

St Faith's CofE Primary School

25 Manor Road, Horsham St Faith, Norwich, NR10 3LF

Inspection dates

14–15 July 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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders, governors and managers have successfully steered the school through a time of turbulence so that it continues to improve.
- The interim headteacher, other leaders and governors have been effective in improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement this year.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have enabled pupils to make considerable progress in phonics (the sounds that letters represent) to the extent that all Year 1 pupils reached the expected national standard this year.
- The early years provision is outstanding because of consistently high quality teaching that enables children to make very rapid progress.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They take a pride in presenting their work neatly.
- The school ensures that pupils are safe, a view supported by most parents.
- Pupils benefit from visits and visitors, including residential visits.
- The Harnser Federation has brought a range of benefits to staff and pupils this year.
- Governors know the school well and provide a good level of support and challenge to leaders and managers.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some marking does not show pupils how to improve their work.
- Occasionally, pupils are not given time to act upon their teachers' advice after their work is marked.
- Teachers do not always have the same high expectations of the most-able pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in 10 lessons or parts of lessons. Most observations were shared with the interim headteacher. The inspector also visited some small groups of pupils receiving extra help and a nurture group. He attended an assembly.
- The inspector heard pupils read and, with the interim headteacher, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents, including: development plans; policies; self-evaluation reports and safeguarding records. He considered evidence of the school's partnership work and the information provided for families.
- A meeting was held with a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff. The inspector talked to the Chair and former Chair of the Governing Body, three other governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. He also spoke informally to parents and received two letters from parents.
- The inspector considered 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- During the inspection, the Year 3 and 4 pupils were on a residential visit. The Year 6 pupils were not in school on the first day because they were visiting their secondary school.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There is a Reception class; a class for pupils in Years 1 and 2; a class for pupils in Years 3 and 4; and a class for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Children in Reception attend full time.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The interim headteacher joined the school in September 2014.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been four headteachers or interim headteachers. The senior teacher has been off sick since Easter 2015 and was replaced by an acting senior teacher.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school federated with two other local primary schools this year as the Harnser Federation ('Harnser' is Norfolk dialect for 'heron'). The three schools share the interim headteacher and a single governing body that was newly formed at Easter 2015.
- In September 2015, the Harnser Federation is scheduled to join with a federation of two junior schools and an amalgamation of an infant and junior school to form a larger organisation called the Nebula Partnership. An executive headteacher has been appointed to oversee this partnership.
- Some pupils have joined the school other than at the usual times, for example, at the end of Year 5.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' achievement by making sure that:
 - marking is fully consistent in showing pupils how to improve their work
 - pupils have the time to act upon the advice teachers give them so that their learning moves on
 - teachers have the same high expectations of the most able in other subjects as they do in English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of turbulence at senior leadership level. For a small school, having changes in both headteacher and senior teacher is significant. However, the interim headteacher has brought welcome stability to the school this year and steered it skilfully through challenging times. He has prepared the staff well for joining the Nebula Partnership in September. Despite the changes in staffing and particular disruption for the Year 5 and 6 class, leaders have secured good progress over time. They have improved the quality of teaching and maintained good behaviour.
- There is strong leadership of teaching. The interim headteacher has given teachers clear feedback and there have been opportunities for them to share good practice, both within the school and across the federation.
- The school has built upon its caring ethos, in which all pupils are valued as individuals, and given an equal opportunity to succeed. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Middle leaders have assumed responsibilities this year that have had a positive impact on school improvement, such as developing the teaching of phonics. The current acting senior teacher accepted this challenging job at short notice, and also had extensive, personal teaching responsibilities, yet contributed very well to bringing about improvements. For example, the teaching of mathematics was improved. Staff have all worked very well together under difficult circumstances, putting the needs of the pupils first. Consequently, pupils have made good progress during the last year and achieved well.
- The pupil premium is spent effectively on supporting disadvantaged pupils, so that there are no gaps in attainment between them and other pupils. The progress of these pupils is tracked carefully to make sure they are not at risk of falling behind. They are also given every opportunity to take a full part in the life of the school, receiving help where necessary, for example, to go on visits.
- The curriculum caters effectively for pupils' learning needs. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. All staff share the school's vision and values with the pupils and with the wider community. These include British values, such as tolerance and fair play. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong. They learn about cultures and religions different from their own and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils benefit from residential visits and joint events with their counterparts from other schools in the Harnser Federation. The pupils were keen to say that a recent sports activity day involving the three schools was a great success. They enjoyed competing against other pupils of the same age and made new friends. The primary physical education and sport premium is spent effectively on providing an enhanced range of sporting activities and coaching for pupils. These opportunities have led to pupils' increased participation in sport, including taking part in tournaments with other schools. Staff have also had the opportunity to improve their skills in teaching sport.
- Parents are very conscious of all the changes in leadership at the school, and some feel dissatisfied with the disruption to their children's education. The added move to first federation and, soon, partnership with other schools had led to concerns among some parents. However, an increasing proportion see the benefits for their children in having greater opportunities to take part in joint events and sharing expertise among staff. It has not been an easy year for anyone, but staff have worked tirelessly to minimise the disruption to pupils by vigorously sustaining good teaching and learning with considerable success despite all the challenges they have faced.
- The school benefits from a highly committed group of 'Friends', who raise large sums of money to support its work. The new and impressive 'trim trail' is one of the contributions they have recently made to benefit pupils' learning.
- The impact of the Harnser Federation is beneficial to the school. It enables staff to share best practice, plan the curriculum and undertake training with opportunities for pupils to learn together. Leaders

anticipate extending these opportunities when the new Nebula Partnership is formed in September.

- The local authority has been an enormous support to the school and has supported it very well through all the changes. The local authority made available the interim headteacher, who has done so much to stabilise a very difficult situation and move the school on. There has also been considerable support for teaching staff and governors, particularly with assembling information on the school's performance. The local authority set up a school improvement board to check closely the school's progress over time and this has been very helpful in supporting the drive for improvement.
- Leaders and governors ensure that all safeguarding measures are applied and meet requirements. They are effective at keeping pupils safe. They make all necessary checks on staff and keep careful records of support for vulnerable pupils and their families.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are effective. They are very knowledgeable about the available information on progress and attainment so that they know exactly how well different groups of pupils are doing, including disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Governors also have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, gained through their regular visits and from the information they receive from the interim headteacher. Governors have taken decisive action to secure good leadership for the school, and have provided strong levels of support and challenge through difficult circumstances. Governors have confronted any underperformance and acted swiftly in the interests of the pupils. They know how the management of teachers' performance is organised and check that targets for improvement are met. Governors will not reward teaching unless they are convinced that outcomes for pupils merit it.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Better teaching since the previous inspection has led to improved attitudes to learning among pupils. They find lessons interesting and are eager to take part. They work hard in class and cooperate well together. They take a pride in their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is good around the school. They are polite and friendly. They take responsibility as 'buddies' and help with various jobs. The older pupils take care of the younger ones.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. The older pupils have coped well with changes of teaching of staff this year, when their class teacher left suddenly. They said the changes helped to prepare them well for secondary school, where they knew they would have to adapt to having several teachers rather than the same one all the time.
- Pupils are keen to support those less fortunate than themselves and raise money for charity. For example, pupils decorated a dragon, which is on public display in the Norwich Forum, along with 120 others to raise money for a local children's charity. They reach out to the local community and take part in events held at the church and elsewhere.
- There are a small number of pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. These pupils are well supported by teaching staff so that any disruption is kept to a minimum. On rare occasions, some pupils lose concentration when the work is too easy for them.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying and that pupils are kind to one another. They are confident that adults will help them if they have any concerns. Pupils know about different types of bullying such as cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying. They support one another in promoting anti-bullying, so

challenge any behaviour they consider unacceptable.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe in a variety of different situations. They receive cycling training and learn how to give first aid. They learn good life skills, such as resuscitation in first aid.
- The school has done much to make pupils aware of how to keep safe on the internet. They know that they should not give their personal details and risks involved with using social media.
- Pupils take an active role in ensuring that the school site is safe. For example, they were involved in considering potential risks to be overcome when designing a new 'trim trail' for the playground.
- Teaching staff care well for vulnerable pupils. The nurture groups help pupils to develop their social skills and talk through any issues they may have. This provision helps them to cope better with working in their classes.
- Attendance was above average in the last year and punctuality is good.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is good. The teaching of phonics is particularly strong. Teaching in the early years is outstanding.
- Teachers make good use of information on pupils' progress and attainment to plan work that helps to move pupils' learning on. They check how well pupils are progressing in class and usually adapt teaching accordingly to meet their needs. However, on occasions they do not challenge the most able to produce the best work they can, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Teachers use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding and to encourage them to think more deeply than they would otherwise have done.
- Teachers give pupils opportunities to apply literacy and numeracy skills in practical ways. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils designed and costed an amusement park, making sure it ran at a profit. Year 1 and 2 pupils researched the Shackleton Polar Expedition and local lifeboat man, Henry Blogg. As a result, pupils are competent users of literacy and numeracy in different situations.
- Pupils use the targets they are set by their teachers to help them assess their own progress in literacy and numeracy. Their self-assessment is helpful to them in understanding what they could do better.
- The teaching of reading is good. Since the previous inspection, much work has been done to support struggling readers and improve pupils' skills in phonics. As a result, pupils confidently sound out new words. Older pupils enjoy reading and speak with enthusiasm about their favourite authors.
- Pupils learn well in writing because teachers give them many opportunities to write and to apply their skills. Presentation of pupils' work has improved greatly. All pupils are using a clearly joined script, an action adopted successfully across the Harnser Federation.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. Teachers have focused on developing pupils' reasoning skills. This has helped them in solving mathematical problems.
- While there have been improvements in marking, it is not consistently good, particularly in making clear to pupils how to improve their work. Sometimes teachers do not give pupils the time to act upon the advice they give them. Consequently, pupils do not make the progress they could from correcting their work and improving their understanding and accuracy in the tasks they go on to do next.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning because they are trained well and work closely with class teachers. Teaching assistants compare their assessment with that of teachers on

how well pupils are making progress so that any deficiencies in pupils' learning and understanding can be remedied.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the school with skills that are broadly typical for their age, but often below in personal and social development and mathematical understanding. They make very rapid progress in the Reception class because of the outstanding provision which meets all their learning needs exceptionally well. In 2014, most children reached a good level of development by the end of the year and, in 2015, the vast majority did so.
- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1. There were too few pupils in Year 2 in 2015 to comment on their attainment without identifying them. However, all 16 Year 1 pupils reached the required standard in the national phonics check in 2015, a great improvement on 2014. This better performance was because leaders reorganised how phonics was taught and the more stringent approach has made a major difference to pupils' progress.
- Analysis of pupils' work in their books shows that Years 1 and 2 have made good progress over time in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. The published data on pupils' performance should be treated with caution because small numbers of pupils make analysis unreliable.
- Current Year 6 pupils have made good progress from their different starting points, although data should be treated with caution because of the small numbers in each year group. Some pupils entered the school in Year 6 with low attainment and, although they made good progress, did not have time to reach the overall standards of other pupils when they took the national tests this year. Standards attained were influenced by the relatively few pupils in the year group and provisional results were below average in reading and writing and broadly average in mathematics. Pupils who had been in the school through Key Stage 2 did better.
- There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in both 2014 and 2015 to comment on their attainment without identifying individuals. However, school information, scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations show that disadvantaged pupils make good progress across all year groups and their attainment is similar to that of other pupils.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is generally good. They progress as well as their classmates because they receive well-planned additional support to meet their individual learning needs.
- While the most-able pupils mainly achieve well, some did not reach the highest levels of attainment in 2015. Teachers generally have high expectations of these pupils, although this is less apparent in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Across the school, books and data show that pupils are making good progress and that their attainment is often above expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children's achievement in the early years is outstanding. This is because of the consistently high quality teaching they receive, which enables them to make very rapid progress ahead of that made in other year groups. All pupils are very well prepared for Year 1 by the time they leave Reception.
- The early years classroom is a stimulating resource, with plenty to interest and engage children indoors and outside. Teaching staff ensure that every activity helps to accelerate children's learning. For example, the 'mechanic' role-play area gives children an opportunity to simulate practical motor-vehicle maintenance. Clipboards with detailed checklists enabled them to give the 'owners' a comprehensive

breakdown of the tasks they had carried out.

- The teacher's very high expectations of what the children can achieve transform the early years. Children are keen to succeed in completing challenges and take great pride in sharing their achievements with the class and wider school. For example, a girl in reporting how she had met her challenge 'to persevere' said, 'I kept trying and trying and I didn't give up!'
- Children are engrossed in their activities and share resources with great consideration. Their behaviour is exemplary. All adults ensure the children are kept safe.
- The leadership and management of the early years are outstanding. Teaching staff know the children extremely well as individuals and stringently record their achievements in highly detailed 'learning journeys'. Consequently, leaders rapidly identify any weaknesses in learning and the children achieve exceptionally well. Leaders have excellent relationships with parents, who are very actively involved in supporting their children's learning.

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	121082
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	463544

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Toni Rhodes
Headteacher	John Marshall-Grint (Interim Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2013
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