

North Elmham Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Holt Road, North Elmham, Dereham, NR20 5JS

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly when they start school and make good progress.
- As pupils move through the school, they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers' planning is good, they make good use of well-chosen resources and they have high expectations for learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe in school. They have positive attitudes to learning and their attendance is above average.
- The school is led and managed well. The governing body provides good support for the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other staff.
- Leaders have been successful in maintaining good achievement since the last inspection and improving the quality of teaching. The school is well placed for further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally the pace of learning slows in some lessons, which limits the time for pupils to complete their tasks.
- Teachers do not always inform pupils how to improve their learning when marking their work.
- Occasionally, work is not matched to pupils' different abilities.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons and observed all teachers teaching. Most of these were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspector heard five pupils read in Years 1 and 2, and examined their reading records.
- The inspector held meetings with a group of pupils, a few parents and when they brought their children to school, and the English and mathematics co-ordinators. A telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Joint meetings were held with representatives of the governing body and the senior leadership team. A meeting was also held with the lead inspector of the federated school, which was undergoing an inspection at the same time, to discuss the impact of the federation on the two schools.
- The inspector took account of 38 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and looked at the questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at records of governors' visits, the report from the school's improvement partner, the summary self-evaluation and school improvement plan, safeguarding policies, records of pupils' progress and the work in the books, and records of attendance.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This smaller than average primary school serves the village of North Elmham and other local villages.
- A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for pupil premium, which is the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free schools meals and those in local authority care.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is broadly average and the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- Since its last inspection the school has entered a partnership with a local primary school of similar size, and both schools were federated in September 2011. During that year there was no permanent headteacher. A new executive headteacher for both schools was appointed in September 2012. The two schools share the same senior leadership team, finance officer and governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and improve achievement by ensuring:
 - pupils always have time to complete their work
 - tasks provided to pupils of different abilities match their learning needs
 - teachers consistently provide written comments in their marking which show pupils how to improve their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children usually enter the Reception Year with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for their age, although this varies slightly from year to year. They make good progress in all areas for learning, particularly in their personal social and emotional development and their ability to link letters to sounds.
- Results of the recent Year 1 national test of pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds were below average. However, pupils otherwise made good progress in reading in Year 1 to reach broadly average attainment in reading. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. This represents good progress for this group, who entered school with below average attainment.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reached above average standards in English and mathematics, a position which has been sustained since the previous inspection. Pupils make at least expected progress in reading and mathematics.
- Lesson observations, pupils' work and the school's accurate information about pupils' attainment shows that pupils are continuing to make good progress, with no significant differences between boys and girls. The small number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates.
- It is not appropriate to report on the relative attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals as the numbers are very small and there is too great a risk that individuals could be identified. Over time, these pupils make good progress from their starting points. This was confirmed by most parents who responded to parent view and during informal discussions with parents during the inspection. The school's records of its pupil premium spending, which has been used to provide additional teaching assistance support for literacy and numeracy, as well as a reduction in group sizes, show that it is helping this group of pupils to make good progress.
- Partnership working across the federation is enabling teachers to develop greater confidence in making judgements about the levels of progress pupils make.

The quality of teaching is good

- Rigorous checks by senior leaders have ensured teaching is good across the school and led to some being outstanding. The quality of teaching is improving steadily as a result of the sharing of good practice across both schools.
- Teachers make good use of practical resources to stimulate pupils' learning. In the mixed Reception and Year 1 class, following a whole class reading of a traditional African story, the youngest children used the outdoor learning environment for free play activities, while Year 1 pupils used teacher made writing frames to develop their writing of the characters in the story. In a mixed Year 2 and 3 history lesson, some pupils used lap top computers to research the Saxons and derive three facts about Sutton Hoo. Others looked at modern day artefacts to stimulate writing a list of their own characteristics to enable others to identify them.
- Lessons are carefully structured to ensure planning builds upon pupils' prior learning from one year to the next. Teachers' high expectations for learning were seen in their challenging questions and their constant feedback to pupils to extend their learning further. This was done

exceptionally well in a Year 6 mathematics revision lesson, where the teacher constantly extended the accuracy of pupils' measurement of angles and their understanding of properties of shapes to ensure they were working within the higher levels of attainment. As a result pupils made rapid progress in shape, space and measures and were very well prepared for their national tests in mathematics.

- The teaching of communication, literacy and numeracy is good and enables pupils to make good progress. The teaching of reading is good, and teachers carefully record any gains in the knowledge of the sounds letters that pupils make in their reading records. Pupils are encouraged to read widely. This promotes good learning and progress in reading.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs by breaking tasks down into smaller steps and developing a clear understanding of key words in the topic.
- Teachers generally make good use of lesson time to ensure pupils complete all tasks, although occasionally this is not the case and the pace of learning slows.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They usually make good use of pupils' learning and progress to match activities to the different learning needs of pupils. However pupils' books show that, occasionally, the pupils who find learning difficult are given the same tasks to do as more able pupils. Consequently, on these few occasions, some pupils find the task too difficult and others find it too easy.
- Marking is consistently tells pupils how well they have done. However, teachers do not always provide written comments to inform pupils how to improve their learning when their books are marked.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good and occasionally it is outstanding. Pupils know how to stay safe. They handle equipment and use the internet safely. They adopt safe practices, by walking sensibly and showing consideration for others when moving from one area of the school to another.
- In lessons, pupils' behaviour is at least good and sometimes it is outstanding. They respond well to the code of conduct and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Parents who expressed their views believe that behaviour and safety are good. This was also confirmed in discussions with parent during the inspection. Nearly all parents and pupils believe that bullying is rare and is dealt with effectively. Pupils have good knowledge of the various types of bullying and how to avoid it.
- Staff provide excellent role models for behaviour and refuse to accept any form of discrimination. The family ethos of the school encourages very good relationship between pupils and staff.
- Children in the Reception Year learn to take turns and share because all adults ensure children's well-being and pay good attention to their personal, social and emotional development.
- Attendance is above average.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders work very effectively to raise achievement and improve the school, and make sure all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. They make good use of their own accurate self-evaluation of the school's work to set well-chosen priorities for improving teaching and learning.
- Leaders' rigorous checks on the quality of teaching in lessons and reviews of pupils' work have led to consistently good teaching, with an increasing proportion which is outstanding. Teachers are given clear individual targets to improve their work, which are clearly linked to the national guidance on teaching standards as well as to the school's priorities for development.
- The strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and communication skills in all subjects and topics is leading to good achievement in these areas. The wide range of opportunities to enrich learning includes visitors to the school, after-school clubs and a residential visit.
- Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development are used exceptionally well. Pupils very sensitively record their feelings about events which touch their lives in their thought diaries. They make excellent use of the quiet reflection area, and are regularly asked to consider important issues, such as natural justice, as part of the programme for personal social and health education. They actively celebrate diversity. Older pupils, for example, learn about Brazil, whilst others begin to learn Spanish, during which they will visit a Tapas restaurant to sample Spanish food. The youngest children compare traditional African stories with traditional English ones.
- The local authority is providing appropriate light touch support for this good school, and is closely monitoring the work of the federation at least on an annual basis.
- Good partnerships with parents are reflected in the relatively high responses in this small school and their good attendance at school functions and parents' evenings. Most parents who expressed a view would recommend the school to others.
- Partnership work across the federation ensures the school offers good value for money. Leadership has been strengthened by linking the subject leaders and their responsibilities across both schools. Joint training and joint subject leadership briefing are leading to a steady improvement in the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a thorough understanding of how teachers' performance is managed and how the best teaching is rewarded and have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. They make regular and focused visits to school and receive detailed reports on achievement from senior leaders. Governors make good use of the information about pupils' progress to compare the school's performance with other schools. They ensure finances are well managed to achieve value for money especially for pupils premium funding. They review the progress different groups of pupils are making and compare this to the progress of the other pupils in the school. Governors ensure that the school meets all legal requirements, particularly for safeguarding. They regularly check that policies, procedures and training to promote the safety and well-being of pupils are up to date.

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	121049
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	403451

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Blogg
Headteacher	Keith Wright (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2008
Telephone number	01362 668318
Fax number	01362 668832
Email address	office@northelmham.norfolk.sch.uk

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