

Snape Community Primary School

Church Road, Snape, Saxmundham IP17 1QG

Inspection dates

4–5 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- While leaders now have an accurate view of the school and rapid action has been taken since the appointment of the interim headteacher, too little has been done soon enough by leaders, including governors, to prevent a decline in aspects of the school's provision.
- The quality of teaching, while good in Years 1 and 2, is too variable in key stage 2.
- Most-able pupils are insufficiently challenged in key stage 2 and do not make rapid enough progress. Too few pupils achieve above the expected standard by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers in key stage 2 lack sufficient subject knowledge in mathematics. Pupils do not develop a strong understanding of mathematical concepts. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics is too slow and achievement is not high enough.
- Achievement in subjects such as history and religious education is not as high as it should be because teachers do not expect pupils to produce work of a high enough standard.

The school has the following strengths

- Children benefit from a good start to school. Children in the Reception Year benefit from being taught with older pupils because teaching is well matched to the range of needs and abilities in the class.
- Opportunities for developing artistic and creative skills are strong. Music, art and drama feature highly in the school's curriculum and 'skills afternoons' contribute to pupils' development well.
- Pupils enjoy a warm and caring environment where they feel valued and known as individuals. As a result they behave well, and are respectful of each other and of adults. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in the above-average attendance of pupils at the school.
- Parents are supportive of the school. They welcome the family atmosphere and the sense of community that is engendered at the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - secure long-term and sustainable arrangements for the school's leadership are put in place
 - the governing body continues to develop its strategic role and hold leaders to account stringently
 - the leadership roles of all staff continue to be developed.
- Ensure that good teaching is consistent across all classes and subjects by:
 - leaders continuing to make their expectations clear and hold all staff to account
 - providing more opportunities for teachers to share best practice and drawing on the good practice seen in other schools
 - focusing monitoring more closely on the impact that teaching is having on pupils' learning over time
 - teachers having equally high expectations of what pupils should achieve in all subjects.
- Ensure most-able pupils make more rapid progress in key stage 2 by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of the progress that most-able pupils can and should be achieving
 - teachers using assessment within lessons more precisely to identify pupils' needs
 - teachers planning tasks and questions that deepen understanding of most-able pupils.
- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics in key stage 2 by:
 - developing teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics
 - ensuring there is a clear whole-school approach to teaching mathematics that reflects the new national curriculum requirements
 - ensuring that teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning about mathematics and to apply their skills to problems and investigations.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the interim headteacher took on her role in September 2015, leaders including governors have recognised the weaknesses in the school and are now taking effective action to secure improvements. Plans for improving the school correctly identify what needs to be done and include useful milestones so that governors can check the school's progress towards improvement. However, not enough has been done soon enough and as a result, pupils' progress in key stage 2 is too slow, particularly in mathematics.
- Leadership of those other than the interim headteacher is underdeveloped. Previously, too much of the responsibility for improving the school had been left solely to the headteacher. However, the deputy headteacher is now developing her role in improving teaching and learning across the school and is providing good support for the headteacher in driving forward improvements. In addition, other teachers, such as the curriculum leader, are being given opportunities to develop their leadership roles.
- The interim headteacher and the deputy headteacher now carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning. They provide feedback both to individuals and to the staff team. Sometimes this feedback does not identify clearly enough the impact that teaching is having on learning over time, and the points identified for improvement are not always acted on by teachers. Consequently, leaders have not yet been successful in ensuring that all teaching is good. There is variability in the quality of teaching between classes and across subjects.
- School policies are not applied consistently by all staff, for example the school's home reading and marking policies. Some staff do not fully recognise the school's weaknesses and do not fully share the headteacher's vision for the school's future development.
- A broad and balanced curriculum is in place with a thematic approach to many subjects. This is working particularly well in the youngest class. Pupils benefit from varied opportunities such as to learn the trumpet and to perform plays. They enjoy scientific investigations and hold art exhibitions. The 'Friday afternoon skills' sessions also help pupils develop the skills of resilience and perseverance. After-school clubs also enhance the curriculum and promote learning. However, in key stage 2, opportunities to extend and deepen learning in some subjects such as history are not developed sufficiently.
- Pupils learn about values, including British values, through assemblies and work in class. Pupils spoke with the inspector about the emphasis being given to developing resilience in learning. Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils develop good social skills because these are encouraged in a variety of ways, such as through working with others from all year groups for certain tasks, and taking part in inter-school sports competitions and musical events.
- Funding provided to support disadvantaged pupils is used well. Leaders ensure that this is used to support academic achievement through additional teaching support. It is also used to support pupils socially, for example by providing funding for trips.
- Sports funding provided by the government to support achievement and participation in sports is well used. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in a variety of dance and sporting activities and competitions, and every pupil in the school has swimming lessons. The number of pupils who take part in activities has increased and this is making a positive contribution to pupils' health and well-being.
- Parents are supportive of the school. They welcome the school's family atmosphere and the good communication they enjoy with individual teachers.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Following the departure of the previous substantive headteacher, governors had negotiated the appointment of a permanent shared headteacher with a local school but these plans collapsed. They recognise that the interim arrangements put in place for the school's leadership mean that the current improvements are at risk and long-term plans need to be made. They are actively investigating partnerships with local schools and trusts. However, as yet, no firm plans have been made and this is causing uncertainty and concern among staff and parents.
 - Governors acknowledge that until the interim headteacher took up her post, they had not been sufficiently robust in checking aspects of the school's work, including ensuring that teaching and learning and pupils' progress were good. As a result, the quality of education provided by the school has declined since the time of the previous inspection.

- Governors, supported by the local authority, now have a much better understanding of their roles and are carrying these out more effectively. However, this support was provided too late to prevent standards from slipping. Governors now visit regularly with a specific focus on aspects taken from the school improvement plan. They ask challenging questions, for example about how reading is taught and how homework is promoting learning.
- Governors have a sound oversight of the school’s finances. They know how the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent and are able to demonstrate how this has had a positive impact on the progress of these pupils.
- Governors are now holding staff to account more stringently than in the past. With the interim headteacher, they have reviewed the arrangements for managing staff performance so that they are confident that only performance that is good or better will be rewarded.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school takes all necessary steps to ensure that pupils are kept safe in school. Staff, volunteers and visitors are checked carefully and all statutory requirements are met. Concerns raised about individual pupils are recorded appropriately and followed up where necessary with external agencies. Staff receive regular training in how to keep pupils safe. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil’s welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good across the school and in all subjects. Until recently, leaders did not check the quality of teaching carefully enough and have not provided sufficient support and advice to teachers. The interim headteacher is now providing regular feedback to teachers, but this is not always being acted on sufficiently to ensure improvements.
- Teachers in key stage 2 lack sufficient subject knowledge required to teach mathematics well enough. Consequently, too often pupils in key stage 2 are taught methods by rote which they do not understand and so cannot apply in varying contexts. Teachers in key stage 2 give too few opportunities for pupils to apply mathematical skills within varied contexts, to reason about numbers or to investigate and solve mathematical problems.
- While in Years 1 and 2 the needs of the most able pupils are well met, this is not the case in Years 3 to 6. In these classes, teachers do not assess pupils’ needs with sufficient precision and use this regularly to plan tasks for the most able pupils that challenge them and deepen their knowledge and understanding. Teachers do not ask questions which require the most able pupils to think hard, or which challenge them to explain their thinking. Consequently, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers’ expectations in some subjects such as history and religious education are not high enough. The work produced by pupils is variable in quality.
- Teachers mainly comply with the school’s marking and feedback policy. In key stage 1, comments are used well by pupils and help them to improve their subsequent work. In key stage 2, some comments are insufficiently precise in identifying steps for improvement and their impact on learning is not as good.
- Changes to the way in which writing is taught have had a positive impact on pupils’ progress, particularly in Years 1 and 2. However, while older pupils are given regular opportunities to practise their grammar and develop their vocabulary through exercises, they are not helped to apply what they have learned to their writing regularly enough.
- In most lessons pupils behave well. They share resources and cooperate. However, occasionally, where lessons are not sufficiently well planned to meet pupils’ needs, some pupils lose interest and do not concentrate as much as they could.
- Teaching in key stage 1 is good. Teachers and other adults know each pupil’s capabilities and use this knowledge to plan activities carefully, so that pupils make good progress.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils are taught phonics skills well in small groups. The school’s focus on promoting reading is evident around the school through displays, and pupils spoke with the inspector about the higher profile given to reading for pleasure. As a result, pupils enjoy reading and make good progress.
- The needs of pupils with special educational needs or disability are well met because teachers know the pupils well and plan carefully for them. Teaching assistants provide good support for these pupils, working with them individually and also in groups.

- Pupils are given good opportunities to apply skills across the curriculum. For example in key stage 1, pupils carried out a science investigation to find out who had spread germs across fairy land as part of a topic on fairy tales. This provided a motivating context for learning which pupils enjoyed and were keen to take part in.
- In science, pupils are given regular opportunities to carry out practical investigations. Pupils make predictions drawing on their prior scientific knowledge, and draw conclusions about what they have discovered about scientific concepts. Pupils make good progress in science.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They told the inspector about the many aspects they enjoy, and particularly that the school is small and everyone knows each other very well.
- Pupils feel safe in school. The school teaches pupils about how to keep themselves safe including when using technologies such as the internet and mobile phones. Pupils know exactly what to do if they encounter problems. Pupils say there is always someone in school to speak with if they are upset or worried about anything.
- All parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their child is safe in school and that their child is well looked after at school.
- Attendance at the school is good because pupils enjoy coming to school. One parent spoken to during the inspection said that her child 'skipped to school every morning'.
- Good opportunities are provided to develop pupils' spiritual, moral and social understanding. For example, pupils performed a Shakespeare play for the community and they regularly visit the village hall and develop their social skills by interacting with older people. They are given good opportunities to learn about ecology and caring for the environment during the Friday skills sessions. However, pupils are given fewer opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes. They cooperate with each other and listen to each other's views. They are polite and respectful towards adults and respond willingly to adults' requests.
- Pupils are given opportunities to take on responsibilities. For example, pupils wrote applications and were interviewed for positions as office assistants. Older pupils take responsibility for tidying up the hall and giving out playtime equipment. They do so very willingly, taking their turn on the rotas.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection were confident that bullying was extremely rare and that any incident that did occur would be dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff so that it did not re-occur. Parents agree that behaviour at the school is good.
- Pupils told the inspector that they understand the school's system for managing behaviour using red and yellow cards, although some of the older pupils did not feel it is consistently used by teachers and so is not always effective.
- Where teachers plan lessons that are well matched to pupils' needs, pupils behave well and show enthusiasm for learning. However, occasionally, where lessons are less interesting, pupils are not as well motivated and do not apply themselves as well as they could.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- By the end of Year 6, most pupils at Snape Community Primary School achieve the standard expected for their age. However, too few achieve above this standard because most-able pupils are not given sufficiently challenging work by teachers.
- The progress of pupils currently in key stage 2, while strong in reading and writing, is not as good in mathematics because teachers lack sufficient subject knowledge. As a result, pupils are not given enough opportunities to fully understand and apply their learning in mathematics, and progress is too slow.

- Achievement in some subjects, such as history and religious education, is not high enough because teachers do not expect pupils to produce work of the same standard as they do in lessons such as English.
- In Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics has been consistently good since the time of the previous inspection, while the proportion achieving above this standard has been variable. Leaders have been aware of this variability and put in place steps to ensure that achievement of most-able pupils in Year 2 improves. As a result, a good proportion of pupils currently in Year 2 are working above the expected standard for their age.
- Phonics teaching is good and provides a good foundation for the development of future reading skills. Those pupils currently in Year 1 are set to achieve the expected standard in the phonics check at the end of the year, so that the decline in Year 1 phonics outcomes over the past two years is reversed. The school's work to promote reading for pleasure has been effective and pupils across the school are making good progress in reading and achieving well.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress. Leaders carefully plan for these pupils' needs and check that steps taken are effective in supporting these pupils. For example, where pupils have social and emotional needs, staff plan activities in lessons and at playtimes which help encourage social interactions and establish friendships.
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress which is as good as or better than others in the school because the additional funding provided is carefully targeted to maximise its impact on learning. Leaders identify any barriers to learning and take steps to address these.

Early years provision

is good

- Most children enter the Reception Year with skills that are broadly typical for their age. Since the previous inspection, the proportion of children who achieved the expected standard for their age has been too low. This is because insufficient attention has been paid to the development of children's skills in number. However, this has now been addressed and children currently in the Reception Year are making good progress from their starting points.
- A good range of activities are provided both inside the classroom and in the outside areas. Children have opportunities to participate in creative activities, such as painting and drawing, role play such as the dentist surgery, and literacy activities, including using the outdoor reading area.
- Children are given opportunities to work with adults in small groups, to take part in whole-class sessions and to work independently. This provides a good balance of learning opportunities for children.
- Children show high levels of perseverance and independence. They choose tasks confidently and remain with them for extended periods. For example, children enjoyed drawing themselves on the ground and spent considerable time adding details to the face and colouring in the large figures neatly with chalk.
- Children are supported to develop good social skills. They play together sensibly, sharing resources and discussing their play. They are able to speak in sentences and to respond correctly to questions such as 'Which is taller?' and 'How do you make purple?'
- Children benefit from being in a mixed-aged class because teaching is modified well to ensure that their needs are met. For example, during whole-class sessions, questions are planned so that some are clearly pitched at the youngest children and others at the oldest and at the most able. At the same time, older children provide good role models from whom the youngest children learn.
- Induction procedures are good. Staff visit the various pre-school providers prior to children starting at the school. Children also have a number of induction sessions before they start school. As a result, children settle quickly and parents say that the transition into school is very smooth.
- Children are kept safe and their welfare needs are well met because staff know each child very well. They are aware of their needs and abilities and plan for these well.
- Occasionally, when adults intervene in independent play, they take too much control of activities so that children are not enabled to make their own choices.

School details

Unique reference number	124607
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10010945

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Hill
Interim Headteacher	Sarah Gallagher
Telephone number	01728 688373
Website	www.snapeprimaryschool.com
Email address	office@snapeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 October 2010

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized school with three mixed-aged classes. Since the time of the previous inspection, the school has extended the age range of pupils for whom it caters and now takes pupils from Reception to Year 6.
- Children in the Reception Year are taught in a mixed-aged class with pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.
- There are currently no pupils with English as an additional language and almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school has one pupil with special educational needs or disability supported by an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs.
- The school is currently led by an interim headteacher, who took up post in September 2015.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons in all classes. Some joint observations were carried out with senior leaders.
- The inspector looked at pupils' books, school assessment information, the headteacher's evaluation of teaching and learning, and a range of school documents.
- The inspector spoke with a small number of parents, took account of 16 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and met with some pupils from Years 2 to 6.
- The inspector heard a small number of pupils read.
- The inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority and with two members of the governing body.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made during the recruitment of new staff, arrangements for e-safety (keeping children safe online when using electronic media) and risk assessments.

Inspection team

Maria Curry, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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