

# Edgar Sewter Community Primary School

Norwich Road, Halesworth, IP19 8BU

**Inspection dates** 7–8 May 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Since the previous inspection, determined leadership and management have driven rapid and sustained improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements.
- The headteacher has been the catalyst for the school's improvement; governors, staff and parents acknowledge the difference she is making to the school.
- Behaviour is good and pupils say they feel safe and well cared for in school. Parents agree. Edgar Sewter is a harmonious community because the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Teaching is good because staff benefit from good quality training. For example, they use questions effectively to clarify and extend pupils' learning.
- Achievement is good; the vast majority of pupils make good progress in relation to their different starting points.
- Each pupil's progress is closely tracked so that any falling behind can be given extra help to keep up.
- Early years provision is good overall; children make good progress and most enter Year 1 with the basic skills that are essential to their future learning.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' reading skills lag behind those of writing and mathematics.
- Teaching assistants do not receive enough direction about what they are expected to do when the teacher is talking to the whole class.
- The school's new approach to reading has not yet become embedded in all classes and staff and pupils are not always clear about their roles.
- Teachers do not always check that pupils act on the guidance they are given in marking to improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 29 lessons, including all year groups and in a range of subjects. Most observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors met with: the headteacher; the deputy headteacher; members of the governing body; subject leaders; parents and pupils; and representatives of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work and heard a group of pupils read.
- The inspectors considered documents about the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and arrangements to ensure that pupils are safe.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents in discussions and in 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. The inspectors also took account of 27 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Bob Greatrex, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Barbara Chevis	Additional Inspector
Heather Hann	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Nursery class attend part-time, mornings only, while those in the Reception class attend full time. Elsewhere, pupils are taught in three groups: Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6 in the morning, when extra staff are provided. In the afternoon, pupils are taught by their class teachers in two classes, each of one age group.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are looked after by the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- An independent pre school meets daily in the school building, and offers breakfast and after-school clubs. It is inspected separately.
- A children's centre, also independent of the school, shares the site. It, too, is inspected separately.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate progress, particularly in reading, by ensuring that:
  - staff and pupils fully understand their roles in the school's new approach to reading
  - teachers check pupils' understanding and follow the advice they receive in marking
  - teaching assistants are given clear advice about what they are expected to do when the teacher works with the whole class.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The school has been on a rapid journey of improvement since the previous inspection. There have been difficult moments but, throughout this time, the headteacher, governors and staff have steadfastly stuck to their goal. The school is now a place where there is good quality teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour are good and pupils thrive.
- Ensuring each and every pupil has an equal chance to succeed is a core value of the school. As one governor put it, the school is determined to offer 'a level playing field.' On the very rare occasion any form of discrimination occurs, leaders take swift and effective action, and there is no repetition.
- When the headteacher arrived, shortly after the previous inspection, she quickly realised that standards were too low. She and governors have provided extra teachers in the mornings, to reduce class sizes. This has enabled teachers and pupils to concentrate on improving reading, writing and mathematics standards. In the afternoon, pupils revert to their original classes for other work. This is proving highly beneficial to pupils' achievements and is a factor in their accelerated progress.
- The school tracks pupils' progress carefully and provides extra help for any pupil who is falling behind. If any group causes concern, appropriate changes are made and leaders check to ensure they are working. For example, girls who are less confident in mathematics are taught as a separate group. School data suggests that this has been effective and that they now make much better progress.
- Good quality training, largely provided by the local authority, has improved teaching. For example, teachers' subject knowledge of mathematics has improved greatly, a key contributor to pupils' good progress.
- The headteacher regularly checks the quality of teaching and checks to see that any recommendations are being implemented. There are regular opportunities for teachers to discuss their performance and how it might improve. As a result, teaching is much improved and is now good.
- The deputy headteacher, together with phase and subject leaders, effectively lead their areas of responsibility. For example, they collect and collate information from a range of sources so that decisions are accurately centred on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- The new curriculum is effective. The school arranges regular visits to places of interest so that pupils can develop their knowledge first hand and deepen their understanding. Teachers make the links between different subjects clear, so that pupils can see how the themes they are studying are reflected in each. However, the new approach to reading is not yet fully embedded.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Teachers ensure pupils understand the importance of key values, such as compassion; these are regularly introduced in assembly and followed up in class work.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about democracy, for example, by becoming involved in elections for roles such as house captain and school council member. They develop a sense of community by participating in town events such as 'remembrance'. The older pupils visit London and experience a contrasting community to their own, urban rather than rural, that shows them the diversity of our country. For most, for example, just travelling on the underground is a very different experience.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. The funding is used to ensure the relatively small number of eligible pupils in the school receive extra help in smaller groups and have access to a wider range of activities and opportunities.
- The school's effective use of primary school sports funding means pupils benefit from specialist expertise,

and staff benefit from extra training. The school's audit shows a much greater pupil participation in a wider range of sporting activities, including cheer-leading. Pupils understand the importance of energetic activity to their health.

- Parents are very supportive of events involving their children, such as sporting activities. Parents of Nursery children like the way they can keep up to date with, and contribute to, their children's progress on-line.
- The school benefits from working closely with other schools and taking part in shared events, such as a science challenge at the high school. This familiarises pupils with their future surroundings and ensures several key policies, such as those relating to attendance, are common across all schools. Staff use these links well to check their assessments with other teachers.
- The local authority has supported the school well, particularly by providing staff training and checking that the changes made, for example, to teaching approaches and subjects, are the right ones.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective and meet statutory requirements. Record keeping is thorough. All necessary checks and procedures are in place.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are effective; they compare information from a wide range of sources, including their own visits, to check how the school is performing and see the 'big picture'. Consequently, they know the school's strengths and areas to improve well.
  - Governors' minutes show they have frank and honest discussions, and question school leaders closely, including those responsible for subjects, if they have any concerns. Staff are held accountable for spending, and governors check the impact of the additional funding, such as pupil premium and the primary sports funding, to ensure they are making a difference to pupils' outcomes.
  - Governors are not afraid to tackle weak teaching. They have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and check that any pay is merited, for example by linking it to pupils' progress

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There have been no exclusions since the previous inspection and the school is a harmonious community. Whether in the classroom or the playground, pupils know what is right and wrong and behave accordingly.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They respond positively to challenge. The vast majority are engaged in their learning because they enjoy lessons and like the staff that teach them. A very small number, mainly in younger years where teaching was last to improve, still need occasional reminders about how teachers expect them to concentrate at all times, which is why behaviour is not yet outstanding. Pupils do not consistently act on the advice they receive from their teachers' marking.
- Social skills are developed well. In reading, for example, pupils have roles such as 'questioner' or 'boss' so that they learn successfully about working in groups, important preparation for later life.
- Pupils' pride in their school shines through everything they do. They are very clear that the school has improved. They enjoy contributing and taking on responsibilities, and particularly taking part in local events.
- Attendance is broadly average and has improved over the last year because the school has worked hard to raise it. Pupils are given incentives to encourage good attendance and the school quickly tackles parents of children who are regularly or frequently absent or late.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The grounds are secure and well maintained.

Staff on playground duty are alert to potential risks. Visits are carefully assessed and staff identify and manage potential risks well.

- The school thoroughly checks the suitability of staff and visitors to work with pupils. All staff are fully trained and see safeguarding as paramount.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They know they can speak to staff if they are worried about anything. Pupils spoken to were confident that staff would resolve any concerns.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teachers' questioning is very effective. Teachers use questions systematically to check pupils understand what they are learning, challenging them to improve, or drawing them into a discussion, so that their learning deepens.
- Marking in pupils' workbooks is generally effective. Pupils understand the systems used and say marking helps them improve. However, teachers do not always check pupils read and follow the advice given, so pupils do not always improve as quickly as they should.
- Staff form effective teams, planning together and sharing expertise and ideas so that all pupils benefit from their expertise. Relationships between staff and pupils are also good. As a result, pupils are eager to please the teachers and this has a positive impact on their attitudes and learning.
- The teaching of reading is good. Staff training has improved the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) so that everyone follows the same approach and pupils know what to expect whoever teaches them. The new approach to teaching reading skills is effective when staff and pupils fully understand their roles. In these lessons, pupils' reasoning and questioning skills also improve through discussion of the text. However, because it is new, some staff and pupils are still learning about this different way of working.
- Writing skills are taught well in short, focused lessons that concentrate on one skill at a time. Each skill is then practised and pupils' understanding checked in writing in other subjects, such as history.
- The teaching of mathematics is good because teachers are well trained and have good knowledge and understanding of how to teach this subject.
- Teaching of the most able pupils is effective because teachers plan activities that are at just the right level of difficulty, being neither too easy nor too hard.
- Teachers use computer presentations skilfully to make learning interesting for pupils and to give visual explanations of key teaching points. In one example, the teacher used this technology to teach words such as 'clockwise' and 'anticlockwise' to Year 2 pupils, so that their understanding was clearer.
- Teachers use homework well to support and extend pupils' learning in school. The school arranges for pupils with limited opportunities to do homework at home, to do it at school so that no one misses out.
- Teaching assistants make very good contributions to learning when they take a group or individual for specific purposes. Some are well briefed by teachers and make a good contribution to whole class sessions too. However, this does not occur that frequently.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Achievement, given pupils' starting points, is good because all now make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. School information and a scrutiny of pupils' books show that the vast majority of pupils

are now learning in two terms what they are expected to learn in three. Even so, Year 6 pupils left last year, and are likely to do so again this year, with standards below those they should achieve. Information from the school and local authority shows this was because of previous under-achievement. Although this is being rectified, and pupils are catching up quickly, a legacy remains.

- Pupils in Year 2 are on track to reach broadly average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good progress when pupils low starting points at the beginning of Year 1 are taken into account.
- Much greater emphasis is now given to reading skills so standards are improving. In 2014, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the nationally expected standard in the phonics check was below average. This year, with improved teaching and a more consistent approach, results are on track to be above last year's national average.
- Writing standards are improving rapidly because the 'tools' of writing, such as grammar, are taught successfully in explicit lessons about these skills and then practised in sessions such as 'topic literacy', so learning is consolidated.
- Leaders have responded very effectively to concerns about mathematics standards. More staff training, teachers' consistent use of policies, such as that for calculation, smaller classes, the effective use of ability and single sex groups for girls have enabled pupils to learn at a faster rate. Therefore standards are rising quickly.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school, including those in Year 6, make good progress similar to their school peers. They are making better progress than pupils nationally and closing the gap in attainment. However, the attainment gap between these pupils and their peers in the school is not closing as quickly, because both groups are now making accelerated progress. This is significantly better than last year when disadvantaged Year 6 pupils were three terms behind their peers in reading, and four terms behind pupils nationally. In writing, the gap was one term behind their peers and one and a half behind pupils nationally. In mathematics, the figures were two terms and nearly four terms.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their different starting points because teachers carefully track their progress and give them extra help that is tailored to their needs.
- Currently, the most able pupils do well, a vast improvement on the past. This is largely because of improved teaching and higher expectations of them. In mathematics, for example, when they work with pupils of similar ability, they now make much faster progress than was previously the case.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children start in Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding broadly typical for their age. They make good progress through both Nursery and Reception and are well prepared for Year 1. This year, school information and inspection findings suggest about two-thirds will make a good level of development, similar to the national figure for last year. This is a significant improvement on the past, when results were much lower; in 2014, less than half achieved a good level of development.
- Children respond positively to the well-planned learning activities teachers provide and are enthusiastic. Teaching is good. The most able children are challenged well and good questioning by adults encourages all children to think carefully and thereby deepen their learning.
- Children behave well, generally co-operate with one another and willingly share games and activities, particularly with their friends. They make sure that other children are included and treated fairly. For example, during the inspection, a Reception child remonstrated with others when they laughed at another child.
- Partnership with parents is strong and positive. One parent stated, 'Our children are happy and doing

well.' Parents say they and their children enjoy the 'stay-and-play' sessions which cover a wide range of topics, ranging from bedtime stories to a celebration of Diwali. This is beginning to give children an understanding of different cultures.

- There is good leadership of early years. As soon as she arrived, the headteacher recognised that the early years provision was not good enough and moved quickly and decisively to make improvements. Early years staff now form an effective team. Parents say they can see improvements because new staff are making a positive difference.
  
- Children's safety and well-being are given the highest priority. All staff are trained to be alert for any potential hazard, for example checking the outdoors area every day before it is used.



## 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>	124585
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	462044

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	265
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roy Excell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Katherine Milk
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01986 873194
<b>Fax number</b>	01986 873194
<b>Email address</b>	office@edgarsewterprimary.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and *inspects* to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2015