

Sheringham Woodfields School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121258
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358967
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Jeffery Plumb

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	16
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carole Fields
Headteacher	Carol Evans (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2008
School address	Holt Road Sheringham NR26 8ND
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons taught by nine different teachers and a higher learning support assistant. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, parents, staff and pupil focus groups. They visited the high school on the same campus as this school. They analysed a wide range of evidence including: data on pupils' progress; attendance data; feeding plans; curriculum planning; the community cohesion plan; Early Years Foundation Stage documentation; pupils' work; the monitoring of learning file; the school's improvement plan; safeguarding policies; two case studies of pupils in vulnerable circumstances; and 41 questionnaire returns from parents and carers.

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

- How much progress is made by groups of pupils with different special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- What is the impact of non-attendance for pupils with very complex medical needs on their achievement?
- How successful is the school in promoting pupils' awareness of cultural diversity within an almost exclusively White British area?

Information about the school

Sheringham Woodfields School is a complex special needs school, which provides for pupils with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. A few pupils have additional hearing impairment and visual impairment. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision for 12 children, all of whom have very complex needs. Every pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There are significantly more boys than girls on roll. Almost all pupils are White British and very few are from families where English is not the first language. Pupils travel daily from a wide geographical area to attend this school, up to 50 miles away. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. There are four looked after children.

The school has specialist status in Cognition and Learning and as such provides training, particularly in working with pupils on the autistic spectrum disorder, to local schools in the area. The school has its own charity shop in the town, which is run as a business by pupils. The deputy headteacher is acting up as headteacher and the assistant headteacher is acting up as deputy headteacher. The substantive headteacher has been appointed as headteacher to another school within the local authority.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Sheringham Woodfields School provides an outstanding quality of education and care. The acting headteacher's vision that the needs of each child will be met is embraced by all staff and translated into classroom practice. Exceptionally effective joined-up working between health professionals and education staff, individualized tailored curriculum plans and modifications to furniture and resources remove obstacles to learning.

Pupils make good academic progress and achieve well. In 2010, all Year 11 pupils met or exceeded their challenging targets in English and mathematics. Specialist curriculum programmes significantly enhance pupils' independent communication and mobility skills, and this is greatly appreciated by parents and carers. By the time that sixth form students leave the school, they are exceptionally well equipped with the social, job-readiness and college-readiness skills required to be successful in the adult world. Pupils' adoption of a healthy and safe lifestyle is outstanding. Pupils give back to the community through their involvement in enterprise projects, such as making hanging flower baskets for display throughout the town of Holt. Through outdoor project work pupils solve problems, think critically and work to improve the environment for local residents. Their recent work in constructing a dipping platform for use at the local lake is outstanding.

Teaching is good overall. There is a very considerable amount of outstanding practice. Specific planned outcomes for each pupil lie at the heart of the high-quality teaching. Assessment drives improvement. For example, when observing a pupil it was evident that he was reluctant to handle a messy substance. This led to planning to introduce him to this experience more gradually, step-by-step from a dry substance to increasingly moist substances. The innovative and flexible curriculum, with a very strong focus on learning outdoors, provides relevance for pupils and is linked to a wide range of appropriate accreditation opportunities. The focus on monitoring learning through lesson observations is very successful and teachers greatly appreciate the challenge and support this provides for them. Consequently, teachers reflect carefully on how to best plan to meet the needs of each pupil in their class.

Through its outstanding outreach work the school has successfully changed attitudes towards special educational needs/and or disabilities in local mainstream schools and the local community. The school's work in supporting mainstream teachers to work more effectively with pupils on the autistic spectrum disorder is excellent. Inclusion opportunities for pupils have brought very significant academic and social benefits for them. Located in the centre of town the school-run charity shop is a respected business within the community and develops pupils' work-related skills exceptionally well.

Deeply reflective analysis of every aspect of its performance, together with decisive action to effect change which benefits pupils, are key features of this school. All staff and pupils are involved in self-evaluation. Following analysis and careful research, action is taken to

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raise achievement and improve teaching. For example, recent analysis showed that pupils on the autistic spectrum disorder struggled with the personal, social and health education curriculum. Changes have been made and these pupils now better engage with this subject and their progress has improved. Lesson observations result in feedback and development opportunities, which improve the quality of teaching. Given the success of actions taken to raise the achievement of individual pupils through very specific tailored activities and also the success to improve group achievement as seen in the new Key Stage 2 mathematics programme, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics for all pupils in Key Stage 2 and in personal, social and health education throughout the school for pupils on the autistic spectrum disorder by implementing the strategies agreed with rigour.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

All pupils make good progress in learning in lessons because activities are well planned to meet their needs. Teachers use assessment data and the goals in individual educational plans effectively to plan specific learning outcomes for each pupil in their lessons. Consequently, pupils make good gains in the areas of learning and development, which are most important to them at that time. For a pupil with profound and multiple learning difficulties, this is communicating through body language an independent choice, such as 'I want more' or 'I am finished'. For a high functioning pupil on the autistic spectrum disorder, it is grasping a high order information and communication technology skill or solving a challenging mathematical problem. Achievement over time, from a very low starting point for the large majority of pupils, is good. A few higher-functioning pupils with autism reach standards in mathematics which are above the national average. Scrutiny of data held by the school shows that in 2010 all Year 11 pupils made or exceeded their targets in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education. However, progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2 lagged behind that of other key stage groups and pupils on the autistic spectrum disorder did not make the same progress as their peers in personal, social and health education. Decisive action taken by the school has begun to address these achievement gaps.

Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is above average. Their behaviour is outstanding and they engage enthusiastically with learning, both indoors and outdoors as part of the Forest Schools Curriculum and the school's shop located in the town. Pupils feel safe and secure and respond exceptionally well to the opportunities they are given to adopt safe practices in the community. Pupils participate energetically in dance, horse riding and swimming. They appreciate the value of physical exercise and understand the importance of a balanced diet. Pupils exercise their voice confidently and are involved in school improvement. They respond exceptionally well to opportunities to become involved in the community. For example, they give back to the community by growing flowers as part of their Holt Hall Studies Centre project for the annual bloom display in Holt. Enterprise projects including the shop in the town and the school's sandwich business develop pupils' work-related skills exceptionally well. Pupils learn about money, how to run a business, set out their stalls and market their produce. Pupils follow the school's sensory trails with a

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sparkle of amazement in their eyes and track bubbles and coloured lights in the sensory room. At work and play, pupils show a high level of consideration for each other. Through engagement in a wide range of multicultural projects they have, within their capability, an outstanding experience and awareness of cultural diversity.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

Teaching, indoors and outdoors, is relevant to pupils' immediate needs. Activities challenge and engage pupils' interest and support them in developing important life skills exceptionally well. Teaching methods vary according to ability groups, but in all lessons effective use is made of small-stepped assessments to plan specific learning outcomes to meet pupils' academic and personal needs. Consequently, in a lesson for pupils with profound and multiple difficulties, with encouragement one pupil communicated an instruction to the teacher to start using a sewing machine, while another with hand-on-hand support used a tacking gun and another reached out, following massage of his fingers, and turned a handle on a machine. In a high functioning group, pupils with autism, working towards the production of a short film, thought critically and solved very challenging problems. On rare occasions, transition from a whole-class activity to planned activities for individual pupils takes too long and this slows the pace of learning.

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Highly personalized and flexible, the curriculum meets the needs of the pupils exceptionally well. Through the outdoor curriculum pupils learn to take safe risks in using tools to chop wood, build fires and cook food. They learn to build a dipping platform to be used in the local lake. The Dragon's Den project enables them to learn how to set up a business. There is a strong focus on promoting pupils' independence, for example the independent travel programme is very successful. At the capability level, pupils' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, alongside their communication skills, are maximized through an innovative and creative curriculum. The accreditation opportunities available for pupils are broad, relevant and challenging. Individual therapeutic needs are met exceptionally well. As appropriate, pupils' access inclusion in a mainstream primary and secondary school. This significantly enriches their learning and enables them to access the same examination courses as their mainstream peers. Extra-curricular activities and an extensive range of field trips accelerate pupils' learning and raise their achievement.

Health professionals, social service staff and the educational staff work in an exceptionally effective partnership to remove barriers to learning for every pupil. Careful attention to positioning supports pupils in feeding as independently as possible and in moving their hands to participate in practical activities, such as reaching out to hit a switch or explore an object. Parents are exceptionally well supported in gaining confidence to allow their children to take safe risks so as to gain in independence. Induction arrangements for pupils new to the school are outstanding and so they settle into school quickly. Transition arrangements are excellent. Pupils receive very helpful guidance to prepare them for leaving school, including mentoring from business partners and realistic and challenging careers advice.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher sees each pupil as an opportunity for the whole staff team to learn as each staff member works ceaselessly to ensure that each pupil reaches his or her full potential. Her drive and ambition, which focuses on removing every barrier to learning for each pupil with a disability and/or learning difficulty, is embraced totally by every member of staff. There is a clear message that every child can do and will achieve highly. Rigorous analysis of pupil performance data is used to plan to raise achievement on an individual and group basis. The stories of action for each pupil roll off the headteacher's lips and there are clear strategies to raise the achievement of identified groups showing any concern. For example, analysis shows that pupils with autistic spectrum disorder do not achieve as well as their peers in personal, social and health education (PSHE). The school has researched this and introduced role play and increased sensory profiling into

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their PHSE programme: these have raised achievement for these pupils in this subject. Equality of opportunity for each pupil to achieve highly lies at the heart of this school, which combats racist and homophobic attitudes robustly. Monitoring of lessons is shared amongst the acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and the heads of learning. Observations use a rubric, which focuses on learning, and teachers receive high-quality feedback on how they can better help pupils to learn.

Outstandingly effective procedures and management systems ensure that every pupil is secure and safe. Child protection procedures at the time of the inspection were extremely effective. Risk assessments, including of specialist facilities such as the hydrotherapy pool, are exceptionally detailed and thorough. Partnerships with local businesses significantly enrich the curriculum and enhance the pupils' learning. A large supermarket chain allows the school a shop spot in the town rent free, which is used very effectively to develop pupils' work-related skills in a real-life setting. An excellent partnership with parents and carers results in the school equipping families with the resources and skills required to help their children learn at home. Last year, the school sent 247 story sacks to pupils' homes to support parents and carers in helping their children to read and a large number of fine motor packs.

Community cohesion is outstanding. An exceptionally effective, recently evaluated plan, successfully promotes understanding among pupils, within their capability, of their local, national and international communities. Governance is effective in that it supports and challenges the acting headteacher and meets its statutory responsibilities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are placed in the Early Years Foundation Stage via referrals from health and the Early Year Support Teachers within the county. Children's needs are very complex and a

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few have multi-sensory impairments. Children often start out not able to engage in activities, not able to take turns and with no sounds. They make outstanding progress. Their communication and independence improves very significantly as they recognize cues for what is going to happen next and move with increased independence into the next activity. For example, they recognize the music cue which means that it is time to tidy up and get ready for snack.

The modified curriculum is outstanding as is the quality of teaching and care the children receive. Each day starts with a one-to-one physiotherapy session to maximize the mobility for each child at the start of the day. At the end of this session children are transitioned into chairs so that they are stable and able to access learning. Careful attention is paid to positioning children comfortably so as they can access resources as independently as possible. Throughout each session, staff with knowledge of carrying out functional visual and hearing assessments carefully monitor the children with multi-sensory impairments and log any sounds they make. The staff team assess children's development throughout each session and use their assessments immediately to set the children new targets to accelerate their learning and development. For example, observing a child mastered putting objects into a container and, taking them out again, he was set a target to pass the objects from hand to hand. Staff encourage children to initiate their own learning by allowing them to follow their interests. A child's fascination with space has developed into an exciting project, which develops children's communication and mathematical skills very well. Excellent use is made of the outdoor play area and children able to weight-bear because their muscles are strong enough are taken out of their chairs to move their bodies as they crawl using their arms. Others enjoy riding cars independently and climbing, their little hearts pumping with determined effort and enjoyment.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The staff team meet every week and reflect on the progress each child has made. This evaluation is used to modify planning to raise children's achievement. For example, they bring to this meeting the measured responses of the children with hearing impairment in tracking sounds and use this to plan activities to increase their responses the following week. The Early Years Development Plan drives improvement. Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. They are given valuable support in helping their children to eat and drink with increased independence at home and in how to maximize opportunities for their children to move as freely as possible.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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Sixth form

Sixth form students make outstanding progress because the teaching ensures that activities are meticulously matched to their learning needs. The learning environment is exciting and inclusive. It enables each student to become independent and participate in active learning. Students respond exceptionally well to the high expectations teachers set them through challenging targets. Accreditation opportunities are very good and so students achieve and leave school with a wide range of nationally recognized qualifications, which equip them well for college courses or the world of work. Accreditation opportunities are tailored to the needs of the individual and a few higher-functioning students on the autistic spectrum disorder can take examinations with their peers through inclusion in the high school. Students engage in enterprise projects, which develop their work-related skills exceptionally well. They help to manage the school's charity shop in the town centre, run a sandwich making business from school and engage in a badge making project. These vocational opportunities give students a sense of purpose, resulting in them gaining confidence and becoming increasingly independent. The school successfully equips students with the skills required to be successful in adult life.

The quality of care and support is outstanding. Transition arrangements are exceptionally carefully planned, involving the whole family in the process. Leadership and management are outstanding. There is ceaseless reflection and management of change to enable each student to realize his or her dreams. Currently, the sixth form team are planning to provide better opportunities for the students to gain higher work-related qualifications than they do at present.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

Views of parents and carers

Returns from questionnaires show that almost all parents and carers are delighted with what the school achieves for their children. They submitted an extensive number of detailed notes for inspectors, which were full of praise for all that the school does for their children. In particular, they are absolutely thrilled with the way in which their children become confident and independent young people who believe in themselves as a result of attending this school. Inspection evidence corroborates parents' and carers' exceptionally positive views of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sheringham Woodfields 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 90 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	90	4	10	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	88	5	12	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	71	11	27	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	71	11	27	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	71	11	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	73	9	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	76	10	24	0	0	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)	26	63	9	22	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	73	10	24	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	31	9	22	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	73	11	27	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	71	12	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	76	9	22	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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).

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



28 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sheringham Woodfields School, Sheringham, NR26 8ND

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. You are exceptionally well cared for and your teachers and learning support assistants meet your needs outstandingly well. Your charity shop in the town helps you develop important work-related skills. You use real tools in the work place and the opportunities for you to be successful in a wide range of nationally recognized courses and examinations are excellent. Your academic achievement is good. Your school is outstanding.

Here are the main things we found.

Your lessons are relevant, challenging and meet your needs well.

You learn relevant life and work-related skills.

Barriers to learning are taken away as you are positioned comfortably to

- access learning and resources are adapted to improve your access to learning.

You enjoy school and your behaviour is excellent.

You make a very valuable contribution to the community.

You understand the importance of keeping yourselves healthy and safe and

- you are kind to one another.

The leadership team at your school manage your school in such a way that

- you are enabled to do the very best you can.

We have asked your acting headteacher to make sure that those of you in Key Stage 2 do better in mathematics and to help those of you who struggle with personal, social and health education to better engage with the subject and make greater progress.

Yours sincerely

Jeffery Plumb

Lead Inspector

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