

Welford Sibbertoft and Sulby Endowed School

West Street, Welford, Northampton, NN6 6HU

Inspection dates

12–13 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress because they are well taught. Leaders have successfully introduced changes in the way writing is taught. As a result, pupils' achievement in writing has improved since the previous inspection.
- Reading is a strength because letters and their sounds are taught very well, in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Older pupils read a broad range of books and recommend different books and authors to each other.
- In lessons, teachers provide interesting, challenging and purposeful activities which pupils enjoy. Pupils have many good opportunities to discuss their ideas, answer questions and work together.
- Relationships are very positive and pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are treated as individuals. Teachers manage behaviour well and praise the good contributions that pupils make.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and are free from bullying. Pupils are outgoing and friendly and confident when talking to adults. Pupils get on very well with each other.
- The school has improved since the last inspection. The leadership of teaching is effective and achievement is better than at the time of the last inspection. Leaders and governors have managed a falling budget carefully to ensure that pupils' learning has not been adversely affected.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While checking and support by leaders has maintained good teaching since the previous inspection, it has not been sharp enough to increase the amount of outstanding teaching to help the pupils to progress even better.
- Pupils do not have regular enough opportunities to apply their calculation skills in mathematics and other subjects.
- Governors do not have clear enough information about pupils' progress so that they can challenge leaders as fully as possible.

Information about this inspection

- Seven lessons were observed, including joint observations with senior staff. The inspector also observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 19 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and information from the school's recent survey of parents' and carers' opinions. Parents' and carers' views were also gathered from letters and informal conversations during the school day.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents, including the school improvement plan, school checks on teaching and progress, records relating to attendance, the school's numerical data on pupils' progress, and analysed samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school. The pupils are taught in four classes in the morning and three classes in the afternoon. The school does not have alternative provision.
- Numbers of pupils attending the school have fallen since the previous inspection because there are fewer pupils aged 4–11 in the local area.
- Nearly all pupils are White British and no pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled, or who have special educational needs and are supported by school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. The proportion supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average. The school has received funding for these pupils since September 2012.
- There is onsite pre-school provision that is not managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding, so that pupils' learning and achievement are outstanding in a higher proportion of lessons, by:
 - checking up more closely on the quality of teaching to give teachers even more help and support to improve their practice
 - improving opportunities for teachers to visit and work with outstanding teachers
 - promoting a brisk pace of learning at all times.
- Strengthen pupils' investigation and problem-solving skills by providing them with more opportunities to apply their calculation skills in mathematics and other subjects.
- Improve and clarify the information about the progress of pupils, particularly for governors, so that they can strengthen their challenge to leaders about how well the school is performing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' learning and achievement, as observed in lessons and seen in the school's records of pupils' progress over time, are good. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make progress which is similar to other pupils. These pupils say that they are doing well and comment that they 'learn a lot' in lessons and are expected to work hard.
- Pupils who benefit from pupil premium funding make good progress. They are provided with additional support when needed, including well targeted individual support.
- Children start school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. Reading, writing and number skills are slightly weaker than children's personal development and communication skills. Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is above average.
- Pupils' progress in writing, which has been a priority for improvement, is improving at a good rate. Pupils have a good understanding about how to make their writing interesting for the reader and they relish using adventurous vocabulary.
- While pupils' calculation skills in mathematics are secure, pupils do not have regular enough opportunities to apply these skills to problems and investigations in lessons. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics remains the slightly weaker area of performance.
- Reading is a strength of the school. In Reception, pupils are helped to read words such as 'van' and 'vest' using their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics). Less-able readers in Year 1 use their phonic knowledge confidently to read a wide range of simple words. By Year 2, these skills have developed well. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6, have mature reading habits. They talk knowledgeably about different authors and their writing styles.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the previous inspection teaching has remained good. Good teaching has ensured that pupils have achieved well from their different starting points.
- Reading, writing and calculation skills are taught well; however, planning does not provide regular enough opportunities for pupils to solve mathematics problems in different contexts. Reading skills are taught effectively in Reception, and Years 1 and 2. Year 2 pupils, for example, read a story about the nativity fluently, including more complex words, with more-able pupils using intonation well for different characters. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 teach the skills necessary for pupils to write at the higher National Curriculum level.
- Learning typically moves on at a brisk pace, including for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Teachers provide interesting activities and the work provided is not too easy or too difficult. On some occasions the pace of learning dips in some parts of lessons. For example, in the final part of lessons when too long is spent reviewing learning.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils want to give of their best. Older pupils work with a great deal of confidence on individual tasks and with each other. Younger pupils join in enthusiastically and work diligently, for example, when counting 'penguins in the snow.'
- Questioning by teachers probes pupils' understanding well and pupils' responses to questions are well thought out. In Years 3 and 4, for example, good questioning helped pupils to extend their understanding of synonyms and simile, and to explore different adverbs and adjectives to make their sentences more powerful. In Years 5 and 6, role play and discussion was used well to get pupils to explore how they might feel when they went through the wardrobe to enter 'Narnia'.
- Pupils have good information about how to improve their work. Marking is helpful and is developmental as it effectively informs pupils about what they have done well and what must be improved. Teachers also discuss on an individual basis how the pupils can improve their work. Pupils have opportunities to assess their own work and set their own targets but these are not

regular enough.

- Teaching assistants provide valuable support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and, for example, they keep detailed notes of how they are getting on in class. Their targeted input in Year 1 has helped pupils to improve their sentence construction and use of vocabulary.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' have good attitudes to learning. Older pupils, in particular, work well together in groups to tackle joint tasks. Their positive attitudes are reflected, for example, in the quantity and quality of their written work in their books, and the work they do at home in their learning journals. However, pupils say there are a few occasions when interruptions 'slow them down'; pupils sometimes need reminding about paying attention.
- The school is a happy and friendly place. Pupils confirm that they get on well together and any 'falling out' is quickly resolved. The size of the school enables all of the pupils to get to know each other well. They comment that school is a 'really nice place to be.'
- Parents, carers and staff express the view that pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. The pupils report that they are free from any bullying and they have great confidence in their teachers to sort out any issue should it arise. They comment that they feel very safe and that their teachers are kind and deal with them fairly.
- Pupils have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of the dangers of alcohol and drugs and that the internet can be misused. They have had visitors to the school to discuss road safety including using their bicycles on roads.
- Pupils are punctual to school and their attendance is very regular.

The leadership and management are good

- Good teamwork is well established. Questionnaire returns confirm that all teachers value the support and training provided and say, for example, that they enjoy working in the school and are 'always looking for ways to improve.'
- The school has responded well to issues identified at the time of the previous inspection. The outside learning area for younger children has been significantly improved and now offers a spacious covered area. In writing, improvement is evident across the school, with rising standards in the subject. However, opportunities for staff to visit and work with outstanding teachers in other schools, for example, to help them sharpen their skills are underdeveloped.
- Leaders have maintained a close watch on the progress of individual pupils. The school's system for tracking pupils' progress against their targets is regularly updated. Leaders are able to use this information, to demonstrate that pupils have equal opportunity to do well. Discrimination is not tolerated. However, the information provided to governors about pupils' progress is hard to interpret and the lack of clarity makes it difficult for governors to provide the necessary level of challenge about the school's performance.
- There are secure links between different subjects to make learning relevant. For example, the 'rain forest' topic enabled the pupils to develop their design technology, art and geography and literacy skills. Improvement plans rightly identify that applying mathematics skills in other subjects is a weaker area.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is promoted well. The school has strengthened pupils' cultural awareness through, for example, a visit to a gurdwara. Pupils greatly enjoyed joining in with the festive singing at lunchtime and there are good opportunities for reflection throughout the day.
- The local authority has provided 'light touch' support for this school.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has managed a decrease in funding due to the fall in numbers of pupils well. Governors have good insight into the future challenges that may be faced. They know that the school is performing well based on visits to lessons and results in Years 2 and 6. However, they have not drilled down robustly into more detailed data nor established a clear enough view of achievement in different classes so that they can hold leaders fully to account. The governing body have a clear performance management procedure to make informed decisions about teachers rising up the salary scale. Governors know how the pupil premium money has been spent. However, it is too early for them to come to a view about the impact of this spending as they have only recently received funding. Nevertheless they know pupils entitled to free school meals achieve well. The budget is very carefully monitored and governors ensure the school lives within its means. Governors have been suitably trained to fulfil their statutory duties and for example, have attended courses on teacher appraisal and performance management, child protection and safer recruitment of staff. As a result, procedures and practices in these specific areas are secure.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	121997
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	402074

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Webber
Headteacher	Michelle Pye
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2009
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