

Waldringfield Primary School

Cliff Road, Waldringfield, Woodbridge, IP12 4QL

Inspection dates 12–13 September 2013

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.

- From their very different starting points, the vast majority of pupils thrive and achieve well because teaching is good and they are happy at school.
- Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection.
- The school rightly has a very good reputation for enabling pupils with special educational needs, and those who have found school life difficult elsewhere, to settle and make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning and a 'thirst' for knowledge. The vast majority behave well.
- The expertise of staff and others is used well to extend, enrich and widen subjects beyond the classroom.
- Pupils say, and parents agree, that they feel safe in the school.
- Parents and pupils describe Waldringfield as 'one big happy family' where everyone works and plays together harmoniously. 'We care, we share, we learn together' underpins every aspect of school life.
- Parents are very supportive. Many choose the school, even though it is not their nearest, because they like what it does and how it does it. One typically stated, 'We have been overwhelmed by the friendliness of everyone.'
- Staff and governors work together to plan improvements so everyone understands and supports the school's vision and direction.
- The headteacher and governors have brought about improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection. Staff training is closely linked to areas for development identified when checking their performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing are not as high as in reading and mathematics. The most able pupils, in particular, are not consistently given the right level of challenge.
- Opportunities for pupils to work together, share ideas and develop teamwork skills are too rare.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons. The majority were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, governors, parents and carers, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and two written responses. The inspector also spoke to a small number of parents. The responses to 12 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress; planning and monitoring documentation; the school's self-evaluation; records of how the school uses its funding, especially how the money from pupil premium is spent; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.
- During this inspection, the inspector asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Robert Greatrex, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much-smaller-than-average primary school.
- A very large proportion of pupils come from outside the school's catchment area, nearly all through parental choice. In the last academic year, 20 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time. This represents a high proportion.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the extra government funding for children looked after by the local authority, known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups) is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school makes use of the expertise of a special school.
- Pupils are taught in four classes. Three are mixed-age classes, but Year 2 pupils are taught as a single year group.
- 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?

- Raise the quality of teaching by:
 - giving pupils more frequent opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning
 - enabling pupils to work collaboratively to develop teamwork skills and learn to cooperate, share ideas, listen to one another and use other pupils' feedback to modify and improve their work.
- Improve the standard of writing by:
 - providing tasks that are relevant and stimulating to pupils and have the right level of challenge, particularly for the most able pupils
 - giving pupils more opportunities to develop their writing skills by using them more in different subjects
 - further checking and eradicating gaps in pupils' knowledge of phonics, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with a very wide range of skills and experiences that, overall, are broadly as expected by this age. Thorough preparation and good pre-school links mean they settle quickly.
- In Reception, children make good progress because tasks often draw on their interests so they are highly engaged and persevere with their learning. They also benefit from the example given by older Year 1 pupils in their class, who show similar interest in learning and do equally well.
- Pupils' progress is tracked closely and regular meetings held to see that every pupil is doing as expected. If any pupil falls behind, suitable tasks are given to help them to catch up. Parents receive regular reports about their children's attainment levels, so that they can support their children, too.
- By the end of Year 6, the vast majority of pupils reach the levels expected nationally in English and mathematics, and many exceed them. In 2013, two-thirds of the pupils reached a higher level in reading and over half in mathematics. In writing, however, this proportion fell to one-fifth because more-able pupils were insufficiently challenged.
- A significant factor in pupils' good achievement is their outstanding attitudes to learning; they want to do their best and do well at school. They know the levels at which they are working and feel a sense of accomplishment as they advance.
- The school recognises that it has not yet done enough to improve how pupils learn to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics) because the proportion reaching the expected level by the end of Year 1 is below the national average. Carefully planned changes include a more systematic approach so pupils' knowledge builds up lesson by lesson. More training for staff and parents' information sessions, too, are making a difference.
- Nearly all of the very few pupils in the school eligible for pupil premium do as well as, or better than, other pupils in their class.
- The school's good reputation means that it has a relatively high proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who struggle with particular subjects. These pupils receive very effective extra help to support their different areas of need.
- Many basic skills are good. Pupils are numerate. They use computers with confidence. Recent improvements in handwriting mean the presentation of work is of a very high standard. The school has recognised that a small number of older pupils, however, have gaps in their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar. These are being corrected through short, focused sessions.

The quality of teaching is good

- The very positive relationships between staff and pupils create a sense of working together purposefully to get each lesson's objective done. Pupils try hard because they want to learn.
- Right from Reception, pupils have a very clear understanding of what they are to learn and how

they will know they have succeeded because teachers give them this information, in 'child-friendly' 'learning labels', at the start of every lesson. Also beneficial is the review of success criteria at the end of the lesson to assess learning and progress.

- Pupils have a very strong work ethic. They engage particularly well with activities that are relevant and presented in an interesting way. When given the opportunity to work together, such as in outdoor learning, they are focused and their conversations are task-related.
- Teachers use questioning well. In the eldest class, for example, the teacher pitches each question at the right level for the pupil she chooses. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher regularly asks, 'How do you know?' to check understanding.
- Marking is good and useful because it is age-appropriate so pupils understand it. For example, in the Reception Class, symbols are used more than words.
- Teachers constantly check how their pupils are progressing. They quickly modify tasks if pupils are struggling, and ensure these pupils have extra help and so do well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from the good support, guidance and encouragement provided by teaching assistants. The skills of these staff are well utilised.
- Through the 'learning ladder', pupils have a good understanding of their current level and their next target. They know what they have mastered and what they are working to improve.
- Pupils say they particularly like the homework tasks, such as research on Vikings, that give them opportunities to pursue their interests and present their findings in a way they choose.
- Lessons are carefully planned so learning moves on at a good rate. However, some pupils are occasionally given worksheets which stifle their creativity and, for the most able in particular, their achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Throughout the school, pupils invariably do their best. They take great pride in their work and its presentation is of a very high quality. Most exercise books are immaculate. However, this can inhibit pupils' creativity when they are asked, for example, to draft work.
- The vast majority of pupils behave very well. A very small number struggle to manage their own behaviour. On rare occasions a short period of exclusion is used appropriately.
- Play and lunchtime are very happy occasions when pupils of all ages, both sexes and all ethnic groups play happily together and look out for one another.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of safety. They are taught about staying safe, for example when using the internet or in woodland activities.
- Pupils know they are valued because staff regularly seek their views, and often act upon them.
- Attendance is average. Unauthorised absence is much lower than at the last inspection.

- The school community is very happy and mutually supportive. For three quarters of the parents, this is not the nearest school. One parent who moved her child from another school stated, 'From day one he has been a much happier child... staff know the children as individuals.' The relatively high number who join the school during the year are quickly helped to settle in. One pupil who has been to several schools said, 'This will be the only school I will not want to leave.'
- Pupils say they understand and remember better when their learning is presented in an interesting way, such as when they re-enacted a Victorian school day. Independence is fostered well in the youngest class. These children regularly take responsibility for their own learning. This skill, however, is not built upon sufficiently in older classes.

The leadership and management are good

- Staff and governors work together to agree the school's direction and plan the year's improvements. All feel a sense of ownership and commitment to see that these are accomplished.
- Teamwork is strong; staff morale high. Teams to develop subjects include all staff. Everyone's views are valued. The staff questionnaires returned were very positive. One said, 'It is a pleasure working in such a supportive team.'
- Staff know that they will be held to account for their pupils' progress. Equally, they know they will be given the support and training to succeed. The headteacher has a clear and accurate understanding of what good teaching looks like, and monitors and manages teaching well.
- Policies are clear and accessible to all. Additional funding is used effectively. For example, the school has made plans to use extra physical education funds to provide further opportunities for pupils, including gymnastics at a nearby facility. Specialist instruction is already provided and is proving beneficial.
- Pupils say they enjoy the breadth of the curriculum. For example, they speak enthusiastically of their many experiences in the superb school grounds. This makes a strong contribution to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use these first-hand experiences in their writing.
- The school has clear policies to tackle any discrimination that may occur, and ensures that all pupils have equal opportunity to benefit from all it offers.
- The partnership with parents is very strong and an important factor in the school's effectiveness because pupils gain confidence from seeing home and school working closely together.
- The partnership with other schools is very beneficial. Staff train together and visit one another's classrooms to share ideas. Pupils visit their future high schools and work with future classmates.
- Local authority training, particularly for governors, is beneficial. Otherwise, the local authority provides 'light touch' support because this is a good school. However, although it recognised the relatively low standards in writing, this did not lead to any offer of support or guidance to the school.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is well organised. Training has been chosen carefully to enable governors to be effective. They work closely with staff, planning improvements together so all share a common understanding of priorities. Individual governors' skills and expertise are used well. Governors visit school regularly and question the headteacher closely. They have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching, monitor performance management closely and see that sufficient money is set aside for any necessary staff training. They know what the school is doing to tackle underperformance. There is, however, no direct link between teachers' pay and pupils' performance. Governors know and understand data well, whether about pupils' progress or finance, including pupil premium funding. They use this knowledge to question and support the school. They ensure that the school meets national requirements, including those for safeguarding.

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	124615
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	427405

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	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Currie-Cathey
Headteacher	Sarah Wood
Date of previous school inspection	23 March 2010
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