

Wollaston Community Primary School

College Street, Wollaston, Wellingborough, NN29 7SF

Inspection dates 6–7 March 2014

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.

- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and attainment is well above average by the time pupils leave Year 6.
- Children progress quickly in Reception because teaching is good. They are well prepared for Key Stage 1. Across the rest of the school, teaching is equally good and sometimes outstanding.
- Teachers pay particular attention to the development of pupils' reading skills; consequently, reading standards are high.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils feel safe and well looked after by staff. Their attendance is above average.
- Support for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very effective.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher looks constantly for ways to improve the school and staff are all equally committed to doing their best for every pupil.
- Senior and middle leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, and quickly identify and address any emerging weaknesses, however minor.
- Governors bring considerable expertise to the school. They are well aware of pupils' performance and know how well the school compares to others nationally. Their regular visits ensure they are knowledgeable about the school and in a good position to challenge staff about their teaching quality and impact.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in writing does not always match that in reading and mathematics. As a result, attainment is above, rather than well above, average by Year 6.
- In some lessons, pupils do not write enough or practise and consolidate the skills they have learnt. There are few opportunities for them to practise their writing skills in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons taught by 11 teachers. Four lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the pupil council, six Year 6 pupils, the Chair and both Vice-Chairs of the Governing Body, the headteacher and deputy headteacher and other teachers responsible for different areas of the school, such as the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- A discussion took place with a representative from the local authority about the support and advice it gives to the school.
- There were only three responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) by the end of the inspection and so no analysis was possible. The inspectors took account of a recent questionnaire completed by parents during a parents' open evening and also sought the views of parents and carers as they arrived at school with their children.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' recent and current progress, planning for school improvement, records of governing body meetings, checks on teaching and behaviour, attendance and safeguarding records.

Inspection team

Joseph Peacock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Beverly Minette

Additional Inspector

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Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Pupils mostly come from the large village of Wollaston and there are very few who are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A major building project is underway to join the two Victorian buildings together and provide a larger hall.
- There are two classes for Reception–age children. All other pupils are in mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional government funding through the pupil premium is well below average. In this school, it mostly applies to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action and the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are both broadly average.
- The school meets the government’s current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils’ attainment and progress.
- This is a lead school for the ‘Schools Direct’ initiative, which provides school-based teacher training. Ten places are allocated each year. The headteacher is the lead professional in the partnership with Northampton University.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in writing for all groups of pupils from Reception to Year 6 so that attainment is at the same level as it is in reading and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - pupils have more opportunities to practise their skills in writing at length both in literacy sessions and other subjects
 - the standard of pupils’ handwriting, spelling and punctuation is as good when pupils are writing in other subjects as it is when pupils are taught these skills in formal literacy lessons
 - senior and middle leaders check that planned opportunities for pupils to write at length occur more regularly in all classes and that they are leading to improvements in pupils’ writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- School data show that almost all pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. This is because teaching is consistently good. Typically, progress is good for each year group and a higher proportion than nationally achieve as expected by the end of both key stages. This proportion has been increasing year by year over the past three years. The proportion making rapid progress is also increasing.
- Attainment on entry to the Reception class varies considerably. Last year it was well below the level typically found at this age but is stronger this year. Some children have reading, writing and mathematics skills that are lower than usual but all make good progress from their starting points. Supportive and caring teachers and other adults ensure children settle quickly into school routines and go on to achieve a good level of development in all areas of learning. Children are well prepared for the next phase of their learning in Year 1. However, early writing skills remain weaker than other skills.
- The good start children make when they first enter the school is due to effective planning and good use of the opportunities offered by the indoor and outdoor areas. Children enjoy the sessions in the school computer room and use modern technology confidently to listen to stories and develop their reading skills. This also promotes their computer skills effectively.
- Pupils make good progress in learning phonics (the sounds that individual and groups of letters make). Overall achievement has been below national levels for the past two years but staff have worked together to introduce new systems and programmes that are helping to raise standards. Early assessments show that these are proving successful. Many pupils are on track to exceed the standard that is expected for pupils entering Year 1.
- The school has made good use of 'Read and write' sessions across Key Stages 1 and 2 to supplement learning in phonics sessions and these, together with the good support parents give to home reading, have ensured reading skills are particularly strong throughout the school. Some are making exceptional progress. Three-quarters of current pupils are expected to achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6, with some making four levels progress.
- In Key Stage 2, more-able pupils do particularly well in all areas by the end of Year 6. However, scrutiny of pupils' work shows that, whilst most pupils are likely to reach above average standards overall this year, in writing, progress is not as consistently good as it is in reading and mathematics. Teachers are beginning to provide more frequent exercises to improve pupils' grammar, spelling and punctuation. These are helping to accelerate progress in writing. However, pupils are not writing regularly enough or sufficiently long pieces to consolidate skills in these areas. Pupils' spelling and punctuation are not as secure when pupils are writing in other subjects as they are when they are practised in daily literacy sessions.
- Tasks in mathematics are consistently challenging and help pupils of all levels of ability to progress well. In Year 6, for example, pupils responded well to their teacher's high expectations and were able to solve word problems involving the use of decimals.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs usually make good progress in mathematics and English. They benefit from the expertise of skilled teaching assistants who work closely alongside the teachers to support individuals and small groups.
- The school uses the small amount of additional pupil premium funding well to provide individual

help for the relatively few known to be eligible, and school records show that this helps to improve their attainment in English and mathematics. Virtually all such pupils make the same good progress as their classmates. No report is made about attainment of eligible pupils leaving Year 6 in 2013, as numbers were very small and there is too great a risk that individuals might be identified.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers talk regularly to pupils before beginning an activity to ensure they fully understand how to approach their work. This gives all pupils a clear picture about what is expected. As a result, most pupils make good progress in lessons. 'Teachers make learning fun' was a typical comment from pupils. They particularly remember events such as 'Dragon's Den', where they had to try and sell their Victorian inventions to a panel of other pupils.
- Some teaching is outstanding. Here, teachers' exceptionally high expectations of pupils and the high quality of the support provided by skilled teaching assistants ensure pupils progress rapidly and approach their learning enthusiastically. In a challenging Key Stage 1 lesson on three dimensional shapes, for example, one of the builders delivered a letter from the project architect requesting pupils' help. This made the pupils' task of identifying and describing the properties of these shapes around the school 'come alive'.
- In the two Reception classes, children benefit from the close support of adults when working indoors and outside. Activities such as making planets from balloons and wet newspaper are well-planned to hold children's interest and to ensure they are challenging and take children's learning forwards.
- The school's help in encouraging pupils to apply their reading skills to new tasks has been very effective. However, progress in developing pupils' writing skills is less marked. In some classes, pupils are not writing enough in their books. In others, the tasks pupils are set are too restrictive and do not require them to sustain the quality of their writing across longer pieces of work.
- Teachers accurately and regularly assess pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, giving them a clear picture of each pupil's progress. Assessment information is shared with pupils in one-to-one meetings twice each term, giving pupils a good understanding of their achievement and allowing teachers to set new, more challenging targets that reflect their progress.
- Staff ensure pupils are attentive to their teachers, interested in their work and kept busy at all times. There is a quiet, calm atmosphere for learning in lessons. Any rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour are handled immediately and effectively by staff.
- Through regular assessments of their progress, teachers quickly identify the specific learning needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Tasks are planned carefully to ensure they are suitable and help all these pupils to progress, whatever their difficulties and needs. The school makes good use of a wide range of outside specialists such as an education psychologist to provide specialist support from the moment pupils first enter the school.
- More-able pupils do well in all subjects because teachers plan appropriately challenging tasks for them and they show good ability to work without direct supervision. In mathematics, for example, those with a special talent attend weekly mathematics lessons at a local secondary

school with other pupils of a similar ability. All are highly motivated and show a strong determination to do well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is effective. Pupils say that they feel safe and if they are worried, there is always someone there for them. All appear to enjoy school. This is demonstrated by their consistently above average attendance. There is hardly any persistent absence and no pupils have been excluded in the past two years.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different types of bullying, such as name-calling and misuse of mobile phones or emails. A member of the pupil council was able to explain 'psychological' bullying, for example. They say that bullying is not an issue in the school, a view backed up by school records, but know what to do if they should experience any form of bullying.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe. Annual visits by the 'Life Bus', school rules and assemblies promote good conduct towards one another. From information provided sensitively by staff, all pupils are made aware of the danger from strangers and the internet.
- Staff manage behaviour consistently well and deal with the rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour immediately and effectively. The behaviour of pupils is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils respond straightaway to teachers and other adults whenever their full attention is required. Their positive attitudes to learning ensure most do well in lessons, completing tasks set for them and making good progress.
- 'This is not a regular school. We do amazing things here' was a typical view expressed by pupils. There is a well-established system for rewards and sanctions and the 'Circle of friends' established by the school council ensures everyone is looked after and has someone to play with at break or lunchtime.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's determination to improve the school is fully shared by all staff and governors. Senior and middle leaders work effectively as a team and, having identified priorities for improvement, quickly set about tackling them. Standards are rising year on year as a result.
- There is a well-established system for collecting and analysing data on pupils' progress. Regular 'mentoring' sessions are used to give individual pupils time with their teacher to share and celebrate achievements and set new targets and to support any individuals or group who were not doing as well as expected. These have led to clear improvements in reading and mathematics but they have not been so effective in writing, where there are still inconsistencies in teaching in some year groups.
- Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The deputy headteacher oversees the work of this phase very closely and ensures that children have a good start to school.
- The school's involvement in the 'School's Direct' initiative has enabled it to sharpen its assessments of teaching quality. The national teaching standards are used as the basis for judgements on how well teachers are doing their jobs and to provide the evidence to inform decisions about teachers' pay.

- Staff are proud of the curriculum that they have developed for pupils. It was singled out for praise in the previous inspection and remains a strength of the school. It is well planned and underpins pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with a series of well-planned topics such as 'Floods in the Philippines' or 'Walking Wellies'.
- Staff are already working in collaboration with other local schools to prepare and implement the new curriculum, which is due in September. There is a strong emphasis on promoting basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Learning opportunities beyond the normal timetable, such as 'dance function' for three mornings each week, yoga and residential visits, add to pupils' enjoyment of school.
- The study of different faiths and links with schools in the Gambia give pupils a good understanding of cultures different to their own and contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The small amount of additional funding allocated to increase sporting opportunities is being used to provide a sports coordinator. As well as increasing opportunities for pupils to enjoy different sporting activities, the coordinator is also providing training for the PE leader and developing staff expertise in gymnastics so that they can make good use of their new hall and PE equipment when it is built. Governors are ready to evaluate the impact on pupils' participation in sporting activities.
- Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection hold positive views about the school. They rightly think that staff treat every pupil equally, that their children are safe and looked after well, and that discrimination is not tolerated. All parents said that they would recommend the school to others.
- The local authority recognises the skills and abilities of the headteacher and senior leaders. Other than through periodic checks on performance data, the local authority's support has been limited, reflecting the known strengths of this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors draw on their varied and considerable professional expertise to support and challenge staff. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving in comparison with others nationally. Their knowledge of performance data gives them the confidence to hold the school to account for the achievement of different groups of pupils. An effective system has been established for governors to check how well staff are tackling aspects identified for improvement.
 - Governors regularly review the performance of the headteacher and ensure that of other teachers is reviewed carefully each year to determine pay increases. Governors with specific expertise ensure that all current national requirements relating to safeguarding and child protection are met. Governors have assessed the impact of the pupil premium funding and are ready to do the same for the funds designed to develop opportunities for sport and the promotion of healthy lifestyles and pupils' well-being.

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	121874
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	440582

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	291
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Luke Hodson
Headteacher	Mrs Sally Hamson
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2011
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