

# Spooner Row Primary School

Station Road, Spooner Row, Wymondham, NR18 9JR

**Inspection dates** 16–17 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from their different starting points. Overall standards in reading and writing are above those expected by the end of Year 6.
- The attainment and progress in mathematics has improved recently due to better teaching. Progress in reading is good due to the effective teaching of linking sounds and letters (phonics).
- Teaching is good. Lessons are well-planned and resourced. Teaching assistants offer good quality support for pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Their very positive attitudes to learning have a strong impact on their good progress. They demonstrate a real pride in their school and are very caring towards each other.
- Since her appointment the headteacher and governing body have provided the school with strong leadership. The school provides pupils with outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The good teaching of mathematics is the result of outstanding subject leadership and changes to teachers' skills. Equally good improvements to pupils' writing have been made through introducing more drama and role play.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give pupils time to respond to written feedback on how they can improve their work.
- Not all the work in subjects other than English and mathematics is well-matched to pupils' earlier learning. Spelling, punctuation and handwriting skills are not as good as they could be.
- The leadership of other subjects is not as strong as it is in English and mathematics and neither is the tracking of pupils' progress.
- The governing body do not work closely enough with subject leaders.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons. Almost all of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, governors, pupils, staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- Samples of pupils' work were looked at carefully. Some pupils read books to the inspector.
- The inspector analysed and took account of the 40 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View) as well as letters from parents sent to the inspector.
- In addition, 11 staff questionnaires were considered.
- The inspector looked at key inspection documents, including the school's information about pupils' progress, procedures for safeguarding, the school's view of its own performance reports to the governing body and the school improvement plan.

## Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Spooner Row Community Primary School is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who do not speak English as a first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A below-average proportion of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by a local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a privately managed pre-school that shares the school's site. This is inspected and reported on separately.

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

- Make more of the teaching outstanding by:
  - ensuring the work in subjects other than English and mathematics is targeted more closely at pupils' skills and needs
  - giving pupils time to understand and respond to feedback from teachers that tells them what they have done well and what they need to do to improve
  - helping pupils improve the precision of their spelling, punctuation and handwriting.
- Improve the leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics and ensure this is monitored more closely by the governing body.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children typically start in the Reception Year with levels of knowledge and understanding broadly in line with those expected for their age. The small size of the year groups in this school mean this can vary from year to year. Commonly, children start school with weaker skills in creative and expressive skills and understanding of the world. They make good progress and attain levels above those expected by the end of the Reception year. Particular strengths are in their physical development, their technological awareness and their number work.
- The school's results in the 2012 Year 1 reading check were well above average. This year they have done even better and almost all of the current pupils have reached the required level. This is due to good teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) and well-organised groups so that teaching can be better focused on the needs of individual pupils.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are regularly above average and pupils make good progress. The current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve above average levels. Boys' writing remains slightly below other areas but is still above average nationally. Many of the boys have made better progress this year.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average and rising in writing and mathematics. Although standards in mathematics dipped in 2012, current standards are much higher. In addition, high quality work in art and design and in German was observed during the inspection. Mathematics standards are rising rapidly due to improvements to the teaching of problem solving. Pupils in Year 5 and 6, for example, worked exceptionally well together to solve a mathematical problem relating to fractions and chocolate.
- The school's information show that in Years 3 to 6, progress is better than that expected in reading, writing and mathematics. More pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach the higher levels in all three subjects this year.
- Although often good, progress in writing is sometimes slower than that in reading and mathematics. Recent improvements to the teaching of writing have come about through good teaching using drama and role play to inspire pupils. For example, Years 3 and 4 followed up role play as King Lear and his three daughters by writing affectingly in a variety of ways such as letters or diaries.
- There were not enough pupils known to be eligible for funding from the pupil premium in 2012 to comment on their attainment. However information about current pupils shows that almost all are achieving at least as well as their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported. There are no marked differences in the achievement of different groups, including the very small number from a minority ethnic background.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The good quality of teaching supports pupils' good achievement. A small amount of the teaching is outstanding and this is characterised by the deep involvement of all pupils in their learning.

- The teaching of mathematics is much improved and many more lessons are based on the use of basic mathematical skills in solving problems. This also is very effective in developing pupils' thinking skills and their ability to cooperate and collaborate. In Years 1 and 2, for example, pupils worked together well on problems with numbers that are near doubles.
- Teachers have made good use of further training in, for example, mathematics or the teaching of boys' writing and this has led to more rapid progress in those subjects. This is supported by some effective links made between subject areas, such as those between art and design, geography and history in work on Africa. Teachers have planned and worked together, and observed each other deliver lessons. This has been very effective in spreading good practice.
- Where the teaching is less consistent it is because the work is not always well targeted at different pupils' abilities or earlier learning, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics. When this happens all are engaged on the same task which means it is likely to be too hard for some and too easy for others. Teachers do not encourage enough precision in pupils' writing and as a result their spelling, punctuation and handwriting skills are not as consistently strong as they could be.
- Marking of pupils' work has improved since the last inspection especially in English. However, pupils are not always given time to respond to suggestions for improvement. In one lesson, for example, pupils did not understand fully the oral feedback given by the teacher and this led to less progress than might have occurred.
- In most lessons teachers plan activities that are supported by a stimulating range of resources so that pupils are interested and enjoy their work. For example, in an outstanding Reception Year session outdoors, a letter from fairies asking for children's help in solving problems was received excitedly and resulted in some excellent learning activities.
- Teaching assistants often provide very effective support to teachers and pupils, particularly when working with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The relationships between adults and pupils are consistently strong and supportive and this encourages pupils' participation in learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary and they are a delight to spend time with and talk to. They are extremely polite and friendly, and show pride in their achievements and in their school. They live up to the school's strong values and its motto of 'Believe, Achieve, Succeed'. They are clearly becoming responsible, respectful, caring members of society. This is supported by parents' comments about how well pupils look after and care for each other and younger children.
- Pupils' attitudes have an extremely positive impact on their learning. Because of this, there are no notable interruptions or disruption to learning. Teachers are able to provide interesting, exciting lessons. This was evident, for example, in the way the youngest children worked together outdoors to solve problems.
- Pupils say there is no bullying, and this is supported by the school's records. They feel safe at school and the large majority of parents and carers who completed the on-line questionnaire agreed with this view. Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying.

- Pupils love taking responsibility and showing independence. The school recently raised a significant amount of money to help rebuild a school in Sierra Leone. They take responsibilities seriously whether it is the school council, the ECO group or helping look after the school chickens.
- Attendance is consistently well above average and there are no persistent absentees. The school works closely with parents and carers to encourage full attendance although there are still a small number who take holiday time during the term.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Leadership and management are good because there is a lack of complacency and a continual seeking of new ideas to help raise pupils' achievement. Because of this there is a good capacity to improve further. Since her appointment the headteacher has provided a clear steer to the school's work and she has created a skilful and close knit team.
- A vast majority of the parents are very happy with the school and the way it provides for their children's academic, personal and social development. A number wrote extremely positive letters to the inspector praising the school and the progress their children are making. The school engages with parents and carers well. Events such as the day showing the teaching of mathematics, and the methods used by teachers, are much appreciated.
- The leadership of mathematics is outstanding and that in English, and for Early Years and pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs, is good. Strengths are the training teachers have undergone to improve their leadership and subject knowledge skills but also the sharing of ideas and best practice among staff, including teaching assistants. However, the leadership of the other subjects needs to be further developed so that the work in those areas is more closely monitored and pupils' learning more sharply assessed.
- The school has detailed and regularly monitored improvement plans. These give the school a clear focus and a set of aims for further improvement. The morale of staff reflected positively in their responses to questionnaires which show that all are proud to work at the school. Staff are positive about the school's motto 'Believe, Achieve, Succeed.'
- The progress made by pupils in the school is tracked in detail using a recently introduced electronic system. This helps staff and governors see how well all groups of pupils and individuals are achieving. Regular meetings regarding pupils' progress are held so that any underachievement can be quickly identified and tackled.
- The challenging targets for improvement set for teachers are based appropriately on raising standards and the priorities in the school improvement plan, as well as for their individual professional development.
- The local authority provides appropriately light touch support for the school. In addition, the school takes advantage of a range of training and support advice the local authority provides. This has a positive impact on, for example, the school's use of data.
- The funding available through the pupil premium is used effectively to help the small number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals to take a full part in school life, and receive, where appropriate, specific resources and adult time. The progress made by these pupils is closely monitored by the headteacher and the data clearly indicate that there are few gaps in attainment. Other groups are also closely monitored to ensure equality of opportunity.

■ The school has developed a good curriculum that makes appropriate links between subjects to make learning more meaningful. The staff provide outstanding additional activities to support pupils' learning in a wide range of ways, and a great deal of work is done to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. Because of this the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. In the recent past regular visits have helped share first-hand information about the school's work. This year less of this has taken place. In addition the linking of governors with different subject leaders is at an early stage of development. Even so, governors have a high profile in the school. They organise their work efficiently through committees and they receive good information about pupils' progress from the headteacher using the new tracking system. Because of this their understanding of pupils' progress has improved. New governors have had appropriate training and the local authority has provided other training to help governors hold the school to account. Governors understand how targets are set for teachers and how the school links this to salaries. Good decisions have been made over the spending of the pupil premium. They check the impact on pupils' progress carefully to ensure best use of this funding. The governing body makes sure that all statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120868
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	403450

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nuala Connelly
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline Powrie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 April 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01953 603356
<b>Fax number</b>	01953 603356
<b>Email address</b>	office@spoonerrow.norfolk.sch.uk

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