

South Wootton Junior School

Hall Lane, South Wootton, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3JZ

Inspection dates

30 November-1 December 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors have brought about the required improvements identified at the previous inspection. Staff are united in supporting the improvement goals of the school.
- Leaders hold accurate views about the school's performance and have concentrated their efforts on the areas which needed most attention, including the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Teachers demonstrate effective subject knowledge and make sure that teaching supports the learning of pupils of different abilities. As a result, pupils are making good progress across a wide range of subjects in all year groups.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning are good. They show commitment and interest in their work and are very respectful towards their teachers and each other. Exclusions are no longer occurring.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They appreciate the values of their school and work hard to live by them. As a result, relationships are positive between pupils and staff.
- Pupils' attendance has improved. Leaders have taken effective steps to reduce persistent absence for all groups of pupils.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of the different people, beliefs and cultures within their country and show respect to people who are different from them.
- Pupils' commitment to British values, including democracy, liberty and the rule of law is good. The work of the school council is effective and helps establish pupils' support for democratic government.
- Governors fulfil their leadership role well. They offer effective support and challenge to senior leaders and help set the strategic vision of the school.
- There are occasions when pupils, including the most able, do not receive sufficiently demanding work, or they choose easier tasks. As a result, they do not learn as well as they are capable in some lessons.
- In mathematics, pupils, including the most able, are sometimes not helped to move on to the highest-level work when they are ready. As a result, they are unable to apply their mathematical knowledge and master the very highest skills.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils, including the most able, reach the highest standards expected for their different ages, by making sure that:
 - teachers always guide pupils to attempt work that will challenge them, when different activities are offered in lessons
 - in mathematics, pupils apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to the most demanding work more rapidly, as soon as they have shown that they have the understanding and confidence to do it.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management Good

- This school is led effectively. The headteacher leads with clarity and purpose and is ably assisted by his capable deputy and other senior staff. Leaders and governors have established a convincing vision of high expectations for pupils' academic achievement and personal development, and all staff work to achieve it. As a result of these strengths, the quality of both teaching and pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. Parents also agree that the quality of education has securely improved.
- Leaders' assessment of the school's performance is accurate and they accurately identify any remaining areas for improvement and focus on them effectively. They have been particularly successful in analysing national test results and use the findings to adjust teaching across the school. The school's strategic improvement plan addresses these priorities, and arrangements for checking on its progress are timely and effective. Governors are closely involved in these procedures.
- Leaders' arrangements for checking on the quality of teaching are rigorous and help its improvement. Leaders look at pupils' work, analyse teachers' assessment records, and meet with pupils and teachers to discuss their progress. They also visit lessons regularly and their judgements about the quality of teaching are accurate. Leaders use these findings to provide helpful support and challenge for staff where needed.
- All teachers and support staff receive effective professional development. The school contributes to staff training across west Norfolk, and teachers and support staff report their satisfaction about the opportunities provided to them. As a result of these positive conditions, the high staff turnover reported at the time of the previous inspection is stabilised and all teachers have been successfully retained.
- Arrangements for managing the performance of teachers are effective and help drive improvements in teaching and pupils' progress. Teachers' performance targets are challenging and match the priorities of the school improvement plan. Leaders require teachers to offer detailed evidence prior to any salary decisions and governors carry out effective checks on these arrangements. As a result, pay awards and the promotion of staff reflect the improvements made to teaching since the previous inspection.
- Subject leaders make an effective contribution to the improvement of teaching and learning. They demonstrate secure subject knowledge and carefully plan for the development of pupils' skills to help them make secure progress during their time in the school. They work effectively as a team and meet regularly to review the development of assessment, pupils' progress and teaching methods.
- Leaders have successfully improved the quality of written and verbal feedback to pupils since the previous inspection. All teachers follow the school policy meticulously and pupils act well on their advice, which contributes to their good progress.



- Target-setting arrangements reflect the high expectations of leaders and teachers. Pupils receive demanding academic targets and leaders make regular checks on their progress and organise effective help, if any require support. These arrangements are particularly effective for pupils whose lower starting points mean they need to catch up on their reading skills or who are in need of additional support in mathematics.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding. As a result, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is now similar to that of other pupils nationally. Following accurate assessments, each pupil is provided with additional support and tuition, which is matched to their knowledge and skills. Leaders have focused on improving pupils' achievement in mathematics and reading, particularly those who started at the school with average attainment. As a result, these pupils are now making good progress in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders' use of additional funding to promote pupils' physical education and participation in competitive sports is effective. The school's subject leader for physical education is very capable and has shared expertise with other local schools and brought in the services of experienced coaches, in order to improve the quality of teaching and develop the teaching skills of staff. Leaders have invested in high-quality equipment and facilities that will last into the future, and they have developed links with regional sporting organisations for hockey, basketball, gymnastics and football. As a result of this effective work, far more pupils are now regularly active in competitive sporting activities than was the case in the past.
- The curriculum is effective and well organised to support pupils' learning and the development of their skills across a wide range of subjects. Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have made sure that pupils have the opportunity to develop their written and mathematical skills across most subjects. Subject leaders have improved the way in which work is planned so that subject skills are thoroughly developed in art and design, music, reading, computer studies, sciences, history, geography and religious education. The curriculum is effective in supporting the development of pupils' personal values, which include respect, cooperation, resilience, independence and curiosity.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Leaders and teachers offer an effective programme of assemblies, morning discussion sessions and extra-curricular activities, which help pupils to appreciate the importance of the school's values. As a result, their education makes pupils highly aware and respectful towards the different cultures and beliefs in their country.
- The school's promotion of British values is a strength. Pupils are successfully introduced to democratic values through their work as elected school councillors or as voters. They understand the important link between modern democracy, its benefits and its foundations in ancient Greece, and they are able to explain how laws are made, including examples of how their work has improved conditions in their school. Pupils demonstrate a very clear, age-appropriate commitment to democratic values and are resistant to political ideas which are extreme or threaten democracy.
- The local authority has commissioned effective support for the school from external advisers who visit annually. They offer an accurate view of the school's performance and provide useful written advice to leaders in order to help them address remaining areas for development.



The headteacher and senior leaders work closely with schools across west Norfolk to share expertise in teaching, assessment and the development of leadership. Their contribution is effective and, as a result, the school has become a regional centre for staff training and school improvement work as part of Sheringham Teaching School.

Governance

- Governors contribute effectively to school leadership and provide leaders with a careful balance of support and challenge. Since the previous inspection, they have focused their attention on leaders' improvement of teaching, pupils' progress and the quality of the curriculum. Governors have adjusted their roles and responsibilities to reflect these priorities, and regularly visit the school to meet with leaders who are responsible for these areas of the school's work. Consequently, governors are well informed about the performance of the school and hold leaders to account for their work. This is reflected in the challenging questions they raise about the school's performance and their monitoring of the improvement plan.
- Governors meet all their statutory duties, including their arrangements for overseeing the work of the school to keep pupils safe.
- Governors make sure that leaders are held to account over their use of additional funding to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors are effective in their considerations about staff performance management and salary progression. They review all pay awards carefully and require all decisions to be supported by convincing evidence for targets having been met.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- As a result of their effective safeguarding work, staff and governors have created a vigilant culture where pupils are effectively protected from risk.
- All staff and governors are suitably trained to fulfil their safeguarding roles and duties. Training covers all areas of safeguarding and includes arrangements to protect pupils from potential harm when using communication technologies and the internet. Staff are also trained to protect pupils from the potential risks of extremism or radicalisation. Leaders make careful checks on the effectiveness of these arrangements and levels of staff awareness. As a result of these effective arrangements, staff are confident about safeguarding work and know what to do if they have concerns.
- Staff act effectively on any concerns, which are accurately recorded and reported to the leaders responsible, who then take appropriate action. Safeguarding referrals made to local authorities and other appropriate agencies are undertaken quickly and effectively.
- Leaders responsible for safeguarding are well informed about the pupils they are helping. Their record-keeping is thorough and they meet regularly to review their work. As a result, they are able to act quickly if circumstances change and make sure that pupils get the support they need.
- Full checks are made on the suitability of people to visit the school or be employed as members of staff. Recruitment of staff is safely managed and several teachers and governors are appropriately trained for this work.



- The school's site is secure and access to the premises is carefully managed by signingin procedures and identity checks.
- The school's safeguarding policy is compliant with national requirements and staff are aware of how to use it effectively in the event of a concern.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is now good for pupils of all age groups within the school. Following the high level of changes in teaching staff at the time of the previous inspection, pupils have benefited from stable staffing for two years, along with secure improvements made to the quality of teaching.
- Teachers make effective use of their subject knowledge and pupils' assessment information to plan activities that are sufficiently demanding for pupils of different abilities. Work is set to different levels of difficulty and pupils are guided to select tasks that help them use their knowledge skilfully in order to make good progress. One good example was in a history lesson, where all pupils selected suitably challenging writing tasks in order to demonstrate their understanding about the living conditions experienced by people in Iron Age communities. Their teacher and teaching assistant supported them to improve the quality of their writing by helping them select connective words and accurate historical vocabulary.
- Teachers establish very positive relationships with their pupils. Teachers are enthusiastic about learning and communicate high expectations about working hard, accepting challenges and not giving up. They also carefully check on pupils' progress during lessons to encourage them and make sure they understand their work. As a result of this effective support, pupils are confident and strive to succeed.
- Teachers' use of questioning supports effective learning. They use questions to challenge pupils' thinking and use of their knowledge skilfully. One good example was in a poetry lesson. The teacher used questioning to encourage pupils to share the effective features of a poem about Father Christmas and his magical delivery of presents. As a result, pupils were able to explain the importance of selecting the relevant language, rhyme patterns and imaginative subject matter for their poems, in order to convey the intended seasonal mood.
- Teachers' explanation and demonstration skills are effective and they use high-quality visual resources and wall displays to help pupils understand new ideas, concepts and skills. As a result, pupils are able to handle difficult new work quickly and confidently.
- Teaching assistants are used to support pupils' learning effectively. They work closely with teachers in order to organise the help they provide to pupils. They receive high-quality training and they are particularly skilled in supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their questioning skills are effective and help pupils to make good use of their knowledge and skills. As a result of their work, the pupils they support make good progress.



- Reading is well taught to pupils of all abilities and they make good progress as a result. Teachers use assessments and test results to adjust their work to help pupils of all ages to improve their reading skills. Those who need help to secure their phonics knowledge are given effective support from the point at which they enter the school. As a result, their ability to correctly pronounce the sounds made by letters and words improves quickly and their confidence grows. In all year groups, pupils' comprehension abilities are more secure and their understanding of story structures helps them to skilfully summarise a plot. They are also able to explain their assessment of characters by selecting evidence to support their views. Teaching is increasingly effective in helping older pupils and especially the most able to understand the use of punctuation, and this helps them read aloud with accurate expression. Reading is effectively encouraged and pupils are provided with interesting books that are suitably challenging for their abilities.
- The teaching of writing skills and handwriting has improved since the previous inspection. Younger pupils are effectively taught to form their letters and, as a result, they write with greater accuracy. Written skills are developed effectively across a wide range of subjects including history, English, sciences, geography and religious education. As a result, pupils are able to explain the living conditions of people who lived in the past and compare them with other time periods. They are also able to produce reports that demonstrate their effective use of scientific methods and to use the correct terms to distinguish between different animal species. In religious education, they are supported to explain the beliefs of different people. Spelling skills and vocabulary are clearly improving as the result of consistent use of dictionaries and thesauruses.
- Mathematics is taught effectively and pupils are making good progress in this subject. Teaching supports pupils of all age groups and classes to secure their knowledge of numbers, operations and multiplication tables. Teachers' explanations of concepts and problems are effective. As a result, pupils have the knowledge required when they are provided with more difficult types of calculation work. Pupils' work shows that teachers help them to think through their knowledge of number rules when they attempt problems, and this helps them work with confidence.
- Although mathematics teaching is helping pupils to make good progress, some with average starting points and some of the most able do not learn as well as they could in some lessons. This is because they sometimes spend too much time on activities that do not enable them to apply their knowledge and skills to higher-order work as quickly as they are able.
- While teachers normally plan activities that are suitably challenging, there are occasions when work set for pupils does not contain sufficient demand, or the pupils select tasks which are not difficult enough to help them thoroughly develop their skills. This was, for example, seen in some guided reading work.
- Parents agree that teaching is good and are supportive of the school's use of regular homework to improve pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills. A small number do not agree with the extended homework assignments that are set for some classes. However, inspectors found that these assignments are useful in preparing older pupils for their secondary school experience.



Teaching is good in a wide range of subjects. These include history, geography, religious education, physical education, languages, arts and music.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are very polite and show respect to each other and visitors. They are considerate of other people's feelings and clearly accept and appreciate the values of their school.
- Pupils make an important contribution to school life. They take up positions of responsibility such as team captains, prefects, head boy and head girl. They also undertake important work as school councillors and compete for elected office. Their council is effective. It has improved the school menu and set rules for the safe use of bicycles and scooters on the school site. The council meets regularly and pupils work closely with senior leaders to make final decisions on policies.
- Pupils are active in their local community and are proud to help others. They do this through charity work and are currently supporting the restoration of the local Wootton Park.
- In lessons, pupils show good manners when listening to their teacher or each other. When working together, they are helpful and cooperative with one another.
- Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to be ambitious about what they can achieve and this is a strength of the school's work. Some are provided with very useful opportunities to experience university life by visiting Cambridge University and completing extended essays and projects in English and mathematics. Others take up orchestral instruments from an early age and become confident in public performance skills.
- All staff and governors take particular care to keep pupils safe from harm. Pupils agree that they feel safe and that bullying in all its forms is extremely rare at this school. Most parents report their total confidence in the school's work to keep their children safe and tackle any bullying. A small number of parents do not agree that the school is effective in this area of its work. However, inspectors were unable to find evidence that supported their concerns.
- The school's arrangements to keep pupils safe when using age-appropriate communication technology, games, computers and the internet are effective. As a result, pupils are clearly aware of the potential risks of sharing information with strangers or making personal contact with people they do not know.
- Arrangements to help pupils maintain a healthy lifestyle are effective. They receive physical education every day and large numbers of them participate in competitive sports. They are also provided with a healthy menu choice at lunchtimes and are clearly able to explain what makes a suitable diet.



Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All staff and governors communicate high expectations for behaviour and pupils respond well to their encouragement and the relationships they enjoy with their teachers.
- In lessons, pupils' attitudes are positive and they show a willing commitment to working hard and being successful. They take pride in the quality of their work and their efforts demonstrate that they wish to succeed.
- Around school, pupils' conduct is also good. They move around the school safely and sensibly and they are considerate to one another and adults. They are well behaved in assembly. They respect the school environment and play areas, learning resources and wall displays. At lunchtimes, they wait patiently for their food, eat it sensibly and are polite to all support staff in the dining hall.
- Attendance has improved and is average. Leaders and governors have worked effectively to communicate the importance of high attendance to all families. The school monitors attendance carefully and acts quickly to help all pupils attend school regularly and punctually. As a result of this effective work, absence rates are reducing, including persistent absence rates, particularly for those pupils whose attendance has been lower in the past, including the disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- There have been no exclusions in the current academic year and this reflects the good behaviour of pupils currently at the school. Fixed-term exclusions were above average in the past but they were reduced in 2016. There have been very few examples of prejudiced-based behaviour in the last two years and the school has dealt with them effectively.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress across the school is now good and this represents an important improvement since the previous inspection. There are no significant differences in the progress of groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged.
- Pupils enter the school with standards that are close to average or above average for their age.
- The standards achieved by Year 6 pupils rose firmly between 2014 and 2015, especially in the proportions achieving higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, which represented clear improvements in the progress pupils made from their starting points at the school. In 2016, standards reached were above the national average result in reading, writing and mathematics, and were highest in writing.



- Pupils' work, lesson visits and the school's accurate assessment records show that pupils in all year groups are continuing to make good progress, and standards are close to or above average for their different ages in reading, writing and mathematics. However, pupils' work for mathematics shows that some of the most able pupils and some with average starting points are not achieving the very highest standards they are capable of, because they are sometimes set work that does not allow them to thoroughly develop their skills.
- There are few disadvantaged pupils at the school and this makes meaningful comparisons with national results difficult. However, taking account of their individual starting points, they are making good progress, including those with the highest attainment on entry. There has also been a clear improvement in the achievement of those who enter the school with average starting points. This represents an effective improvement on past results when their progress demonstrated that they were not catching up with others nationally with similar starting points.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good when compared with other pupils with similar starting points. This is because their teachers and senior leaders responsible for their achievement assess them accurately. As a result, they are provided with effective support from teachers and teaching assistants that helps them learn well in lessons.
- The most able pupils are making good progress. They are doing particularly well in subjects that help them to develop their communication skills and written work, including history, geography, reading, sciences and arts. They are also provided with additional help to develop their subject skills more thoroughly. Their progress in mathematics is also good but, on occasion, classroom work and activities do not help them to apply their mathematical knowledge as skilfully as they could do.
- The progress of pupils who enter the school with lower attainment is good. They are carefully assessed and leaders and teachers provide effective support to help them catch up, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' work and the school's accurate assessment records demonstrate that they are making good progress, particularly in reading. This is the result of effective work to improve their phonics knowledge.
- As a result of effective teaching, pupils are securing their knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects, which include sciences, history, geography, music, religious education, arts and physical education.



School details

Unique reference number	121197
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10019610

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Dewey
Headteacher	Jonathan Rice
Telephone number	01553674596
Website	www.southwootton-jun.norfolk.sch.uk
Email address	office@southwootton-jun.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 November 2014

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Other pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils (those supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is low, and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is also low.
- Following the release of national test results in summer 2016, a small number of pupils' scores were raised in reading and mathematics, following an appeal by the school.
- There have been no changes in staffing since the previous inspection.



- The school is a regional centre for staff training and improvement work, as part of the Sheringham Teaching School.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.



Information about this inspection

- The inspection gathered evidence from lessons covering all classes within the school, some of which were visited jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of information and school documents, including self-evaluation records, curriculum information, checks on the quality of teaching, attendance and exclusion records, the school's values and the school improvement plan.
- Inspectors looked closely at the school's procedures, policies and records for the safeguarding of pupils. They were discussed with staff, the headteacher and governors.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work from each year group and listened to pupils read. They also looked at the school's records for pupils' assessment and progress.
- Inspectors held meetings with teachers, support staff, the headteacher, subject leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority. The lead inspector held a telephone meeting with the school's adviser who is commissioned by the local authority.
- Other meetings were held to discuss the improvement of the school since its previous inspection, the quality of teaching, pupils' progress, their assessment records and the performance management of staff.
- Meetings were held with the school council, prefects, the head boy and girl, and pupils from each year group at the school.
- Inspectors visited an assembly, morning sessions about the school's values, the lunch hall and observed pupils' conduct around the school at different times.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of each day of the inspection. They also took account of 62 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and written comments. They also studied 23 responses of staff to the online questionnaire, Staff View. Inspectors also met with teachers to discuss their experiences at the school and their professional development and statutory training.

Inspection team

David Turner, lead inspector

Nick Templeton

Ofsted Inspector Ofsted Inspector



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