

# Watlington Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120888
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	358869
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judi Bedawi

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	185
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Ward
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jenny Dowden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Rectory Lane Watlington, King's Lynn PE33 0HU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed eight teachers and 14 lessons or parts of lessons. The inspection team held meetings with pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff, and had informal discussions with parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked in detail at pupils' books, a range of documentation, policies, monitoring records and data on pupils' attainment. The inspectors received and analysed 80 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The team looked at how well different pupil groups achieve and are challenged, particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are most able in Years 3 to 6.
- Inspectors checked the quality of the arrangements made by the governing body to continue the smooth running of the school when the headteacher and the deputy leave.
- Inspectors explored how effectively the largely new staff work as a team.

## Information about the school

Watlington is a smaller-than-average rural village primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. A very few pupils are from different minority ethnic groups, but almost all are fluent in speaking and understanding English. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is average. Since the previous inspection all teachers except one are new to the school. The school has National Healthy Schools Status, the Gold School Travel Plan award and the Bronze Eco-Schools award.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are leaving to take up other headship posts at Easter 2011. An interim headteacher will lead the school until a permanent headteacher is appointed.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?****3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. There is a determination from all staff to raise standards and pupils' progress. Parents and carers feel secure, because their children feel happy and safe in school. One commented, 'I do feel the school is improving,' and another said, 'Overall, our children are enjoying their school experience.'

The headteacher and senior leaders have identified the right priorities to accelerate pupils' learning. New initiatives are being adopted in English and mathematics. Writing is appropriately a whole-school focus. Children in the Reception class do not have sufficient structured opportunities to develop their early writing skills. However, the effective strategies used in Years 1 and 2 have led to rapidly rising standards and are now beginning to be used to support older pupils identified as dropping behind. In Years 3 to 6, pupils do not always fully absorb the content of written texts in order to improve and extend their independent writing. This is particularly evident for the most able pupils. Mathematics is stronger across the school, but problem solving tasks for the older most able pupils do not exercise their logical thinking skills. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory, as is the progress made by the small group of minority ethnic pupils, including those at an early stage of learning to communicate in English. Current standards throughout the school are broadly average and pupils' progress is satisfactory, although standards in speaking and listening in Years 1 to 6 are above average and pupils confidently use a wide-ranging vocabulary.

Pupils enjoy school and settle to learning easily. Teaching is satisfactory. The pace of learning is sometimes leisurely and does not fully engage pupils so that they are enabled to make consistently good progress. Teamwork is a strength of teaching. Teaching assistants are used flexibly to support all groups, including the most able pupils. Staff confidence in using assessment is at an early stage of development. As a result, pupils are unsure of their targets and how to improve their own work. Their behaviour in lessons and at play is good. They feel safe in school and are taught how to use computers safely and to stay safe outside school. Pupils are enthusiastic about keeping active and understand the importance of eating fruit and vegetables, enjoying growing their own through the Eco programme. Sustainability is one of the many features of the good new curriculum, which is becoming increasingly thematic and relevant for pupils of all ages. Pupils have strong links to their local community, being involved in fundraising and the development of an eco-friendly travel plan.

Senior leaders ensure that staff have good access to training opportunities and are supportive of those who are relatively new to teaching. Staff responsible for leading subjects are generally new to the role and still improving their monitoring and evaluation skills. The governing body is strongly committed to the schools' ongoing development but

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does not routinely record observations and visits to challenge senior leaders about the school's performance. Issues raised at the previous inspection have been addressed appropriately and self-evaluation is accurate. The school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Raise attainment and achievement in English and mathematics by:
  - extending, in Years 3 to 6, pupils' understanding of written texts to improve the quality of their independent writing, particularly for those who are most able
  - developing more structured opportunities for early writing development in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - providing greater challenge in mathematical problem solving for the most able pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - increasing the pace of learning in lessons, so that pupils make consistently good progress
  - developing teachers' confidence in using assessment to help pupils understand their targets, so that they know what they have to do to improve their own work.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - developing the leadership skills of staff new to their roles in monitoring their subjects, to have a sharper impact on raising pupils' progress
  - ensuring that the governing body keeps formal records to better follow up and challenge senior leaders, and to enhance its own accountability for school performance.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enter the Reception class with attainment that is broadly in line with age-related expectations. Lesson observations confirmed that their basic skills develop steadily in number and in reading, aided by learning about letters and their sounds, but their writing is weaker. By Year 1 pupils' standards are broadly average, but an increasing proportion are still developing their English and mathematical skills even though speaking and listening levels are above average and a strength of the school. In Years 1 and 2 progress accelerates for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, with an increasing proportion making good progress. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' attainment is average. The most able pupils do not all make the progress expected in writing or in solving mathematical problems. The current progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory, with a small proportion making slower progress mostly due to staff changes having an impact on the consistency of learning. Boys in Year 5 are receiving support to improve their writing. In a good Year 2/3 lesson on a 'Pirate' topic pupils listened intently to lively storytelling to help them write at length

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about their chosen characters, enthusiastically using dictionaries to find descriptive words, for example, 'claustrophobic'.

Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Their behaviour is consistently good in class and at play. It is well managed by staff when there are occasional lapses. As a result, pupils feel safe and able to ask adults to help them if needed. They want to please their teachers and are honest in their opinions. They are extremely proud of the school council and the setting up of the Eco-schools committee, deciding to plant 200 trees in the school grounds. They enjoy fundraising for local and international charities and their spiritual development is good. They reflect deeply in assemblies. Their awareness of culture related to music, drama and the arts is a strong feature, but pupils' first-hand knowledge of multicultural lifestyles and societies in the United Kingdom is more limited.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers plan securely and provide appropriate learning opportunities for pupils, although this is less evident for those who are most able. Their subject knowledge and use of questioning are mostly good. In some lessons, a relaxed lesson pace leads to less rigour in learning to enable pupils to make good progress. There is an increasing proportion of good teaching strategies to share. Staff teamwork is a considerable asset, flexibly used to address individual needs. Pupils learning in small groups are well supported in improving their reading and word building skills. A parent appreciated this when commenting, 'My

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child has been taught well where he has benefited from the sound discovery intervention.' Although tracking information is accurate and gathered regularly, the use of assessment, particularly to set pupil targets, is still developing and they are generally unsure of their targets or how to improve their own work.

The curriculum is evolving. It is adapted well for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and offers good opportunities for pupils to develop their independent interests. Cross-curricular learning is embedded well in terms of English and mathematics, but less so for information and communication technology. Visits enhance pupils' learning, with residential trips for older pupils. There is a good uptake of after-school activities for all pupils. Links with larger schools in the area provide opportunities to extend pupils' personal development and experience of different activities such as swimming and music. A parent commented, 'I like the involvement the children have in the Eco-Schools programme, my child loves the planting.'

Pastoral care and the attention pupils receive are given a high priority, underpinning their personal and academic development well. The school has many links with external agencies and support groups which are carefully selected to support those families and pupils who find themselves in more vulnerable circumstances. Monitoring of behaviour is good and attendance monitoring has been effective in reducing persistent absence, although it has yet to ensure that overall attendance further improves. There is good practice in the way that pupils with individual education plans are involved in deciding their content. Transition arrangements are well developed for pupils preparing to move on to secondary school, and are satisfactory for pupils entering the Reception class.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leadership and management at all levels is satisfactory. The school is moving forward steadily as the staff embed their new, well-focused team. The guidance of senior leaders is valued, as is the satisfactory support of the experienced and committed governing body. They have yet to ensure that their visits, decisions and actions are formally recorded to ensure their accountability and transparency contribute to driving the school forward at an increased pace. Staff are mostly new to the management of subjects and other responsibilities, and are keen to hone their monitoring, review and evaluation skills to provide a sharper focus on raising standards and pupils' progress.

Partnerships with parents and carers are satisfactory. They generally support the school and its work but a minority are unsure how the imminent changes in leadership will affect them and their children. Partnerships to promote learning and well-being are good. The

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school has links to a wide range of support agencies, eco-friendly groups and the community of local schools who broaden the opportunities for pupils to undertake activities that the school could not otherwise provide.

Safeguarding is good with all reasonable steps taken to ensure pupils' safety during the onsite building work. Families who find themselves to be in more vulnerable circumstances are supported particularly well, enabling their children to focus on learning. There are strengths in the community cohesion links within the village and local area, including pupils' development of a sustainable travel plan, and global links are starting to develop. Links around the United Kingdom are less secure, but the school has an appropriate action plan to improve this aspect. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Different pupil groups are all helped to make satisfactory progress, understand the principles of treating others fairly and know that discrimination in any form is absolutely unacceptable.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are made welcome and settle quickly, aided by the developing links with the village pre-school setting that many attend. Children relate well to the adults, who care for them well, paying good attention to instilling basic hygiene routines such as washing hands. There is an appropriate balance between adult-directed and child-led activities, although there is less opportunity for children to choose outdoor learning and exercise through play. Children's physical development is weaker than other areas of learning. Apart from early mark-making children have limited opportunities, through structured activities, to develop their basic skills particularly in writing. . Children are still learning social and behavioural skills. While some sit quietly when listening to stories, others get excited and do not always respond to 'sssh' as a means of gaining attention. Staff understand the needs of young children and supervise them well at all times. Parents and



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carers are welcomed on open days but are not provided with ongoing records of their children's progress and next steps. Teaching, assessment and provision of resources that are mainly child accessible are satisfactory. There is early identification and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff have satisfactory training opportunities to extend their skills and they work together well. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were generally positive about all aspects of their children's education. The overwhelming majority felt that their children enjoy school. A minority have understandable concerns about the departure of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher at Easter. A small minority felt that pupils' progress and behaviour were not good enough. The inspection team judged behaviour to be good and progress to be satisfactory. An interim headteacher will be in post after Easter until a permanent headteacher is appointed.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Watlington Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 80 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 185 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	40	47	59	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	39	43	54	6	8	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	29	52	65	4	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	23	45	56	13	16	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	22	28	44	55	6	8	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	25	52	65	4	5	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	34	47	59	5	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	20	47	59	6	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	19	50	63	9	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	18	44	55	9	11	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	18	49	61	8	10	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	13	16	38	48	15	19	10	13
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	21	57	71	5	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



9 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Watlington Community Primary School, King's Lynn, PE33 0HU**

Thank you for giving us such a friendly welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and you told us many things about your school. You like most things. Some of you like different subjects but all of you want to do your best, and like your teachers and lessons that keep you occupied. We were pleased to hear that you feel safe and secure, enjoy being healthy and usually behave well. Your school is satisfactory and you make the progress expected of you. The adults in your school look after you well and this makes you happy.

The headteacher and staff want to make your school even better, and we have asked them to do the following:

- help those of you in Years 3 to 6, including those who learn quickly, to get better at understanding and remembering writing that helps you to get better at doing more of your own independent writing
- think of ways to practise writing that the Reception class children will enjoy
- provide more challenging problems to solve in mathematics for those of you in Years 3 to 6 who learn quickly
- make sure that lessons always move on quickly so you can learn faster
- help you to remember your learning targets and tell you how to improve your own work.

You can help make learning better by telling the teachers if you find independent writing too easy or if you don't understand what you are reading. Children in Reception could think of ways to practise writing and those of you who like maths problems might be able to think of your own problems. Tell your teachers if you are not learning enough, work with them to remember your targets, and learn to improve your own work. I am sure you will enjoy these challenges and hope that you enjoy your time at Watlington.

Yours sincerely

Judi Bedawi

Lead inspector

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