

Docking Primary School

Chequers Street, Docking, King's Lynn, PE31 8LH

Inspection dates

3–4 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Senior leaders have not checked sufficiently that suggested improvements to teaching are being implemented consistently, so teaching and achievement are not consistently good and not improving rapidly.
- The role of subject leaders in checking the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils is underdeveloped and not raising achievement.
- Achievement requires improvement because the least able pupils do not make enough progress. Leaders do not methodically check how well the least-able pupils benefit from the extra help they receive.
- Teachers do not teach the least able pupils how to work problems out for themselves so, in some cases, their learning is slowed because they are too dependent on adults for guidance.
- Teaching assistants do not feedback what they have noted about the least able pupils' progress to the teacher sufficiently, so teachers cannot build on what these pupils have previously achieved.
- Leaders do not share the examples of very effective teaching with all staff so that other teachers can improve and all pupils can benefit.
- Teachers in the early years do not always assess children accurately or use information to plan activities that build progressively on what they already know, understand and can do. As a result, children can sometimes lose interest and their progress slows.

The school has the following strengths

- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress because leaders have made good use of extra funding.
- Teachers mark pupils' work well and ensure that they know what to do to improve.
- Pupils behave well and respect one another so the school is a harmonious community.
- Pupils look forward to coming to school and their attendance is high. They have good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils feel safe and very well cared for. Parents are very appreciative of the sensitive way in which the staff ensure their children are happy and content.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eleven lessons, all with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils reading.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, governors, parents, a representative of the local authority and the independent consultant appointed by the local authority to support the school.
- The inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and other parental views. The nine responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents including: the school's own information on pupils' progress; planning and monitoring documentation; the school's view of its own performance; records of how the school uses its funding, especially how the money from the pupil premium is spent; records relating to behaviour and attendance; minutes of meetings of the governing body and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Bob Greatrex, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than average in size. Year groups vary greatly in number. For example there were only 10 pupils in Year 6 in the last academic year.
- Children join at the start of Nursery, on either a part-time or full-time basis, and go on to attend Reception full-time. Some children also leave at the start of Reception to move to the school nearest their home
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make up a little more than a quarter of the school population. This is well above the national average.
- Approximately one pupil in every ten is eligible for support through the pupil premium (the extra government funding for pupils looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals). This is well below the national average.
- Since the last inspection, the school has had four headteachers.
- There were too few pupils leaving Year 6 in 2014 for their results to be compared with the government's floor targets, which set the minimum expectation for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils, especially the least able by:
 - ensuring assistants and other additional adults feedback regularly to teachers about the progress of the pupils they are supporting, and that teachers use the information to plan subsequent lessons to build upon what the pupils already know, understand and can do
 - teaching pupils to work things out for themselves, rather than being reliant on the teacher
 - sharing the outstanding teaching that already exists in the school more widely among staff.
- Improve leadership by ensuring:
 - leaders check more closely that required improvements to teaching are being consistently implemented by all staff
 - subject leaders have more impact on raising achievement by checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress more rigorously in their areas of responsibility
 - monitoring the progress of the least able pupils more closely.
- Improve provision and teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage by checking children's responses more methodically and planning subsequent activities that build on what children already know, understand and can do.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because initiatives and changes introduced recently have not yet impacted sufficiently on pupils' achievements.
- Insufficient checks have been made to ensure required improvements in teaching are implemented consistently, that staff fully understand what is expected of them and to ensure that other teachers learn from the best teaching.
- Subject leaders have gathered a good range of information to make changes but they have only recently begun to check improvements to teaching are working as intended or that they are improving pupils' achievements. Consequently, they have not had a marked impact on improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The school has had several headteachers in recent years and this disruption has affected the rate and direction of change. The leadership has stabilised and steady improvement is now being made. This has quickened since the school has begun working closely with the local authority and its nominated consultant.
- The school has introduced a new method of assessment which enables pupils' progress to be tracked accurately. However, the tracking of the least able pupils' progress is not analysed in sufficient detail to paint a clear picture of how well they are doing.
- The use of information about pupils' progress has improved because teachers work more closely with others from the cluster to ensure accuracy in their assessments. In the past, specific groups, such as those slipping behind at the end of Year 2, have not always received the right extra help they needed to catch up by Year 6. This aspect of the school's work is improving.
- Leaders' now excellent self-evaluation shows they have a clear understanding of what works well and what needs to improve. This information is used with increasing effectiveness to plan the way forward, and check it happens.
- The school is an orderly community which promotes mutual respect, good behaviour, a strong sense of caring for one another and a commitment to equal opportunities for all. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is well planned and encapsulates the school vision of inspiring pupils to do the best they can. For example, the eldest pupils study the lives of famous Norfolk residents and recognise they too can aspire to do great things.
- Pupil premium funds are used well and carefully tailored to meet the needs of eligible pupils. Additional sports funding is also used effectively to provide staff training and wider opportunities for pupils, and to improve their understanding of the important contribution physical exercise makes to their well-being.
- The school shares a close and trusting relationship with parents who are very supportive and particularly appreciate how much their children enjoy school.
- The school works effectively with its local cluster of neighbouring schools. The adoption of common policies, such as on attendance, ensure all parents hear an identical message. Staff in all roles work closely with their counterparts. Pupils say they enjoy events with those they will meet at high school.
- The local authority provides good support to leaders and has been instrumental in improving the school.

■ Safeguarding meets all requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is effective. Governors use their individual skills well and train regularly so they know how to use information about all aspects of the school, including data on pupils' achievements, to question leaders and hold them to account.
- Finances are carefully managed. The use of extra funds, whether for pupil premium or sports funding, is checked closely to ensure it is used to support the pupils it is intended for.
- Governors check pupils' achievement regularly, have a good grasp of the quality of teaching and ensure there are close links between salary progression and teachers' performance. They are clear how underperformance is tackled.
- Individual governors link to particular subjects and aspects of the school so they have a clear first-hand understanding of the effectiveness of the school's work, for example about how the school promotes British values.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They take great pride in their school and conduct themselves very well. The very few exclusions are for appropriate reasons.
- Pupils say they look forward to the celebration assemblies, when they hear about each other's achievements. In lessons, too, they applaud the success of others.
- Pupils have a real voice in the school and will often make suggestions for special activities, knowing that staff will listen.
- Pupils' aspirations are increasingly high because they are encouraged to think about the sort of job they want to do and life they want to lead, and what they should do to enable them to fulfil those ambitions.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff provide good role models. One parent said, 'they see how staff treat them and they copy that in their own behaviour towards others'.
- Attendance is high. Pupils, and their parents, both say pupils enjoy school. The vast majority of pupils want to learn and increasingly take the more difficult of any two options to challenge themselves.
- Pupils particularly enjoy working together and say they benefit from sharing ideas and suggesting improvements in each other's work. However, at times, they are too ready to wait for adults to help them rather than work their way through challenging activities for themselves.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All staff are vigilant and see safeguarding as of paramount importance.
- Bullying is very rare because pupils respect one another and work hard to maintain the strong bond that exists between them all. They are confident staff would resolve any difficulty they might face.
- Pupils have good knowledge of the potential dangers of the internet and how to avoid them because they are taught well. Similarly, they have good awareness of other dangers, for example on the road.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because recent changes are not yet fully embedded and pockets of excellent teaching are not shared widely enough across the school. As a result, teaching is not

yet consistently good. Some of the approaches leaders have introduced are so new that staff are still learning how to use them effectively.

- Although they often plan activities carefully, teachers sometimes have only minimal contact with teaching assistants during the lesson itself and do not ensure these activities are carried out as well as they intended. In addition, the school has no clear method for teaching assistants to feedback on progress made by the least able pupils, or lack of it, at the end of the session, so teachers cannot plan effectively for the next lesson.
- Sometimes teaching assistants give the least able pupils they guide too much help so the pupil does not learn how to go about tackling problems for themselves.
- Teachers generally plan their teaching effectively and give pupils a clear idea of what they will learn and should strive to achieve. Pupils say they find this very helpful.
- Teachers' marking consistently includes clear references to what has been achieved and where the pupil should focus next. Pupils are also given extra questions, as appropriate, so that they can immediately practise and develop their skills further, while these are fresh in their minds. Those pupils spoken to say they find this helpful.
- The teaching of reading is well structured, systematic and regular so that pupils see staff give it importance. Parents are seen very much as part of the 'teaching team' and are given good advice so they too play a significant role in helping their children learn at home.
- Excellent use is made of a subject specialist to provide challenge for the most able pupils in mathematics. Good use is made of practical activities in the subject and pupils say they understand better when their teacher explains activities clearly but then lets them try to work things out for themselves.
- The provision of good quality staff training recently means that writing is taught increasingly well. Skills are taught and then practised in writing tasks set in other subjects. Speaking and listening skills are taught well and pupils expected to respond thoughtfully and in well constructed sentences.
- Support for disadvantaged pupils is good and enables these pupils to do well. Disabled pupils, and those who have special educational needs, are nurtured so their self confidence grows, but sometimes too much help limits the growth of their ability to solve problems for themselves.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils requires improvement because, throughout the school, particular groups of pupils have made insufficient progress over time.
- The least able pupils have made insufficient progress because the impact of the extra help given is not systematically checked to see that it is working, and teachers do not always modify the next lesson if it is not. Sometimes pupils are given too much help and do not learn how to do things for themselves.
- Year groups are small in numbers and very different in composition, so results in national tests vary greatly. Three years ago, the end of Year 6, test results placed the school in the top 100 schools nationally. Over the last two years, results have been much lower because half or more of the pupils were disabled or had special educational needs that affected their academic performance. Predictions for 2015 are for results to be much higher than in 2014.
- The most-able pupils have made insufficient progress in the past because activities have not always challenged them. With the help of the local authority this has been addressed and the equivalent groups of pupils currently in the school are making quicker progress. This year a good proportion of Year 6 pupils are expected to reach the highest levels.

- Writing standards are improving. This is because lessons are more frequently focussed on key skills such as grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils respond positively to this emphasis and do well.
- Reading standards are improving because school and parents both emphasise the importance of regular practice. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the Year 1 national phonics screening check was above average in 2014 and is predicted to be of a similar level in 2015.
- The numbers of disadvantaged pupils each year are too low to compare their attainment in English and mathematics with others nationally without identifying individuals. However, across the school, these pupils make good progress in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs thrive in the school's caring ethos so they build self-confidence and make steady progress in English and mathematics.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Although improving, the early years provision requires improvement because teaching is inconsistent and assessment information is not always used effectively to plan teaching. Consequently, attainment by the end of Reception, when children enter Year 1 has been too low.
- About half the children start school with skills and experiences similar to those typically seen at their age. The remainder are below this. Progress this term is good overall, but in the last two years, only about one third of children reached a good level of development, significantly lower than in other schools nationally.
- In some lessons, children's questions or observations are not monitored sufficiently so teaching is not altered to take advantage of their contribution.
- Clear weekly plans are not routinely modified when a child makes a significant gain in their learning to plan the next activity so it is challenging enough to engage and enthuse the children.
- Leadership and management of the early years are now having a significant impact on provision and standards, with more children making good progress.
- The structure of the day has been improved and children are increasingly provided with an improved range of interesting and varied activities in the outdoors. During the inspection, children were engrossed in a number activity that was well-led by teaching assistants in the 'field of dreams'.
- Behaviour is generally good because children are curious to learn, but occasionally when their contribution to their learning is not recognised, they stop trying.
- Assessment over time is now accurate and the leader has a thorough grasp of how to use this information effectively, for example to improve provision in areas of relative weakness.
- Parents are fully involved and informed about their child's progress. They appreciate the information sessions that give them useful advice, for example with reading.

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	121207
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	444084

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alastair Symington
Headteacher	David Baldwin
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2010
Telephone number	01485 518344
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