

# Sexton's Manor Community Primary School

Greene Road, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3HG

**Inspection dates** 7–8 May 2014

<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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now outstanding.
- Pupils achieve well in both English and mathematics.
- Teaching is usually good. A small amount is outstanding.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Behaviour is good in and out of lessons.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Parents agree that their children are safe.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- The school's links with the local community, and with a special school which occupies the same site, are extremely good.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work together well to ensure that achievement and teaching are good and improving.
- Subject leaders have well-developed roles in maintaining standards across their areas of responsibility.
- Governors know the school well. They support and challenge the school effectively to make sure that improvement continues.
- The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times, teachers do not provide enough challenge for pupils to help them make rapid progress.
- Pupils do not have consistent opportunities to practise or apply their mathematical skills in other subjects in all year-groups.
- There are not enough high quality resources to support pupils with their reading.
- Information on achievement is shared but not applied well enough between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to ensure that pupils continue to make the same rapid rates of progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by two inspectors.
- Inspectors observed 11 lessons taught by six staff. Four joint observations were carried out with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed a range of activities provided by the school to support individuals and small groups of pupils.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, several subject and middle leaders, a representative of the local authority and two groups of pupils.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to an inspection questionnaire from 20 staff. Inspectors also spoke to parents in the playground to get their views about the school.
- The inspectors looked at the school's improvement plan, data on pupils' attainment and progress, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, a wide range of policies and procedures, and the school's arrangements for safeguarding children.
- Inspectors attended two assemblies. In addition to looking at pupils' work in lessons, they carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work jointly with subject leaders and members of the senior leadership team.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading.
- An inspector visited the school's breakfast club.

## Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Graham Gossage	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below the national average. This is additional government funding for particular groups of pupils including those known to be eligible for free school meals, and those in the care of the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Under reorganisation proposals, the school will become an all-through primary school in September, 2016.
- The headteacher has been in post since September, 2009. She took on the headship after a period when staffing was unsettled. She has recently returned after a period of compassionate leave. During that time, the school was managed by the deputy headteacher.
- The school offers breakfast and after-school clubs.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so a greater proportion is outstanding by:
  - providing a consistently high level of challenge in all lessons
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematics skills in more areas of learning
  - improving the resources used to support the development of pupils' reading.
- Ensure that information shared about children's achievement in Reception is applied more effectively by teachers in Key Stage 1 so that pupils make a smooth transition from the Foundation Stage.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Nursery with skills and understanding generally below those typical of children of this age. They make good progress because of the good provision they receive, which is carefully adapted to their needs, and because of the good leadership and management in the Nursery.
- Only about half of the children in the Nursery go on to the Reception class. Attainment here and across the Early Years Foundation Stage is good overall. Progress in the Reception class itself has been outstanding over the past two years. Teaching is very well planned and activities fully extend the children, help them engage very well with their learning and lead to the rapid development of their skills.
- Pupils, including the more-able, attain good, and sometimes outstanding, standards in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. They make good and sometimes better progress because all pupils are well-supported in lessons and the work they are set encourages positive attitudes to learning. Information on levels and progress is not, however, currently well enough applied by teachers as pupils make the transition between the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Pupils do not, consequently, always maintain the consistently high standards and excellent progress seen in the Foundation Stage.
- In 2012, pupils achieved levels above the national average in the Year 1 phonics screening check. The school took quick action when results dipped below national levels in 2013. It has provided extra sessions and reviewed provision. As a result, current data shows that all pupils are on track in 2014 to meet or exceed the levels reached in 2012.
- Achievement in English is good. Reading, speaking, grammar and punctuation have a high profile in classes. Pupils are frequently able to explain to others why they have developed their writing in a particular style. The topics and approaches on offer, such as writing a letter to an alien, engage both boys and girls. Pupils have good, and regular, opportunities to write at length, and this results in some outstanding work, especially from the more-able.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. They make quick progress in the Reception class with breaking words down into letters and sounds. Across the school, they have daily opportunities to read in class or in small groups. The school acknowledges that the range of resources currently available to pupils to encourage the development of reading skills is limited and these are under review.
- Attainment in mathematics is above average in both key stages. Pupils in Year 4 worked successfully to devise a plan for how to make best use of time and money on an imaginary visit to the Suffolk show, thereby linking mathematics to situations they might encounter in real life. Attainment in literacy and numeracy is good.
- Literacy skills are especially well reinforced across lessons because pupils are able to talk and write confidently about what they have observed. However, although generally well-developed, there are not always consistent opportunities for pupils to consolidate their mathematics skills in other subjects in all year-groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well and make good progress. They are well-supported by teaching assistants who work closely with class teachers to support individuals and clarify areas of potential difficulty, and to help pupils to work out

solutions when they are given problems to solve.

- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. Teachers know their pupils very well, which helps them ensure equal opportunities for all and prevent any discrimination. The school is vigilant in ensuring that support put in place is effective and yields results. Results in 2013 indicate that eligible pupils are ahead of the others in reading by about a term and a half, nearly level in mathematics and about a term behind in writing. These gaps are closing quickly.

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

- Teachers plan lessons well to make sure that pupils are interested in what they are studying and are eager to learn more. Questions are used effectively to check on pupils' understanding so that teachers can quickly re-shape tasks when necessary and ensure that learning continues to progress. Good relationships between pupils and adults give pupils the confidence to persevere when stuck and to respond to new challenges, beginning from the moment they join the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In a Reception class where the children were exploring patterns, wrapping presents and making perfume as part of an exploration of the senses, the high quality of the teaching and the way the teacher modelled what was expected gave children the confidence to attempt the activities. Excellent use was made of all available space indoors and out to enhance children's learning, and girls and boys made similarly rapid progress because the activities were both fun and easily understood.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning because they are also prepared to share their ideas with each other and to accept the opinions of their fellow pupils. Teachers and support staff work effectively together to help individual pupils who need help or who are capable of more. More-able pupils quickly extend their learning because the activities they are given are so well-designed.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and reinforced in other subjects. A Year 4 art lesson on portraits, for example, involved pupils in talking about the differences between a quick sketch of themselves and a more formal picture, but also required them to be aware of the precise distances between the various parts of the human face.
- Reading, writing, mathematics and communication skills are all taught in interesting ways. For example, the technique of 'measuring fingers' was used in a Year 2 mathematics lesson to test the theory that the length of a human arm is the same as the combined length of all the fingers on one hand, and this led to excited discussion and thoughtful predictions of possible outcomes. More-able pupils are regularly challenged by tasks which present them with well-designed opportunities to use and improve their skills and abilities. However, these opportunities are slightly better developed in literacy across other subjects than in mathematics.
- Occasionally, teaching does not ensure pupils are fully engaged by the activities they are given or when they are challenged to find out more about the subject they are studying. Questioning, on these occasions, is sometimes less effective in checking on pupils' understanding and the work pupils produce is, consequently, not of a consistently high standard.
- Work is regularly marked with helpful comments designed to guide pupils towards the next steps in their learning. Presentation is neat because most pupils take pride in their work. Guidance on how to improve also takes place during lessons so that pupils are clear about what they have to do next.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are well behaved and attentive in lessons and around the school. They are welcoming and courteous to visitors. They have very positive attitudes to learning and good self-discipline because they want to succeed. Expectations of good behaviour are reinforced in assemblies and aided by the good relationships between pupils and adults.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good, a judgement with which their parents agreed when spoken to during the inspection and via the online survey. Pupils know that an adult is always nearby and that all adults are ready to help them should concerns of any sort arise. As one pupil said, 'The adults are there for everyone.'
- Pupils' understanding the importance of serving as an example to others by the way they behave is very well promoted by teachers. Links with the special school on site which includes a shared playground area, are used very effectively to encourage pupils to support each other. Good behaviour towards others is rewarded by special mentions in assemblies and the chance to be 'Star of the Week'.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They are fully aware of the different forms that bullying may take, such as cyber-bullying, pushing and name-calling. Playtime 'buddies' for Reception children and older pupils who serve as playground leaders help to ensure that bullying does not happen. Pupils are well-briefed on how to stay safe on the internet.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents, pupils and the staff all agree that pupils are safe. Arrangements to ensure pupils' safety are reviewed at regular intervals, and more frequently now that the school is being reorganised. Pupils are reminded in assemblies and in the classroom about what makes a situation unsafe. Pupils know that fitness and health are important aspects of their life.
- Attendance is improving and is currently just above national averages. The school reminds parents regularly about the importance of not taking holidays in term time. The headteacher meets with parents whose children are persistently absent. Exclusions have reduced significantly, and there were none in 2012, because the school acts quickly to address situations which could lead to exclusion. There have been no recorded racist incidents in the last four years in this harmonious learning community.

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

- The headteacher took over the running of the school after a period during which staffing was very unsettled. She has addressed this difficulty successfully and has accurately identified raising achievement and teaching quality as priorities in the well-focused school improvement plan. Her expectations of progress in these areas are fully shared by the whole school community because she has worked closely with governors, the senior leadership team and all staff to ensure a continued drive for improvement. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good because of this work and because self-evaluation is accurate.
- The roles of subject leaders have been refined. Subject leaders have time allocated to undertake lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and interviews with staff and pupils to assess the impact of the steps put in place to secure improvement. Work done by subject leaders is

reviewed termly. All areas, including the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are well-led and, in the case of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the leadership is outstanding.

- Primary school sports funding is well used to develop links across the local Bury Schools Partnership via the work of a joint sports co-ordinator. The co-ordinator has also worked to develop the physical education skills of staff and helped with a multi-skills sports tournament for Years 1 and 2 as part of the encouragement to all pupils to be fit and healthy.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Displays in corridors and classrooms reinforce all aspects extremely well. The school has carefully planned and implemented improvements in all areas, including promoting topics to develop use of the imagination. Children are asked questions designed to make them think about moral issues, such as 'how important is it to keep a promise' and 'what makes a good or bad idea?' Pupils' social responsibilities to others are especially well reinforced by the extremely close links which the school has with the Riverwalk School for children with special educational needs on the same site and by connections with a local nursing home.
- Procedures for the management of staff performance are effective. They are closely linked to the attainment and progress of pupils and to the priorities in the school improvement plan. Regular reviews take place to assess progress against these targets.
- Links with parents are good. Parents were positive about the school in conversation with the inspectors and in the online survey. The school sends out a regular newsletter. Parents have support sessions provided to help them address their children's needs. Parents are able to work with their children at the school's 'Welcome Wednesdays' sessions for parents.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school whenever necessary but, in general, visits have been only when requested. The school works well with the local schools' partnership and is also working with the local authority over the proposed reorganisation of schools.
- Safeguarding procedures meet all current requirements. Staff and governors' safeguarding training is regularly reviewed. Governors are trained in safer recruitment.
- The range of subjects taught is broad and balanced and develops pupils' learning and skills well. Topics such as food and fashion that are of interest to the pupils are regularly included and pupils have access to a number of well-run clubs and activities, such as the early morning breakfast and after-school clubs, which the school offers.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is good. Governors possess a strong mix of appropriate skills and include people who know the local community well. Governors support the school by the regular visits they make and by working with the headteacher to maintain high standards. They understand how to use pupil performance and other data and are always ready to challenge the leadership about their effectiveness and efficiency. Recent examples include questions about finance and the reorganisation. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching from visits to the school and classrooms and by talking to pupils and parents. They ensure good teaching is rewarded by further training for career development and promotion. Governors are well trained in safeguarding and in the understanding of data, which they use to check on progress and attainment. One governor has a remit to review the use and impact of pupil premium funding and provides detailed feedback to the governing body.

## 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>	124553
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	439597

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

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Valerie Axton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debbie Knight
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 July 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01284 754371
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