

Corpusty Primary School

Norwich Road, Corpusty, Norwich, Norfolk NR11 6QG

Inspection dates

1–2 February 2017

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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have not tackled weaknesses in teaching rapidly enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- Teaching, while strong, particularly in key stage 2, is not consistently good across all classes or subjects. Some teaching is not well matched to pupils' needs to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check have declined over three years. Teaching of phonics is sometimes not sufficiently well planned to ensure that pupils quickly learn their sounds.
- Some checks on teaching and learning by leaders, including subject leaders, have not been sufficiently regular or rigorous. As a result, teachers are not given clear enough guidance on how to improve their practice.
- Some children in the early years are not provided with sufficiently challenging activities to enable them to make the rapid progress of which they are capable. The organisation of their mixed-aged class restricts some opportunities for learning for the children in the Reception Year, especially outside.

The school has the following strengths

- The curriculum provided by this small school, including the extra opportunities for learning, is engaging and interesting. Consequently, pupils enjoy their lessons and want to come to school.
- All staff at the school are highly committed and care for pupils well. They take time to know each pupil individually and to celebrate their strengths and achievements.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. As a result, pupils are helped to develop into responsible and thoughtful individuals. Pupils play a key role in shaping decisions about their school.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged is good and these pupils make good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have equally high expectations of pupils, particularly in key stage 1
 - teaching in all classes meets the needs of pupils of differing abilities including in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - there are more opportunities for reasoning and problem-solving in mathematics
 - the good opportunities provided in some classes for pupils to apply their literacy skills in other subjects are provided in all
 - the best practice that exists within the school is shared.
- Improve the progress of children in the early years by ensuring that:
 - Reception pupils have more regular access to independent outdoor learning
 - adults plan activities which challenge pupils more consistently.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders, including subject leaders, check more regularly and thoroughly on the quality of teaching and learning across the school
 - clearer feedback is provided to teachers to enable them to improve and that this is followed up to ensure that improvements take place
 - teachers and leaders are held to account more stringently by leaders, including governors, for the standards achieved in their classes and subjects.
- Improve phonics teaching by ensuring that:
 - training is provided for adults to improve their practice
 - time in phonics sessions is used more effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and skills
 - adults are aware of the sounds that pupils already know so that gaps in knowledge can be addressed by adults more effectively.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have not acted swiftly enough to address known weaknesses in teaching and learning. They have not taken effective action to ensure that the strong teaching which is evident in most classes is consistent in all.
- The headteacher of this small school maintains a teaching commitment, balancing this with her headship duties. She acknowledges that some checks on teaching have not been carried out with sufficient rigour. Sometimes, feedback provided has been overly positive and has not clearly identified what teachers need to do to improve their practice.
- Leaders have ensured that information about the progress pupils are making is collected regularly. However, this information is sometimes not scrutinised carefully enough to identify, for example, any anomalies and to unpick the reasons for these. Discussions with teachers using this progress information do not take place soon enough and time is lost between assessing pupils and identifying where progress may not be good enough. As a result, follow-up action to improve pupils' progress is delayed.
- Subject leaders have not ensured that they know about the quality of teaching and learning in other key stages to the one in which they work. Some actions to secure improvements have been successful in the main; for example, work to improve the quality of pupils' writing has resulted in improvements for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and skilled in their particular subjects. However, they do not regularly visit classes to share their strong practice with others or to see, for example, the quality of teachers' explanations or questioning in their subject. They do not regularly look at pupils' work in their books to see if progress is good enough or where it is better. Consequently, they are not able to plan and implement effective strategies for improvement.
- A broad and interesting curriculum is in place. Leaders are determined to ensure that pupils enjoy varied and rich experiences within this small school. For example, pupils told the inspector about the topics they had studied such as the Egyptians and wild weather, and about science investigations they had enjoyed. Additional opportunities beyond the curriculum are provided, such as to learn a variety of different instruments, and a wide range of after-school clubs take place almost every day of the week. Trips, such as the Year 5 and 6 residential trip, are greatly enjoyed and provide opportunities for pupils to learn new skills such as sailing and archery.
- Funding provided for the promotion of sports is well used and has had a very positive impact in increasing the number of pupils engaging in physical activity. The school's success in a number of different sporting tournaments is testament to this success.
- Leaders have established a highly inclusive school where difference is celebrated. During the inspection, pupils told the inspector that 'it's fine to be different', following this by talking about people with different needs, backgrounds and views that they had encountered at school. 'Everyone is welcome here' was a view endorsed by all the pupils interviewed by the inspector.

- Funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well used and so most of these pupils make good progress relative to their starting points. Support within class and additional support is carefully planned and regularly evaluated. The headteacher as the leader for special educational needs ensures that all necessary steps are taken to ensure that these pupils are successful.
- The large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire and those spoken to during the inspection were highly supportive of the school. They spoke warmly about the family atmosphere at the school, and of the time and care shown by all adults towards their children. Some parents of children with additional needs were particularly complimentary about the support provided by all staff for their children, and the good level of communication they enjoy with the school. A small number of parents would like more information about the progress their child is making in school. This was also an area identified in the school's own survey of parents.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and are aware of its strengths and weaknesses. However, they have not been sufficiently insistent that effective action is taken to address weaknesses in teaching and learning. They have not held leaders and teachers to account sufficiently for standards achieved in their classes or subjects.
- Governors visit regularly, particularly the chair of the governing body (whose skills from having previously been a headteacher are a strength). Governors have carried out a skills audit to ensure that they have a good range of skills within their number. Governor minutes show that governors question leaders, for example about pupil outcomes, but do not always probe deeply enough, or consider trends over time, such as the downward trend in phonics outcomes in Year 1.
- Governors are committed to ensuring the school's long-term success, spending time considering in detail how best to take the school forward, exploring the possibility of becoming an academy, and giving detailed thought to the implications for the school in both the long and short term. They track finances extremely carefully, recognising that all financial decisions are critical in a small school. Consequently, they know that funding, including that for disadvantaged pupils, is well used and has a positive impact on the progress of these pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has a high profile in the school. Due to the small size of the school, every pupil and their family is known well. Nevertheless, staff recognise that 'it could happen here' and are vigilant in checking for any signs that a pupil may be at risk. Pupil files demonstrate that staff know what signs to look for that indicate a child may be at risk. Where concerns are raised these are followed up and action taken with outside agencies where necessary.
- All legally required checks on staff are carried out carefully. Staff training is kept up to date with regular additional updates provided to staff. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding maintains careful oversight of school systems and procedures to

ensure that all legal requirements are met.

- Pupils told the inspector that the school is a safe place and that there is always an adult to speak to if they are worried or upset. Parents agree that their child is safe in school. Well-established systems are in place for dealing with potential risks such as crossing pupils over the road at lunchtime so that nothing is left to chance in maintaining pupils' safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across all classes. In some classes, adults' expectations of pupils are too low and pupils do not make as much progress as they are capable of.
- Time is not well used in some classes. For example, during the inspection pupils were given sheets to complete which involved little learning, instead involving pupils in colouring in letters or words. Similar examples were seen in pupils' books. Sometimes pupils are not expected to concentrate on the task given. For example, pupils were 'paying' for toys at a 'shop' using coins but became distracted and spent too much time discussing who should be the shop keeper or the shopper, without the teacher intervening. In contrast, in other classes, for example in Years 5 and 6, good use is made of time, with lessons that are well paced and which make the most of learning time.
- Sometimes, tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities because some teachers do not use assessment well enough to inform their planning. For example, pupils' books show that in one class, pupils of middle ability do not make the same rate of progress as those who have higher or lower ability because tasks are not always well matched to their needs. In another class, the most able are sometimes not challenged sufficiently. For example, where tasks are provided to challenge the most able, they do not deepen their skills but require them to do more of a similar nature to the rest of the class, for example adding seven numbers instead of six. This is not the case in all classes. Pupils' books show that the most able pupils in upper key stage 2 are often given work in mathematics, for example, which requires them to think deeply and extend their skills.
- Teachers' expectations are inconsistent across classes and subjects. In most classes, the content of pupils' writing in English lessons is good because teachers talk, for example, about the use of powerful vocabulary, about sentence structure and how to create impact in writing. However, this is not the case in all classes and sometimes teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for younger pupils to develop their writing skills.
- Across the school, the quality of pupils' spelling, while improving, is not as strong as it should be. Some of the most able pupils regularly make basic spelling errors without these being addressed by adults.
- Sometimes, while pupils produce good writing in English lessons, they are not given opportunities to develop their skills within other subjects and so do not make as much progress as they could.
- Teaching of calculations is strong, particularly in key stage 2, but teachers across the

school provide too few opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematics skills through problem-solving and especially to reason about numbers.

- The teaching of phonics is not sufficiently well planned and implemented to help all pupils make good progress in learning their sounds. Some adults do not pronounce sounds accurately and so pupils struggle to blend them into words. Some resources, such as follow-up sheets, do not promote learning and sometimes pupils do not know what they are learning about in phonics sessions. Adults do not keep track of the sounds that pupils already know and which ones they need to learn, so are not able to address gaps in knowledge effectively.
- In contrast, the promotion of reading for pleasure is a strength of the school. Adults model enthusiasm and a love of reading well, and books have a high profile across the school. Class stories provide pupils with opportunities to experience texts beyond their current reading level and introduce them to more challenging vocabulary. As a result, pupils demonstrate a genuine thirst for reading and read with enthusiasm.
- In some classes, teachers make very effective links between subjects such as English and topic. For example, in one class pupils wrote about a character from history – practising writing in particular styles such as diary entries, and incorporating into their writing their knowledge of the period of history and the events that the character was involved in. During the inspection, pupils were learning about changing states in science and the teacher made good links between this and a picture by an artist that the class was studying. These links enable pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding in different contexts.
- In some classes, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in subjects such as science and art. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 carried out a range of investigations into reflections and shadows. Pupils made predictions and tested these out. Sometimes, pupils are given challenging questions which extend their learning in science by adults asking pupils to generalise from what they have learned.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in their learning. Adults ask questions and provide appropriate support for these pupils so that they can access the lessons and make good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- All adults take good care of pupils. Pupils are well known and valued as individuals in this small school. Adults take time to get to know pupils' interests and talents and look out for opportunities to praise pupils, for example through the headteacher's awards and by acquiring stamps towards the much-coveted golden certificates.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is. They told the inspector that the introduction of the 'anti-bullying group' and the work carried out around this had had a very positive impact on further improving behaviour around the school by making all pupils more aware of the impact their behaviour may have on others. Consequently, pupils said that bullying is rare in school and that adults deal with incidents effectively.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. For example, pupils learn about different faiths in religious education, but also develop spiritual awareness through, for example, considering the impact of poems and art work on them as individuals. They learn about different cultures and about the wider world. During the inspection, the school was selling bags of rice to raise money for an overseas charity and through events such as these pupils learn to value what they have and care about others. As a result, pupils at Corpusty are helped to become well-rounded and thoughtful individuals.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to take on responsibility, for example as Reception buddies helping younger pupils, corridor monitors or as reporters for the 'school press'. Pupils told the inspector that they feel this helps them to know how to deal with people throughout life.
- Pupils learn about values, including British values. During the inspection, pupils were learning about Parliament and were preparing for a meeting of the 'Corpusty Parliament'. Through such events, pupils are developing a good understanding of democracy and rights and responsibilities.
- Pupils play a large part in the development of the school because opportunities to give their views are provided very regularly. For example, pupils held a referendum to coincide with the national referendum to decide whether to change the class names. Having voted 'yes' they then discussed the theme for new names and had to reach agreement, recognising the variety of views that existed. As a result, pupils know that they are valued and feel they have an important role to play in deciding what happens at their school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in classes and around the school. They enjoy playing and working together and enjoy positive relationships with one another and with adults.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and most are confident in talking about their work with adults. Most take pride in their work and seek to please their teachers. They respond to directions quickly and are polite and respectful towards adults.
- Pupils' attendance is good because pupils enjoy coming to school. One parent told the inspector that, 'My child always loves coming to school because he has so much fun.' The attendance of disadvantaged pupils, which dipped last year, is now good, with all these pupils attending regularly. The headteacher reminds parents often through newsletters of the importance of regular school attendance. She meets with parents if their child's attendance is low or falling. She takes appropriate steps to address any particular issues, for example by not authorising term-time holidays and issuing fixed-penalty notices where needed.
- Where teaching is not as strong, occasionally pupils lose interest and do not focus on their learning as well as they could.
- Where teachers' expectations are not high enough, pupils sometimes produce work which is not of the high standard that they are capable of.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check have fallen year-on-year over the past three years and in 2016 were below national averages. Inspection evidence shows that phonics outcomes are unlikely to rise because the teaching of phonics is not sufficiently well focused to meet pupils' needs.
- In other year groups, pupils' progress is variable. While older pupils make good progress, those in Year 1 make slow progress because adults' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough.
- In 2016, Year 6 outcomes were below the national average, particularly in mathematics. Leaders were aware that some pupils in this group had specific difficulties which meant attainment would be lower than average. Despite this, the progress that pupils made was as good as or better than that found nationally. The progress of pupils currently in Year 6 is good and pupils are achieving well in relation to the standard expected nationally for their age. Consequently, leaders expect outcomes at the end of this year to be significantly higher and pupils' work seen during the inspection confirms that this is likely to be the case.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in Year 2 in 2016 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress of pupils currently in Year 2 is generally good, as shown by the school's assessment information and pupils' books. However, in writing some pupils are not making as rapid progress as they are capable of because they are not given sufficient opportunities to apply their skills within other subjects.
- In the early years, most children make expected progress relative to their starting points. In 2016, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was below that found nationally. Some children currently in the small Reception year group are not making as rapid progress as they are capable of making because sometimes adults' expectations are not high enough.
- The progress of the most able pupils varies from class to class. Those in key stage 2 make good progress because they are provided with a high level of challenge. However, lower down the school these pupils are not always provided with work which extends their learning and so their progress is not as rapid as it should be.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress relative to their starting points because support for these pupils is well planned and carefully evaluated.
- Good provision is made for disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, through, for example, one-to-one teaching conferences, small-group support and resources such as specific computer programmes. As a result, these pupils make good progress across the school.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The majority of children in the early years start school with skills that are typical for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, most, but not all, reach the standard expected for their age. However, some children are capable of making better progress than this and so are not prepared well for learning in Year 1.
- Children in Reception are part of a mixed-aged class with Year 1 pupils. However, every morning the teacher teaches the Year 1 pupils in a separate classroom and the Reception children are taught by another adult. This arrangement limits the opportunities for the Reception children to choose whether to learn and play indoors or outdoors as the adult specifies when it is time to be inside and when outside.
- Adults in the Reception group do not always expect enough of children and do not provide activities which will extend their skills further. Pupils' learning journeys show that frequently all children carry out the same tasks and adults do not think about how these could be extended for those children who are ready for this. For example, during the inspection children were painting dragons for Chinese New Year. They were provided with ready-mixed paints. However, there was no encouragement for children to explore colours by mixing paints, and the adult's model did not include any colours that had been mixed.
- Phonics teaching in the early years is not sufficiently well focused to ensure that children make rapid progress. Adults are not aware of the sounds that children already know and those they need to learn and this limits how they can promote sounds when intervening with children's play or to plan precise tasks that develop children's understanding of sounds.
- The attractive outdoor area is sometimes not used well enough to promote learning. The activities set up for learning are limited and so do not extend children as well as they could do. However, some engaging and interesting opportunities for learning are provided, such as creating a puppet show and exploring the wider world in 'forest school' and children enjoy a curriculum which covers all areas of learning.
- Adults take good care of children and ensure that they are kept safe in the Reception group. Adults respond to their needs and concerns and make sure that children develop their confidence and social skills well. Children in the Reception group behave well; they cooperate and share resources well.
- Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's learning. Parents spoken to during the inspection were pleased with how well their child had settled into school and said that adults communicate with them well. For example, parents are welcomed into the classroom at the start of the day where adults are happy to speak with them about their child.

School details

Unique reference number	120799
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10023493

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	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Windross
Headteacher	Pam Thomson
Telephone number	01263 587320
Website	www.corpustyschool.co.uk
Email address	head@corpusty.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 March 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is a much smaller school than those found nationally.
- The majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than is found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or supported by an education, health and care plan, or statement of special educational needs, is average.

- The school is organised into four classes, three of which contain two year groups. However, in the mornings pupils in Year 1 and Reception Year work in separate groups.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons in all classes. Some joint observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- 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 35 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and met with some pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The inspector listened to a small number of pupils read.
- The inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority and the chair of the governing body.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made during the recruitment of new staff.

Inspection team

Maria Curry, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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