

Lakenham Primary School

City Road, Norwich, NR1 2HL

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although leaders and managers have successfully raised the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection, it is not yet good enough to support consistently strong achievement.
- Lessons do not always maintain an energetic pace, and the work set is sometimes too easy or too hard.
- Pupils do not get enough chance to write at length for different purposes.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to use their numeracy skills in different subjects.
- While teachers' marking indicates the next steps pupils need to make to improve their work, they are not regularly given the opportunity to respond.

The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership and management from the headteacher and senior leaders, supported by a dedicated team of teachers and governors, led to greatly improved standards and progress throughout the school last year.
- Staff and pupils know the behaviour policy and procedures well. Their consistent use leads to the school's calm atmosphere and pupils' good behaviour.
- Pupils feel safe, and vulnerable pupils are cared for well and helped to make good progress.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start in their education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well by a wide range of carefully planned activities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, attended assembly and visited the breakfast club. Sometimes they were accompanied by the headteacher or one of the deputies.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their views of the school, listened to pupils read in Year 1 and Year 2, looked at work in pupils' books and observed them during play and at lunch breaks.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, staff including senior leaders, and a local authority officer.
- Inspectors took account of the 25 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), written correspondence from parents, and the paper questionnaire distributed by school to parents during the last academic year. They met informally with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took into account the views of staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including: the school development plan; the school's own assessment data and analysis of its strengths and weaknesses; policies and records relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour; and information on pupils' progress and attainment, the performance of teachers and the work of the governing body.

Inspection team

Valerie Palmer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

John Viner

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lakenham is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are higher than found nationally.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for specific groups such as pupils who known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority) is twice the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching regularly good or better across the school by ensuring that:
 - work is prepared for pupils' different levels of ability so it is challenging but not too hard
 - learning moves at a stimulating pace at all times
 - pupils are given time to respond to marking and feedback from teachers.
- Raise standards further and make sure progress continues to accelerate by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length for a variety of purposes using a range of styles in different topics
 - extending the opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because despite rising considerably over the last year, standards in English and mathematics are not yet high enough to reflect sustained good progress for the pupils currently in the school. They had previously been significantly below national averages at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 for several years.
- The school's data show that in 2013, standards improved markedly on the previous year. Pupils in Year 6 had made good progress, and left school with standards that were average in mathematics and approximately two terms behind in reading and writing. In Year 2 standards were just below average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing.
- The school was asked to make improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage after the last inspection. The changes have been successful and children now make good progress in early reading skills following the introduction of a structured programme for teaching phonics (the sounds represented by letters) in the Nursery. Children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age and although they leave Reception, below average, the gap has narrowed.
- The continued progress in reading skills can be seen by the improved proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the national screening check for reading in Year 1. In 2013 the result was broadly average, which is a marked improvement on 2012.
- The school has correctly focused on improving pupils' achievement in English, and this has been particularly successful at Key Stage 2 in writing. Pupils are able to write powerful verbs with confidence and can identify phrases within text that engender feelings. However, they are not given enough opportunities to practise and extend their writing for different purposes in other subjects.
- Progress in mathematics is slower in some year groups than others. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and apply the skills they learn in mathematics in other subjects.
- Pupils for whom the school receive pupil premium funding make good progress, and the gap between their attainment and that of their classmates is narrowing in mathematics and writing. The funding has been used well to give adults additional training to support eligible pupils. The school promotes equality of opportunity in learning by providing pupils with extra help in lessons, in small groups or individually as required.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs generally make good progress in all subjects. They are supported in lessons by dedicated, knowledgeable and effective teaching assistants.
- Some of the pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are new to English make better progress than their classmates. This is due to the additional support they receive at home, based on information supplied by the school on how parents can help their child.
- The new funding for primary school sport has been allocated to incorporate a wider range of out-of-school activities and provide additional support to enable vulnerable pupils to fully access these opportunities.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school. Sometimes, pupils are not given time to respond to teachers' comments on how they can improve their work, the pace is slow and the planned activities are not well matched to their needs. On these occasions all pupils are given the same task to do, so the most able pupils are not stretched and the least able struggle to complete the work without the help of a teaching assistant or teacher.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are based on mutual respect. Pupils are generally keen to learn and say they enjoy their lessons. Just occasionally when the pace of lessons slows, some pupils' concentration drifts and they begin to lose motivation.
- Teachers mark work carefully and pupils are clear about what they have done well and what they need to do to further improve their work. Individual conferences are held at regular intervals to clarify achievements and set objectives to work towards, but pupils are not routinely given enough time to respond to written comments in their workbooks.
- In the best lessons teachers are lively and enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge, and plan work that consistently matches pupils' needs and fully challenges the most able. For example, a guided reading session gave pupils the opportunity to work independently, in groups and in pairs. The work was well matched to their needs, resulting in a positive and engaging learning experience with all pupils making good progress.
- Throughout the school teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively. This is especially the case in supporting the work of pupils who receive extra help and guidance relating to behaviour and/or reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants were seen to be sympathetic, firm and effective in managing some occasional challenging behaviour.
- Teaching in the Reception and Nursery classes is consistently stronger than in other year groups. Well-planned and imaginative activities encourage good personal and social development, both inside and outside the classroom. Children found learning fun when they took part in a counting game, moved quickly to singing the days of the week and moved seamlessly into a lesson based on letters and the sounds they make.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are courteous and polite. They hold doors open for adults, and are respectful and welcoming to visitors. Pupils from a variety of different backgrounds play well together in the playground and respond positively to adult instruction.
- Parents said that behaviour is good, and has improved. The school's records of behaviour and exclusions over time support this view. Fixed-term exclusions have halved since 2011, and there have been very few behavioural incidents in the last four terms.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils and a calm atmosphere result from behaviour being consistently well managed throughout the school. The breakfast club also helps to make sure that those who attend are ready for learning.
- The majority of pupils say they feel safe. Occasions of bullying or rough play are rare but pupils are confident that an adult will deal with any problem quickly if they do arise.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying. Road safety including cycling skills, computer

safety taking into account safe practices when using the internet, and attendance at workshops organised by local emergency services for older pupils help all pupils to develop a strong awareness of how to keep safe in a variety of situations.

- Pupils show good attitudes to learning in all age groups, and disruption to lessons is rare because teachers and other adults manage behaviour effectively. The very small numbers of pupils who find it difficult to manage aspects of their behaviour are given firm but sensitive support.
- The majority of parents rightly feel that their child is happy and well looked after, and behaviour is well managed.

The leadership and management are good

- High expectations and crystal clear direction from the strong headteacher, ably supported by hardworking and knowledgeable deputies, have produced a clarity of vision which is shared by all staff, based on raising standards and accelerating progress for all pupils.
- Teaching has improved strongly as a result of regular and rigorous monitoring of lessons, and clear feedback being given to teachers which has helped them to markedly improve their practice. Inadequate teaching has been tackled firmly. Prompt identification of any pupils falling behind in their work has enabled appropriate help and guidance to be provided to accelerate their progress.
- Leaders check staff performance effectively. They hold teachers to account, and set annual objectives to further develop their skills and knowledge. Teachers are aware of the link between their performance, pupils' achievements and pay progression.
- The very thorough, detailed school development plan sets out targets, timescales and budgetary considerations for the next year. This is based on a thorough self-evaluation document which is updated annually. It focuses on the right main objectives, which are based on raising standards and furthering pupils' progress.
- Parents are happy with the school. The majority feel that they are provided with detailed information on how to support their child, and that the 'door is always open'. Classes have been established for parents who are new to learning English, and parents are invited in to attend assemblies and other events.
- The curriculum links subjects together in a topic approach to make learning more meaningful. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by monthly visits to the local luncheon club where pupils meet and talk to older residents, playing bowls on the bowling green, making music as part of the samba band and taking part in the Lord Mayor's procession, enjoying opera with the Theatre Royal and enjoying visitors from local churches in assembly.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school by giving helpful advice and guidance on how to improve the quality of teaching and learning experiences for pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are led well by the Chair of the Governing Body. They know the school well, and support its leaders while asking challenging questions about pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching. Individual governors visit regularly to extend their knowledge and understanding of what good teaching and learning looks like. Governors understand the

importance of data, use published information such as the 'data dashboard' and are regularly updated by the headteacher. They are clear about how well pupils are performing, and how this compares to other similar schools. They are financially astute and know, for example, how the pupil premium funding is being spent and what impact it has had on pupils' achievements. They understand how members of staff are paid according to their experience and performance, and encourage staff to improve their skills through well-focused training. The governors ensure that safeguarding procedures meet national requirements, and attend courses run by the local authority to keep their knowledge 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	134965
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	425310

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Allen
Headteacher	Oriana Dalton
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 February 2012
Telephone number	01603 877780
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