

# Ixworth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Crown Lane, Ixworth, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 2EL

## Inspection dates

9–10 February 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Safeguarding is ineffective. Systems for keeping pupils safe are not robust. Leaders have not established rigorous procedures for recording concerns and ensuring follow up action is taken and recorded. Leaders have not ensured that all staff understand school procedures for keeping pupils safe.
- Leaders have not acted swiftly enough to tackle weaknesses in teaching and learning. Feedback provided to teachers has not made clear precisely what teachers need to do to improve.
- Teaching is inadequate because in a number of classes and subjects learning activities do not meet the needs of pupils, including those of the most able pupils. Some teachers do not manage behaviour in lessons effectively.
- Governors have not challenged leaders sufficiently or held them to account for the low standards of pupils' achievement.
- Assessment systems are not understood or used by some teachers. As a result, leaders do not know enough about the progress pupils are making.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils and of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is variable because support for these pupils is not well planned. This support is not evaluated to ensure pupils' needs are met.
- Provision in the early years, while improving, is inconsistent because not all adults are equally skilled in using observations to identify the progress children have made and using this to inform their planning.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and they are helped to develop into caring and responsible citizens.
- A broad and interesting curriculum is in place which is enhanced by extra-curricular activities and clubs.
- Reading is promoted well across the school and pupils are developing a real enjoyment of books and literature.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Immediately improve the school's safeguarding procedures by:
  - setting up robust systems for keeping track of concerns about pupils over time
  - ensuring actions are taken and recorded in response to all concerns
  - reviewing pupil safeguarding files regularly with the second designated lead
  - ensuring that all adults in school understand how to keep pupils safe and follow school policies and procedures
  - making sure that confidential information is only shared with those for whom it is necessary
  - governors monitoring the school's safeguarding procedures on a regular basis.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring:
  - rapid action is taken to address weaknesses in teaching
  - more regular checks on the quality of teaching are carried out and feedback clearly identifies where teaching needs to improve
  - governors challenge leaders regarding pupil achievement and the impact of actions taken to improve it
  - leaders use assessment and tracking systems to analyse pupils' progress and identify and address underperformance
  - all leaders take responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning and standards achieved in their area of responsibility and are held to account for these
  - the funding for disadvantaged pupils is targeted to improve their achievement and its impact is carefully evaluated
  - support for pupils who have special educational needs is carefully planned to meet their needs and enable them to make good progress.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring:
  - all teachers have high expectations of pupils and of the standards they can achieve
  - teachers adhere to whole-school procedures and policies
  - all adults manage pupils' behaviour effectively
  - teachers know the expected standards for each year group and use the school's assessment systems accurately and consistently

- teachers address the different needs of pupils in lessons
- teaching in mathematics provides pupils with opportunities for reasoning and problem-solving and provides greater challenge for all pupils
- additional adults are better used to support learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that the establishment of rigorous safeguarding procedures has been given the highest priority.
- Leaders have not acted swiftly enough to address weaknesses in teaching and learning. Following her appointment, the headteacher correctly identified a number of the school's problems, and has addressed some of these sometimes in the face of some significant opposition from staff. Nevertheless, leaders have been too slow in addressing many of the most important weaknesses, including safeguarding. Leaders have sometimes waited too long for advice and support from external bodies such as the local authority. When this has not been forthcoming, issues have not been tackled.
- Leaders have not been rigorous in checking the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher has not provided sufficiently accurate and incisive feedback for some teachers when their teaching is not good. She has not followed up with teachers to make sure action is taken to secure improvements.
- Leaders have not ensured that the system introduced for tracking the progress made by pupils is used and understood by all staff. As a result, they have no accurate information about pupils' progress or attainment. Training provided for staff in carrying out assessments has not been effective. Some teachers are overstating the progress pupils are making, and others are not using the system at all. This has not been identified or addressed by leaders. Leaders do not know what proportion of pupils are working at expected standards in different year groups, or what progress pupils are making.
- Subject leaders are not fulfilling their responsibilities effectively. While some are beginning to put together action plans, these are not based on secure evidence about the current standards of achievement across the school. Some subject leaders do not fulfil their responsibilities for improving the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. More recently appointed leaders are beginning to implement changes to secure improvement but it is too early to see the impact of these.
- Some staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire were critical of changes that have been introduced, even where these have clearly been needed. Leaders have not been successful in establishing either a shared understanding of expectations or a shared commitment among all staff to achieving the very best for all pupils.
- Support provided by the local authority for the school has been insufficient. Support has not halted the school's decline. The headteacher identified serious and long-standing problems to the local authority soon after taking up her position. However, not enough support was forthcoming to help the headteacher and governing body to make rapid improvements.
- Leaders have ensured that a broad curriculum is in place which includes interesting events such as visits to museums and residential trips. Pupils say they enjoy many aspects of their learning and like coming to school. As a result, attendance for the

majority of pupils is above average.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Assemblies celebrate pupils' achievements including when they have behaved well at playtimes, helped someone, or shown other positive attributes. Pupils learn about people from other cultures and backgrounds and demonstrate tolerance and respect for others.
- Funding to promote participation in sports is well used. Its use has ensured that there are more sports clubs, and pupil participation in sporting activities including competitions has greatly increased. Teachers are developing greater confidence and skill in their own sports teaching.
- The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, or who were spoken to during the inspection, were supportive of the school. They like that their children are happy in school and say that it is a welcoming place. A number of parents said that communication has improved relatively recently and is now good. A few parents, with children who have special educational needs, expressed concerns about aspects of provision for their child's needs.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors acknowledge that they have been too lax in their roles in the past and have not taken effective action to stem the decline in pupils' achievement.
- Governors identified that checks on staff appointments were not carried out correctly and addressed this. However, they have not carried out scrutiny of the school's wider systems for keeping pupils safe to ensure these are robust. The school's audit of safeguarding was agreed by governors without them making the appropriate checks to ensure that all necessary procedures were in place and implemented.
- Governors have been too accepting of information given to them by current and previous leaders. For example, governors received predictions for the 2016 Year 2 and Year 6 outcomes. When they then were told the actual outcomes which were much lower and below national averages, they did not question the discrepancies between the figures.
- In the past, governors have not used performance management effectively. Staff have been rewarded regardless of their performance. Staff have not been held to account for standards they achieve in their classes or subjects. Current governors have now begun to address this by reviewing staff job descriptions to establish an understanding of what is expected.
- Governors have not checked on the impact of funding used for disadvantaged pupils sufficiently and so do not know whether expenditure has made a significant difference to the achievement of these pupils.
- The new chair and vice-chair have re-energised the governing body. Governors are now demonstrating a greater sense of urgency and purpose in tackling the school's weaknesses. Governors are attending training to ensure that they understand their role and have a better grasp of information such as school performance data.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have not ensured that robust systems are in place and used to keep pupils safe in school. Systems for recording concerns are not well maintained. Consequently, leaders are not able to identify where smaller individual concerns are building a picture over time of a wider and larger concern about a child. Leaders showed little awareness that, as a consequence, important information could be missed which could put a child at risk.
- The school's safeguarding audit, completed by the headteacher and safeguarding governor, did not identify that systems were inadequate and was carried out with little scrutiny of the school's procedures.
- Leaders do not ensure that action taken in response to concerns, including by others, is recorded in safeguarding files. As a result, leaders do not know what action has or has not been taken or what the outcomes of the different responses were.
- Leaders do not understand the requirement to maintain confidentiality when safeguarding concerns are identified and sometimes share confidential information beyond those who need it.
- Leaders do not ensure that the policies and procedures in place are followed correctly. For example, no log is kept when pupils are physically restrained by staff, and parents are not informed when an incident has occurred.
- Training provided in how to keep pupils safe has not been effective for all staff. During the inspection, some staff demonstrated that they do not understand basic requirements to ensure pupils are safe, including ensuring classes are supervised at all times. Consequently, a safeguarding culture is not well established.
- Leaders recognised that, in the past, checks on teaching staff had not been carried out and recorded rigorously. They have taken steps to ensure that this has been addressed and these checks now fulfil statutory requirements.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Inadequate

- Teaching and learning are inadequate because in a number of classes and subjects, pupils' needs are not met.
- Teachers do not use assessment effectively. Some teachers do not understand well enough what pupils should be achieving in their year group, or what needs to be done to move pupils' learning on. There is not enough challenge for the most able pupils and not enough support for those who need it.
- Some teachers' expectations of pupils are too low. They accept work which demonstrates a lack of effort and do not address this with pupils.
- Teachers sometimes provide pupils with activities to extend their learning through offering different levels of challenge in English and mathematics. Pupils' books show that the large majority of pupils frequently choose tasks they are comfortable with which do not challenge them. Teachers do not intervene quickly enough to move

learning on. As a result, pupils make limited progress in learning.

- Additional adults are not used well to support learning. Sometimes they manage pupils' behaviour rather than addressing its cause and supporting pupils to access learning. In other classes, adults do too much for pupils so do not help them to develop key skills and become independent.
- Some teachers provide feedback to pupils in their books in line with the school's policy. Comments are encouraging and positive, but do not help pupils to know what they have done well and what could be improved. Consequently, pupils repeat similar errors, for example in spelling. In Years 4, 5 and 6, teachers carefully respond to pupils' work, identifying strengths and areas where the work could be better. Pupils in these classes respond well to teachers' comments and use them to improve subsequent work.
- In mathematics, pupils are not routinely given work which challenges and extends their thinking. Opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning about numbers are limited, although these are beginning to be better used in Years 5 and 6.
- In subjects such as history and geography, teachers rarely provide work which challenges the most able pupils, and so progress is slower than it should be. Despite this, pupils say that they enjoy finding out about different periods of history and other parts of the world.
- In science, in some classes pupils are given good opportunities to carry out interesting investigations but are sometimes not given opportunities to draw conclusions about the scientific concepts they have been learning about.
- Some aspects of teaching are effective, for example in upper key stage 2, teachers ask questions which probe pupils' understanding and make them think. In Year 2, teachers check on pupils' learning during lessons to make sure that they understand what they are doing.
- Reading has a high profile across the school. Classes have attractive reading areas and a love of reading is promoted, for example through class books where pupils share a text which challenges their reading skills and extends their understanding of literature.
- Teaching in art is good because teachers take time to model the skills that pupils need to learn, for example in sketching and shading. Pupils are given opportunities to apply their skills by producing work in the style of different artists. They do so well and produce some high-quality work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate because safeguarding is ineffective. Leaders have not ensured that all staff understand how to keep pupils safe or that the necessary policies and systems are in place and adhered to. Training for staff has not been effective in ensuring that all adults understand their responsibilities in ensuring pupil safety.

- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not organised well enough to ensure their needs are met. Leaders do not ensure that the targets set for pupils are regularly reviewed and that provision is evaluated to check the progress these pupils are making. As a result, the needs of these pupils are not considered with sufficient care and attention.
- Pupils say that the school is a safe place and that bullying is rare. Pupils are knowledgeable about what bullying is and know what to do if they have a problem. They understand about the risks associated with technologies, such as when using the internet, and know how to keep themselves safe online.
- Parents believe that their children are kept safe in school. They value the school's friendly and welcoming ethos.
- The school's family support worker provides support for pupils and their parents. Pupils said that the family support worker is always available if they need to talk to someone.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are given opportunities to take on responsibilities within school, such as being a member of the school council. They consider themes, such as the importance of friendship, in assemblies and about qualities for life, such as perseverance. They learn about values, including British values such as tolerance and respect for others, through discussions in class and assemblies. Pupils learn about the wider world, for example about the importance of recycling and how to preserve the world's rainforests. Through opportunities such as these, pupils are enabled to become caring and thoughtful citizens.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Where teaching is not good, pupils sometimes lose interest and do not behave as well as they should. In contrast, where teaching is effective, for example in Years 5 and 6, pupils try hard and show interest and enthusiasm for their learning. In these classes pupils behave very well.
- Teachers are inconsistent in their use of the school's system for managing behaviour. Most teachers establish very positive relationships with pupils and pupils routinely behave well. In some classes, where relationships are less positive, some pupils misbehave and disrupt the learning of others.
- Attendance for the majority of pupils is good because pupils enjoy school. However, the attendance of some disadvantaged pupils is below average. This is because not enough has been done to support them and their families to improve their attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Inadequate

- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 was below that found nationally. The progress made by pupils in this year group was also less than was the case nationally.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 6 in 2016 who achieved the expected standard in



reading was in line with that found nationally. However, in writing and in mathematics the proportion achieving the expected standard was below national averages. In mathematics, no pupil achieved the higher level of achievement. The progress made by pupils in mathematics was well below that found nationally.

- The progress of pupils currently in the school in writing and mathematics is slow in many classes because teachers do not plan for learning well enough to meet pupils' needs. In some classes, pupils do the same tasks regardless of ability and teachers do not intervene quickly enough to move learning on.
- The most able pupils do not make rapid enough progress in some classes because teachers do not have high enough expectations of what these pupils can achieve. These pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6 because teachers have a good understanding of what they already know and what they need to learn next.
- Pupils' progress in some subjects other than English and mathematics is slow because the majority of teachers do not plan work which caters for pupils of differing abilities. Those who are particularly able historians or scientists are not given opportunities to extend their skills or develop their talents further.
- Disadvantaged pupils make very variable progress because support provided for pupils is not well planned or tailored to their needs. As a result, while some pupils make good progress, others do not make rapid enough progress to be able to reach or exceed the expected standard from their starting points.
- Some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make good enough progress because teachers and leaders do not check thoroughly the impact of support that is provided for them. Because their targets are not regularly reviewed, teachers and leaders do not know if these pupils are making as much progress as they are capable of.
- Progress in reading is better than writing or mathematics because teachers promote reading well and so pupils are very enthusiastic about reading. Pupils are given a good start in learning to read and the proportion of pupils in Year 1 in 2016 who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check was above the national average.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has declined for the past three years. In 2016, it was below that found nationally.
- Leaders recognised that provision in the early years was weak and that pupils were not making rapid enough progress. Support has been provided for staff to improve the quality of children's learning in the Nursery and Reception classes and this has led to improvement. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning in the early years remain. These are slowing the progress made by some children.
- Children's learning journeys show that most children are making the progress they are capable of and some are making good progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. Some records do not show well enough what children have learned and what the next steps in their learning are.

- The learning environment in the Nursery and Reception classes is attractive and engaging. A good range of opportunities for learning is set up both inside and outside which children take part in happily. Most children behave sensibly, although occasionally, when adults have do not have high expectations of them, children are less well behaved.
- Children develop their knowledge of phonics well although a few children pronounce sounds inaccurately because adults have modelled them incorrectly. Where support is best, adults join children in their activities, asking questions which make them think and which extend their learning. In other instances, adults do little, focusing on providing or managing resources rather than supporting the development of children's understanding through joining in their activities and discussing their learning.
- Children in the early years have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when moving around and using resources. They know school routines, such as where things are kept and what to do if they need help.
- Adults care for children in the early years well. They get to know them, their likes and interests and plan tasks which build on their enthusiasms and establish good relationships with parents.

## School details

Unique reference number	124704
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10023455

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sophia Wilson
Headteacher	Pip Whiteside
Telephone number	01359 230 228
Website	<a href="http://www.ixworthprimary.co.uk">www.ixworthprimary.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:pip.whiteside@ixworthprimary.co.uk">pip.whiteside@ixworthprimary.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	9–10 July 2012

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected for pupils at the end of Year 6.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- 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.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was a section 8 short inspection which converted to a section 5 inspection on day 1 of the inspection.
- The inspectors observed lessons in all classes. Some joint observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' books, school assessment information, the headteacher's evaluation of teaching and learning and a range of school documents.
- The inspectors spoke with a small number of parents, took account of 37 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and met with some pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The inspectors listened to a small number of pupils read.
- The inspectors spoke with a representative from the local authority, with four members of the governing body and with subject leaders for mathematics and English.
- 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
Simon Webb	Her Majesty's Inspector
Elizabeth Hackett	Ofsted Inspector

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