

Hopton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Thelnetham Road, Hopton, Nr Diss, Suffolk IP22 2QY

Inspection dates

18–19 December 2018

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	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The outstanding provision identified at the previous inspection has not been maintained.
- Since her appointment in 2017, the headteacher has taken decisive action to halt the decline in pupils' attainment and progress by strengthening teaching, learning and assessment.
- Over time, governors have not held leaders to account sufficiently well for the quality of education that the school provides. However, governance has improved and is good because governors are supportive yet increasingly challenging.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of what pupils are capable of and the progress they make.
- Teachers have an accurate view of pupils' starting points. They use this information to help pupils to catch up in their learning when needed.
- Pupils' well-being lies at the heart of the school. Through staff training, leaders make sure that pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable, get the appropriate help and support they need to be ready for their learning.
- Unevenness in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time has led to a decline in outcomes at key stages 1 and 2. However, because of the improved quality of teaching, current pupils are making better progress than before in reading, writing and mathematics.
- All teachers are responsible for developing subjects other than English and mathematics. They have started to assess pupils' achievement in subjects such as science, history and geography, but it is too early to see the full impact of their actions.
- Most parents are extremely positive about recent developments. Nevertheless, a few parents remain frustrated with the historic decline in the quality of education and the effectiveness of communication between school and home.
- Teachers do not consistently move the most able pupils on in their learning quickly enough. The pupils do not make the good and better progress they should to reach the higher standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that subject leaders have an accurate view of the pupils' achievement in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - improving communication with parents to ensure that they have a good understanding of the work of school leaders and governors.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by providing good opportunities for the most able pupils to act upon next steps in their learning, so that they reach the higher standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve outcomes by ensuring teachers move pupils' learning on quickly so that pupils catch up and make the good progress they should.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, leaders, including governors, have not ensured the outstanding quality of education has been maintained.
- A legacy of disrupted teaching, learning and assessment led to a decline in outcomes at key stages 1 and 2. Following her appointment in 2017, the headteacher quickly got to grips with what needed to be done and has been bold in her decision-making to swiftly raise standards. Consequently, current pupils are making better progress.
- After a period of staffing instability, the headteacher has established a passionate and united workforce. Staff are extremely positive about the school's leadership. Longstanding staff have welcomed the changes that the headteacher has brought about. Morale is high, and staff are proud to work at the school. With leaders' clear direction, staff are working successfully together to bring about necessary changes.
- The headteacher recognises that all staff play a very important role in pupils' well-being and learning. She is successfully building a skilled and knowledgeable staff team. This is because she identifies individual skills and abilities, and provides relevant training so that staff at all levels can make a positive contribution to pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher has made clear her high expectations of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. She challenges practice that is not good enough and supports teachers to improve. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved and is now good.
- Historically, assessment information has not been consistently secure across the school and therefore measures of pupils' progress were unreliable. Leaders' and teachers' over-emphasis on pupils' attainment did not ensure that pupils were making the good and better progress of which they were capable.
- The headteacher is developing productive partnerships with other schools to bring about rapid improvements. A specialist teacher of mathematics is successfully supporting teachers in their drive to support more pupils to reach the higher standards. Inspection evidence demonstrates that teachers' subject knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics is good, and they have an improved understanding of what pupils need to do to reach the higher standards of attainment in these subjects.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Strong values run alongside the school's personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils celebrate religious festivals such as Diwali and talk about religions such as Islam, demonstrating a good understanding of diversity.
- Through the broad curriculum, including history work and knowledge of life in modern Britain, pupils gain a good understanding of how times have changed. Through their study of the Victorians, pupils develop a sense of right and wrong. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the work of Charles Dickens and the poverty and treatment of children during this time. They spoke about their study of 'A Christmas Carol'. They were very clear about the messages the novel gives and how the spirits were significant in helping Scrooge to improve his ways.

- Pupils develop a good understanding of patriotism, selflessness, and what makes a good citizen. Pupils worked alongside the local community when studying the First World War and the act of remembrance. Pupils made poppies and distributed them around the local community. Residents displayed the poppies in their gardens. During the inspection, pupils were able to speak with empathy about the horror of the trenches and the brave soldiers who fought in the war.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used effectively to ensure that pupils receive high-quality teaching that is supported by a PE specialist. Funding is enabling pupils to take part in more local competitions as well as supporting pupils to catch up in their swimming skills so that more are proficient in swimming by the time they leave Hopton. The school has achieved a national sports award.
- The pupil premium funding and funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used very effectively. The headteacher's extensive knowledge has ensured that pupils get the right support from specialists to meet their needs and that staff receive the relevant training to continue the support.
- The monitoring and assessing of subjects other than English and mathematics is carried out jointly. All five teachers plan the curriculum content and check that national curriculum objectives are being covered. Leaders are beginning to take action to ensure that all pupils achieve equally well in these subjects. However, it is too early to see the impact of their actions.
- Most parents spoken with said that communication from the school is good. Evidence shows that the school gives opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. For example, a box is made available in reception for parental comments, and regular open mornings give parents opportunities to speak to teachers and to see their children's work. However, a few parents voiced their concerns that communication from the school is not forthcoming. These parents are unclear about leaders' work and its intended impact.

Governance of the school

- Governors recognise that they did not hold leaders to account well enough for the quality of education after the previous inspection. Since then they have sought advice and learned some hard lessons from the challenges they faced in previous years. They are determined and increasingly effective in their actions to ensure that the school now remains on an upward trend and that pupils receive their entitlement to a good education.
- Governors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They adopt an effective strategic approach and have an accurate understanding of where the school is on its journey of continuous improvement.
- The governing body values the training from the local authority and works successfully with other schools to build up governors' knowledge and understanding. Recently recruited members have brought relevant and valuable skills to the governing body.
- Governors are aware of and carry out their statutory duties in terms of safeguarding pupils. They check the single central record of statutory pre-employment checks on

staff and receive all relevant information pertaining to vulnerable pupils.

- Documentation looked at during the inspection confirms that governors are well informed by the headteacher on every aspect of the school's work and the impact it is having on pupils' outcomes. Governors now challenge and support the headteacher rigorously in her work to raise standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has significantly improved systems for safeguarding pupils at the school. Leaders and teachers are committed to ensuring that pupils are safe and attend school regularly.
- The headteacher ensures that staff understand their responsibilities and complete the relevant training in respect to safeguarding children. Processes are clear, and concerns are followed up swiftly. The headteacher is the designated safeguarding lead and ensures that procedures are followed thoroughly. Files are meticulously kept, and records are suitably detailed.
- The headteacher has introduced regular staff briefings where any concerns staff may have about pupils are raised. Staff welcome the improved clarity and understanding about their roles in relation to protecting pupils. Adults know the pupils well and are vigilant to changes in pupils' behaviour.
- The school's single central record and employee files are well maintained and contain all statutory information. All adults have undergone the necessary checks to be suitable to work with children.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe at school and almost all parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, agreed that their children are safe and well looked after.
- Pupils know how to protect themselves and who they need to tell if they have any concerns.
- Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of the potential dangers from working online. They can talk about cyber bullying and the potential consequences from uploading personal information and photographs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- As a result of the headteacher's decisive action, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving and is good. Accurate assessment of pupils' work means that teachers are using reliable information to plan activities to meet pupils' needs. However, a legacy of inconsistent teaching has led to gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers have now identified these gaps and are rectifying this situation. Consequently, most pupils are catching up, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- Teachers skilfully plan activities that build on pupils' prior knowledge to improve their writing and develop their vocabulary. During the inspection, in the Year 1 and 2 class,

pupils were exchanging their initial adjective choices for more exciting descriptive phrases. Pupils were working on tasks carefully matched to their abilities with appropriate challenge in place. Most-able Year 1 pupils were using capital letters and full stops correctly and forming letters well, while using a range of adjectives to improve their work.

- The teaching of grammar is good. Pupils in Year 2 can explain conjunctions and how to use apostrophes correctly. They were able to complete sentences using a range of punctuation accurately. Pupils in Year 6 are confident writers and apply grammar skills in their writing.
- Mathematics is taught well. Teachers plan learning that enables pupils to consolidate basic mathematics knowledge and skills and apply these effectively to problem-solving and reasoning tasks. Pupils demonstrated that they are proficient in recalling number facts. Pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class were able to apply their knowledge of multiplication tables accurately to solve a range of problems. In the Year 5 and 6 class, pupils were able to discuss strategies for finding fractions of amounts. They discussed methods with each other and acknowledged their success when they reached the correct answer.
- Adults ensure that pupils secure their phonics knowledge early on so that in Year 2 they are keen readers and read fluently with increased understanding. Teachers make the most of all opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and continually check their understanding. Pupils' work shows that they have ample opportunities to practise comprehension skills through answering questions drawn from a range of texts.
- Teachers encourage pupils to recognise where they are in their learning. The school's chosen approach involves pupils checking their written work against a set of targets. They improve their work through a clear process of reviewing and editing. Teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to apply their writing skills well by writing for different purposes. Most pupils in all year groups are making good progress in writing.
- Adults support pupils with SEND well in class. Teachers and leaders monitor outcomes closely and adapt the curriculum where necessary. Pupils with complex emotional and behavioural needs are given appropriate outreach support from local SEND provision, and behaviour plans are in place to help pupils to be successful in their learning.
- In some classes teachers do not always move pupils on in their learning in a timely way. For example, the inspector observed pupils who had already demonstrated they could complete one type of calculation not being given the extension tasks needed to deepen their understanding. Similarly, in writing some pupils were not acting on teachers' guidance quickly enough to enable them to make good gains in their learning.
- In some cases, teachers do not give enough opportunities for the most able pupils to make the good and better progress they should in reading, writing and mathematics, so that they reach the higher standards.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes towards their learning. They are confident and happy to talk to adults about their work.
- The school's aim to develop well-rounded resilient individuals is seen throughout the school. Pupils show resilience in their learning. In all lessons observed pupils clearly understood the need to push and challenge themselves.
- The school works well to keep parents informed about the national concerns around child anxiety and mental health by inviting specialist visitors into the school to speak with parents. Parents appreciate this information and are keen to attend these meetings.
- Pupils are delighted to take on roles of responsibility and they take them seriously. They are proud to 'make a difference' through their roles within the school council where they raise money for charity.
- Pupils talk maturely about people in very different social, economic and cultural circumstances, particularly in relation to their study of Africa. Pupils also show understanding about those people who come to Britain to find a better life.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's behaviour policy has been well received by teachers and pupils. Teachers report that pupils' behaviour has improved significantly since its implementation. Staff commented that the behaviour systems are clear and easy to follow and most parents who responded to Parent View agreed that behaviour in the school is good.
- Pupils explained how pupils move up or down the behaviour ladder depending on their behaviour. In lessons pupils celebrate each other reaching the 'outstanding learner' level.
- Some parents do not think that the school deals with bullying effectively. Pupils spoken with knew about the different types of bullying and said that they could speak to an adult if they had any concerns. Evidence shows that all incidents of poor behaviour are recorded in detail. All incidents are followed through and are dealt with appropriately in a timely fashion.
- Leaders have raised the profile of attendance so that parents and pupils are aware of the impact of non-attendance. 'NIMO' (not in, miss out) has created a good sense of challenge and camaraderie. The proportion of pupils who are regular non-attenders has reduced. In accordance with her legal duty and the school's attendance policy, the headteacher is taking measures to reduce the number of unauthorised absences caused by parents taking their children out in school time, for example on their children's birthdays. Most pupils come to school on time every day unless they are too ill to do so.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Inspection evidence confirms that historically pupils were not making the progress they should in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, too few pupils exceeded the expected standard at the end of each key stage.
- Outcomes require improvement because pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has declined over time and has been below national averages for the last three years. Due to leaders' successful actions to bring about improvements, the progress of pupils currently in the school is improving but is not yet good.
- In 2017 and 2018, almost all Year 6 pupils attained the expected standard in writing and mathematics. In reading, attainment was above the national averages at both the expected and higher standards. In Year 2, attainment in reading and writing was broadly in line with national averages but below average in mathematics. This represents average progress from pupils' individual starting points. This pattern of achievement is typical for pupils from Year 1 to Year 6.
- Pupils develop grammar, punctuation and spelling skills well. End of key stage 2 results show that pupils exceed the national average at the expected and higher standards of attainment. Pupils' written work shows that they apply these skills well in their writing.
- Pupils attain well in phonics. Pupils make strong progress from end of Reception to end of Year 1, with almost all pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.
- In mathematics, pupils who have fallen behind are now making better progress by making up for the gaps in their skills and understanding.
- Pupils' work shows that current pupils are making good progress in the topics they have studied. Pupils acquire skills and knowledge in a logical way. Progress in science is increasingly strong. High-quality art work is evident throughout the school corridors and in classrooms.

Early years provision

Good

- Effective leadership in the early years has brought experience, energy and enthusiasm to the provision. Children's needs and capabilities are accurately identified by leaders when children join the school. Leaders maintain an accurate knowledge of where children are in their learning. Staff adjust tasks to meet those needs and enable children to make secure gains in literacy and numeracy. Most children leave Reception achieving a good level of development.
- The early years provision promotes children's personal, social and emotional development well. Leaders establish routines and expectations successfully so that children develop secure learning behaviours. Most children listen and engage with learning purposefully. Children are given the support they need to develop these skills in their own time in the safe and nurturing environment.
- Leaders have made improvements to the provision so that children have a wide range of opportunities to develop in all areas of learning. Leaders have taken advice from local authority advisers and have been successful in creating an environment with purposeful activities that engage and stimulate children.

- The outside area has been developed very effectively to engage children in a range of activities. During the inspection children demonstrated their curiosity when exploring how water runs through channels and independently investigating different objects floating on the water.
- Children who start the early years provision needing to develop their fine motor skills have suitable opportunities to strengthen and develop their pencil grips. Staff work with children effectively when they choose to write independently. Consequently, children make good progress in their writing. In September most children were mark making and now many are accurately forming letters and writing sentences.
- Children are given many opportunities to develop their number skills. They are encouraged to count, and during independent activities were observed being supported appropriately by staff to recognise one more and one less. The inspector also observed children busily constructing toy lorries and counting the wheels on their vehicles. Staff intervened appropriately by asking children questions to extend their learning. For example, one child only counted the wheels on one side of the lorry and was prompted to check his counting. He was able to successfully count on and then recognised his error.
- Parents are positive about the quality of provision in the early years and the good progress their children are making. The school's system for sharing progress is supporting parental involvement well.
- Pupils make good gains in speaking and listening and communication and language often from typically low starting points. Through focused teaching children make good progress in learning their phonics and are prepared well for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	124703
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10085477

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Clements
Headteacher	Claire Wright
Telephone number	01953 681449
Website	www.hopton.suffolk.sch.uk
Email address	admin@hopton.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school became an all-through primary in September 2014.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2017.
- The school is smaller than most primary schools. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes from Year 1 to Year 6.
- A small number of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- There are plans for the school to offer nursery provision from January 2019.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was initially scheduled as a one-day inspection following concerns about the school's performance. The inspection converted to a full inspection completed by the lead inspector on the following day.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning across all year groups.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, governors and school staff, and met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at pupils' written work, information on pupils' attainment and progress, curriculum planning, and records of behaviour and safety. The inspector also looked at the minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents, including mandatory checks made on the recruitment of new staff, and the school's website.
- Discussions were held with pupils from the school council representing every year group and informal conversations took place during lesson times.
- The inspector took account of 50 responses to Ofsted's online parental questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's own parental questionnaire analysis. The inspector also spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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