pupils have gaps in their skills and knowledge in most subjects. These gaps are not closing quickly enough.
- Most teachers do not have consistently high expectations of how pupils should present their work. Handwriting is scruffy and pupils do not show pride their work. The quality of marking is poor.
- The most-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Consequently the work they are given is too easy.
- Disadvantaged pupils often make too little progress.
- Some pupils do not have positive attitudes to their learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Since the last inspection school leaders have improved pupils' understanding of phonics and the quality of their reading.
- The governing body rigorously monitors all aspects of school life. Governors have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and, in the last year, have put in place effective systems for checking the accuracy of the data they are given.
- Pupils feel happy and are kept safe at school. Arrangements to ensure pupils' well-being are good. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
- Mathematics and English are taught well in Upper Key Stage 2. Older pupils make good progress in these subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed lessons or parts of lessons in all classes. Several observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, the local authority, the senior leadership team, staff, pupils and parents.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including pupils’ exercise books, achievement and progress information, documents relating to safeguarding, reviews of teaching and learning and school policies and procedures. They listened to pupils read and talked about their work. The lead inspector scrutinised the school’s self-evaluation statement, external reports on the school and school action plans.
- The inspection team noted the 69 responses to the online questionnaire ‘Parent View’. They also spoke to parents during an informal meeting and received written correspondence from a number of other parents. The inspection team took account of the 25 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

Deborah Pargeter, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Julie Winyard

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Henry Weir

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average sized primary school.
- Since the last inspection the headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body have changed. The new headteacher has been in post since September 2012.
- Pupils are mostly of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for certain groups of pupils, is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Since the previous inspection the school is actively working with external organisations to provide professional development and support.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and thereby achievement, particularly in mathematics by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what all pupils can achieve, particularly the most-able pupils
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge, and in particular, of the requirements of the new National Curriculum for mathematics
 - ensuring teachers urgently identify and then address any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in all the different subjects they are studying
 - ensuring marking always tells pupils clearly how to improve
 - ensuring all teachers encourage pupils to take a proper pride in the work, and particularly in their handwriting and presentation
- Improve the provision for children in the Nursery class by;
 - making sure activities are interesting, purposeful and directly linked to what children should learn.
 - ensuring staff in the Nursery communicate more effectively with parents about their child's learning, so that parents can support their children at home.
 - ensuring leaders in the early years provide better training for support staff so that they are able to ask questions that develop children's understanding, ideas and imagination.
- Improve the quality of leadership of and management in the school by:
 - responding quickly to all areas for improvement so that pupils' achievement is not compromised
 - improving leadership in the early years so that improvements in the Nursery are quickly effective
 - making sure other key stage and subject leaders receive the training they need for them to check pupils' learning regularly and rigorously and deal rapidly with under achievement
 - make sure that all staff are held to account for the quality of their work and that their responsibilities match their pay grade.
 - putting in place a data tracking system that enables all leaders and governors to access and analyse current pupil performance information and respond to any areas for improvement immediately.
 - analysing the impact of the extra support different groups of pupils receive to make sure it is helping them to learn better.
 - checking teacher assessments are accurate so that governors and senior leaders feel confident in the information provided to them.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher has not responded effectively or rapidly enough to the areas for improvement from the last inspection. There is limited evidence of the impact of improvements in mathematics and the use of pupil performance data to support all learners.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders do not hold staff to account and this has resulted in teaching that is not consistently good, poorly presented work in exercise books, irregular marking and tardy delivery of data and other necessary documents to senior leaders.
- Middle leaders have not improved pupils' learning quickly enough in their key stage or subject areas. Where leadership skills are developing they have not been sufficiently supported and guided by senior leaders. Where experienced middle leaders have not had impact on their area of responsibility, they have not been held sufficiently accountable.
- Pupil progress meetings are held each half term and are beginning to have an impact on pupils' progress. This process started in September 2014 and has not had time to make a significant difference to pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher recognises the school's capacity to improve is limited under current arrangements and has actively engaged with external agencies who are providing good advice and guidance. There have been notable, positive changes since this process started in September 2014. School data indicates that these changes are starting to improve outcomes for all pupils.
- The National Curriculum is not being taught to a consistently high standard. Leaders have allowed mathematics and English to dominate improvements in teaching. As a result computing, science and the foundation subjects are taught less well.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of their role in modern Britain and can describe the characteristics of a democracy. The role of the school council is central to the life of the school and many pupils enjoy fundraising for local and national charities.
- Good pupil-teacher relationships, class discussions and collective worship contribute to pupils' good social, moral and cultural development. Pupils are given limited opportunity to reflect on their work and as a result their spiritual development is not as strong.
- Attendance has improved to above the national average as a result of robust systems to track absences and consistent use of sanctions for poor attendance.
- The school's ethos promotes inclusion and equality for all groups of pupils. This is evident in the improving provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The Pupil Premium Grant is used well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as all pupils in the school. However they remain below national expectations for all pupils.
- The local authority has offered some support to the school. The school did not find this helpful and as a result have sought help from outside Suffolk.
- The pupil premium grant is used effectively and the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers is narrowing.
- The school is using the Primary Sports Grant effectively to improve the quality of physical education. Pupils are receiving specialist sports coaching in a wider variety of sport. They participate regularly in local sports competitions and take pride in their sporting achievements.
- The governance of the school:

- The governing body is effective because they have an accurate and honest view of the school and recognises the need for rapid improvement. They hold the headteacher to account and challenge him on the impact of his actions in improving outcomes for pupils.
- Governors have played an active part in engaging external consultants and have worked with them on improving governance at the school. Governors continue to be active in seeking the best support available to the school.
- Governors monitor the quality of teaching and learning by actively participating in work scrutiny, pupil progress meetings and learning walks. They review pupil data and use this to support the allocation of funding for staffing and resources.
- Governors are fully involved in the performance management of the headteacher and review the outcomes of performance management for all teaching staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because a minority of pupils do not consistently demonstrate a positive attitude to learning. When teaching does not meet pupils' learning needs they do not participate fully in activities and distract their classmates.
- Pupils have positive relationships with their teachers. They describe their teachers as kind and trustworthy and feel confident that their opinion is valued.
- In a small minority of lessons pupils demonstrate the ability to persevere at challenging tasks and are eager to succeed. In these lessons pupils are happy to share their misunderstandings openly and teachers praise effort as well as correct results.
- The school keeps an accurate record of the very few racist incidents. Behaviour at lunchtime is carefully tracked and good systems are in place to help pupils take responsibility for their actions during break and lunchtimes, as well as in the classroom.
- Pupils develop self-esteem and confidence through a variety of rewards and celebrations, including certificate presentations and annual school productions. For example they can nominate their peers for a 'Cool to be kind' certificate
- Pupils are proud of their school and say it is a happy, safe and friendly place.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All statutory procedures and systems to report concerns are in place. All staff, including new staff, are trained in safeguarding. Three members of staff share the role of designated person for safeguarding to ensure that a trained member of staff is always on hand.
- A quick response to safeguarding and well-being concerns is achieved because a parent support advisor is available in school to support the child and their family. Parents value the personalised support provided by the advisor.
- Pupils know how to recognise different types of bullying and respond by telling an adult. They are aware of how to keep themselves safe while using computers and other electronic devices. They are confident that the adults in the school will sort out any problems.
- Pupils are safe around the school because safety rules are clearly explained and understood. They can describe why they are not permitted to do certain things without an adult present.
- Parents say that their children are safe and well-cared for at school. Parents of children with additional health needs, praise the school for the practical care and understanding shown to their child.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, teaching has not led to good progress for all groups of pupils. This is because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching throughout the school and good practice is not being shared across year groups.
- Mathematics is taught well in Upper Key Stage 2 and pupils are making accelerated progress. They practise mathematical skills before applying them to problems and teachers regularly clarify pupils' understanding and allow them to explain their calculations to the class. Good teaching of mathematics was not seen in the rest of the school and scrutiny of pupils' books indicates inconsistencies in pupils' understanding and confidence in applying different methods. Poor presentation in books indicates pupils are not shown how to set out their work and that teachers do not have high enough expectations.
- The school's focus on reading has led to improved teaching of phonics and reading. Pupils learn effective strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. Younger children are learning to use their voice to tell the story convincingly.
- A minority of lessons lead to good progress. In these lessons teachers have high expectations for all pupils and model these with pupils' own work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use a wide variety of strategies to excite learners and challenge more able pupils.
- The quality of marking and feedback is poor. There is no consistency in marking and pupils do not respond to feedback in their books. The use of printed success criteria in books supports the majority of learners, but a small minority cannot read them and do not understand what they mean.
- Presentation in exercise books is inconsistent. Pupils' handwriting is varied and there is no clear policy on letter formation and joins. Pupils are regularly writing with blunt pencils and scribble out mistakes. Presentation of books in upper Key Stage 2 is different as teachers have very clear expectations of pupils. As a result their books are neatly presented and handwriting is neat and joined.
- In the majority of classes teaching assistants are used well to support groups of learners. They are aware of the lesson objectives and actively seek pupils that need additional help.
- Several teachers do not adapt their lessons to the different ability levels of the learners in their classes. Consequently not all pupils, including the most able, make consistently good progress.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Children join reception with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. Pupils' attainment when they join Key Stage 1 is average. Results of the Year 1 screening for phonics (the sounds that letters make) are broadly average. These results have improved since the last inspection.
- In 2014 attainment for pupils in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 was average; an improvement on the previous year. Attainment in mathematics was below average and slightly less than the previous year. Most pupils made expected progress in reading and writing but not in mathematics.
- Higher ability pupils did not make sufficient progress in reading, writing or mathematics. Teaching strategies have been adapted this year particularly in Upper Key Stage 2 and there is evidence that a higher number of pupils will make more than expected progress.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium attain better than their peers in mathematics but remain approximately a term behind all pupils nationally. In reading and writing their attainment is approximately a term and a half behind their peers and pupils nationally. This gap is narrowing when compared to all pupils nationally. This group of pupils are making less progress than all pupils in the school and nationally.

- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making good progress from low starting points as a result of good additional support. Parents are particularly pleased with the achievements of this group of pupils.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The Nursery provision is inadequate because teaching does not meet the needs of all children. Activities are dull and children are encouraged to be too dependent on adult support. Independent activities lack a purpose for learning and children are not inspired or excited by the setting. Adults in the setting do not create a varied, stimulating environment and some resources are not fit for purpose.
- Children in the Reception class make better progress because they are provided with an environment that is more interesting and promotes better learning. They are supported well to learn phonics and mathematical skills. The outside learning environment is mainly used well to give broaden children's experiences. However there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their writing skills either indoors or outside. Also reading, writing and mathematics activities do not always attract the attention of different groups. For example only a small minority of boys visit the writing table and fewer girls use the construction toys.
- Children enter the Nursery at age related expectations and leave the class having made average progress. Higher ability children do not make enough progress because activities and teaching do not challenge them sufficiently.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make adequate progress because staff support their specific learning needs well, such as providing speech and language support.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate. Not enough has been done to ensure provision in the Nursery is adequate. The leader recognises the significant shortfalls in the setting and has good plans in place to improve provision rapidly. For example she has introduced a new approach to recording what children can do during their time in the Reception class. This is a good record of learning and development and will be started in the Nursery next term. The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader has not had sufficient support and guidance from senior leaders particularly in dealing with inadequate provision in the Nursery.

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	124677
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	456053

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Hall
Headteacher	Matthew Jordan
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2012
Telephone number	01502 584661
Fax number	14 June 2012
Email address	Office4gunton@yahoo.co.uk

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