

Diss Church Junior School

The Entry, Diss, Norfolk IP22 4NT

Inspection dates

8–9 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Since the previous two inspections in which the school was judged to require improvement, leaders, including governors, have not addressed variations in the quality of teaching and learning quickly enough. Too much remains less than good.
- Governors do not challenge leaders about the school's work effectively. As a result, leaders are not being held sufficiently to account to improve pupils' achievement and raise standards in the school.
- Leaders' self-evaluation does not accurately reflect the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, or pupils' outcomes, at the school. Consequently, they are not identifying weaknesses quickly enough.
- Curriculum subject leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the quality of learning or of the progress pupils make in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders, including governors, cannot account for the impact of the pupil premium grant in improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The 2016 key stage 2 published information shows that too many pupils did not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points.
- Current school information demonstrates that, although improved, pupils' outcomes remain inconsistent in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' work, including their presentation and handwriting, are inconsistent and often too low.
- Teaching does not consistently meet the needs of different groups of pupils; as a result, some work is too easy for pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders ensure that the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which is supplemented by visits and visitors, and the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular clubs.
- Leaders care about pupils, and their work to improve behaviour has secured improved conduct both in lessons and around school.
- Pupils are safe and know how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including when online.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Consequently, pupils feel safe and enjoy school.
- The school's support for vulnerable families has resulted in improved pupil attendance rates.

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?

- Urgently improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the quality of learning and standards across the school
 - using assessment and monitoring information to identify where improvements are needed and acting quickly to address weaknesses in pupils' progress
 - setting higher expectations for the quality of teaching and the presentation of pupils' work
 - setting higher expectations of the progress that pupils make, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics
 - checking on the performance of teachers and teaching assistants based on the quality of their work and its impact on helping pupils to make strong progress
 - ensuring that recruitment records are well organised so that it is easy to review that all appropriate checks have been completed.
- Improve the effectiveness of governors by ensuring that they:
 - closely monitor the impact of plans to improve the school
 - challenge leaders about the impact of actions intended to improve pupils' progress and attainment
 - check on the impact of the pupil premium funding and evaluate the difference it makes to the achievement of disadvantaged pupils
 - have oversight of decisions about pay and progression linked to pupils' achievement.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that teachers:
 - have appropriately high expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons
 - use assessment information to ensure that the needs of different groups of pupils, including middle-attaining and the most able pupils, are effectively met.

The school should not make further appointments of newly qualified teachers.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have not acted quickly enough to improve the quality of teaching in the school. Consequently, the outcomes achieved by pupils currently in the school are not good. Leaders have not demonstrated the capacity to secure an acceptable standard of education for the school's pupils.
- School leaders' self-evaluation is over-generous. Leaders and governors do not evaluate the weaknesses in the school rigorously and this means that there is a lack of pace in improving the achievement of pupils at the school.
- The school development plan is not sufficiently focused on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders often evaluate the impact of actions by judging whether tasks are completed, rather than by considering the difference they make to improving pupils' progress. This leads to pupils not doing as well as they should in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Curriculum subject leaders do not have an accurate view of the quality of learning in their areas of responsibility. They do not use the evidence from books or assessment information well enough to identify where pupils' progress needs to be improved. They do not focus on priorities that result in a rapid improvement in pupils' progress.
- Leaders have implemented a system for feedback to pupils that is understood and used by pupils. However, the impact of this policy is inconsistent because it does not always provide pupils with sufficient guidance about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Although leaders have made significant improvements to pupils' behaviour since the last inspection, they have not addressed weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, teachers do not make the most of pupils' good behaviour in lessons to help them learn well.
- School leaders have not used additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively. These pupils, like their peers, make variable progress. Senior leaders recognise the need to use additional funding more effectively so that pupils overcome the barriers to their learning and are better prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders have ensured that the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils said that they enjoy the range of subjects they study and were particularly keen to share their learning. For example, pupils talked about healthy eating in science lessons, Hinduism in religious education and drawing in art. The curriculum is enhanced by visits and visitors. For example, Year 6 pupils take part in a residential visit to London with a focus on cultural development, and Year 3 pupils visit a 'dinosaur' park.
- There is a strong sense of community in the school. For example, pupils nominate each other for awards, take part in community projects and raise money for charities. The promotion of British values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeate the curriculum. Children's understanding of different faiths and cultures, and the importance of the rule of law, are reflected in the way they behave in school and

show respect for each other and adults.

- The primary physical education and sport premium funding is used effectively to provide pupils with opportunities to take part in and learn a range of sports. Specialist coaches enhance the delivery of physical education and contribute their expertise to the provision of sports clubs.
- Although the local authority has provided considerable support to the school since the previous inspection, it has had little impact in improving governance or leadership. Despite the local authority's challenge to school leaders, they have not addressed the weaknesses in teaching and learning.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not monitor the work of the school robustly. Too often, governors assume that the information they receive about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and of safeguarding is correct without checking it. They have not provided sufficient challenge to school leaders about how well they are improving the standards at the school.
- Governors receive information about the performance management of staff but do not make enough use of all the available information about the impact of their work, including pupils' achievement, when they make decisions about pay and progression.
- Although governors know what the additional funding is spent on, they do not review the difference it makes in enough detail to be able to challenge leaders about its impact on improving the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils. Governors do not have enough understanding of how well pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported.
- The local authority arranged a recent review of governance. Governors have reflected on the recommendations of the review and recognise that they need to check on the work of the school more closely. One governor commented, 'We are not as business-like as we could be.'

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior leaders take their responsibilities for safeguarding seriously. Robust systems are in place to monitor concerns about pupils' safety or well-being. Leaders include evidence from behaviour logs, attendance records and pastoral records when they identify concerns. This ensures that appropriate action is taken swiftly to keep pupils safe.
- Records of concerns are detailed and comprehensive. Conversations with outside agencies are carefully logged. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a very detailed knowledge of the needs of each child in the school.
- All staff are provided with training in important aspects of safeguarding, such as how to help pupils keep safe when they are online, and in the 'Prevent' duty, which highlights the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Pupils have been trained to be 'digital leaders' and they take an active role in the promotion of e-safety across the school. Senior staff and members of the governing body are trained in safer

recruitment.

- Attendance is monitored closely. In cases where pupils have high levels of absence, or they have been identified as being vulnerable, senior leaders are informed immediately of their absence and take actions to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Governors' monitoring of health and safety is comprehensive. They complete regular site walks and check risk assessments to ensure that these are up to date. Consequently, the school is a safe environment for pupils, staff and visitors.
- Appropriate checks are made when staff are recruited, but the personnel records are not well organised. Consequently, keeping an overview of records for individual employees is more difficult than it should be.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress across the school is too variable. This is because the expectations of pupils to do the best that they can are inconsistent and sometimes too low.
- Teachers' assessment of what pupils, particularly the most able, can already do is not used to plan learning that enables them to make swift progress. In lessons, this results in some pupils being given work that is too easy for them.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is too variable. Where subject knowledge is strong, teachers provide clear and accurate explanations and quickly change tasks to enable pupils to make good progress. However, some teachers have gaps in their subject knowledge and so do not always challenge pupils enough. Consequently, pupils' progress slows and they do not achieve as well as they could.
- Leaders have implemented a system for providing feedback to pupils about their learning that is understood and used by pupils. However, it does not always provide them with sufficient guidance about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils when they are writing are not based well enough on assessment. Teachers do not consistently plan well to meet the needs of different groups and, as a result, some work is too easy for pupils and some is too hard.
- Pupils are provided with targets and support from teachers about how to improve their writing, but these are often too vague to be useful. Pupils could not confidently explain what they had to do next to improve their work because of this lack of clarity.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation varies in books, within classes and across the school. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils and sometimes their own handwriting does not set a good example.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to work together to solve problems and learn valuable team-working skills. In a mathematics lesson, pupils of different abilities supported each other to find solutions and apply their reasoning.
- Teachers' use of teaching assistants is inconsistent. In some instances, the activities that teaching assistants lead are not well matched to the needs of the pupils they are working with. At their best, teaching assistants work successfully with teachers to support pupils. The most effective teaching assistants provide support when it is

needed, but also enable pupils to complete tasks independently.

- Pupils have positive views about reading. They have frequent opportunities to read in school, and for pupils who require more support, this includes reading in small groups and one to one with adults. Some Year 6 pupils are not confident readers and find it difficult to read unfamiliar words.
- Disadvantaged pupils sometimes work with teaching assistants and teachers in small groups. This is effective when work is suited to the ability of pupils. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils were supported in finding information to answer questions about a text and were increasingly successful. However, a group of Year 5 pupils were finding patterns in numbers and for some pupils, this work was too easy.
- Some teachers use questioning skilfully to check whether pupils understand their learning and to identify errors. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils were asked to prove that their fraction calculations were correct and this procedure was used to help pupils to identify errors and make them better able to solve problems for themselves.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- Most pupils work hard in lessons, but a few do not challenge themselves to produce their best work. A small proportion of pupils do not have a positive attitude to learning, which slows the progress they make.
- Work in pupils' books shows that a significant proportion of pupils do not take pride in their handwriting or in the presentation of their work.
- Pupils talk confidently about how to stay safe online. Some pupils are 'digital leaders' and, in addition to managing equipment and resources, promote e-safety in assemblies.
- Pupils have been trained to resolve conflicts. Peer mediators support pupils to resolve arguments and disagreements and this contributes to a safe and calm lunchtime.
- Pupils know the importance of a balanced diet and regular exercise and can explain how they make choices about what they eat and what activities they do. One Year 3 pupil commented that, 'you should not have too much of any food group.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders care for pupils and provide pastoral support to meet their needs when they have emotional or behavioural problems. Consequently, incidents of poor behaviour are rare.
- Parents and pupils said that behaviour in the school is good and pupils are safe. Parents recognise that this is a significant improvement.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. Pupils said that bullying and poor behaviour are rare. None of the lessons observed by inspectors was disrupted by poor behaviour and this

reflects the behaviour that pupils, parents and staff said is typical in the school.

- Exclusions have reduced significantly since the previous inspection and are now rare. This is because the school provides effective support for pupils. For example, the school's pupil support worker helps pupils to manage their emotional needs so that they can access learning in lessons more successfully.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. A small group of pupils are persistently absent and leaders are working with their families to make improvements. In cases where parents speak English as an additional language, letters are translated so that they can access information about the importance of their children's attendance.
- A small number of parents raised concerns about the way that staff manage behaviour. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns during the inspection.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the standard expected for their age, or made good progress from their starting points, was low compared with pupils nationally. In reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling, half of the pupils did not reach the standard expected for their age and almost a third did not reach the expected standard in writing or mathematics. Consequently, a significant number of pupils were not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Expectations of pupils have increased across the school for current pupils, but are not always high enough. Work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information show that progress, although improving, is too variable, including in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils have benefited from the improved teaching of English grammar, punctuation and spelling and pupils in each cohort demonstrated age-appropriate understanding. For example, Year 6 pupils could explain how to use the passive voice when writing. Leaders recognise the need to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make more rapid progress.
- The progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up quickly are inconsistent. In some cohorts, disadvantaged pupils make faster progress than other pupils in the school. For example, in Year 6, where teaching is stronger, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is more rapid than that of other pupils in mathematics and reading. In other year groups and subjects, disadvantaged pupils make less progress than other pupils, for example, in Year 5 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make from their starting points is inconsistent. The school has implemented a programme of support and targeted teaching and this is having a positive impact in Years 4 and 6, particularly in mathematics where pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress. However, progress in writing for this group of pupils is slower than progress in reading and mathematics.
- In 2016, pupils who attained above the expected standards at the end of key stage 1 did not make as good progress as other pupils nationally. Evidence in pupils' books shows that the challenge for the most able pupils is still not high enough in all classes, particularly in writing and mathematics.

- Work in pupils' creative books, science books, religious education books and in displays around the school and in the local church shows that pupils' work is often age appropriate. However, the variations in progress seen in English and mathematics are also evident in other subjects.
- Pupils said that they enjoy reading, but a few middle- and lower ability pupils do not learn the wide range of strategies they need to be able to read unfamiliar words. This limits their ability to read more challenging texts independently.

School details

Unique reference number	121032
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10023357

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Turner
Headteacher	Karen Sewell (Executive Headteacher)
Telephone number	01379 642675
Website	www.dissjuniorschool.co.uk
Email address	office@diss-jun.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 February 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets the Department for Education’s definition of a coasting school, based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- The school is in a federation with Diss Infant and Nursery School and Diss Children’s Centre under an executive headteacher. The federation has a shared governing body.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is slightly higher than the national average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This included shorter visits to classes made jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked through a range of pupils' work in different subjects and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and had discussions with other pupils around the school and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors made observations of pupils' behaviour at lunchtime, when pupils were moving in and around the school and during lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors, senior leaders and representatives from the local authority. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the diocese.
- Meetings were also held with the school's leaders of English and mathematics and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including information relating to pupils' attainment and progress, leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and its areas for development.
- Inspectors looked at behaviour records, including records of bullying incidents.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation and how this related to daily practice, as well as speaking with staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Keith Pullen, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Richard Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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