

Blofield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120788
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	363926
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Kathy Hooper

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	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken D’Rosario
Headteacher	Oliver Burwood
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons and eight teachers were observed, and meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work and records of their progress, school policies, planning, and evidence of monitoring across the school. They scrutinised 127 parent and carer questionnaires, 20 responses from staff and 121 from pupils.

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

- How good is the achievement of boys, particularly in mathematics?
- How well do teachers use assessment to support pupils' learning?
- What has been the impact of the new leadership and management team on provision?

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than average. Most pupils come from the surrounding village, but a small minority come from further afield. The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and from minority ethnic heritages are much lower than average, although a broader range of ethnic groups is beginning to be represented. A very large majority of pupils attend after school clubs during the week. The school has achieved a Silver Sing-up award, Healthy Schools status, the Active Mark, and an Eco-schools Silver award.

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

2

Main findings

The school provides an outstanding standard of education for its pupils. Members of the school community are very proud of the school, and this is demonstrated in the comments made by parents and carers, such as: 'It's an excellent school with almost a family feel and we couldn't have asked for a better school,' and, 'This school has offered both our children an outstanding education.' The school has good capacity to improve, thanks to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, based on thorough analyses of pupils' progress. Standards continue to rise and the school is one of the highest achieving schools in the county. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. High standards have been maintained within a potentially disruptive context of changing headteachers. All groups perform equally well, for example boys and girls, and pupils from different minority ethnic groups.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding because their behaviour and attendance are exemplary, they are well taught, and parents' and carers' contributions are exceptional. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a superb start to their education due to talented teaching, a rich curriculum and informed support and guidance.

Pupils throughout the school are extremely articulate, confident and socially aware. They take great care of each other, and huge delight in their learning. Excellent care, support and guidance, and good safeguarding procedures, ensure that pupils feel very safe at all times and parents and carers strongly agree. They display high levels of responsibility and independence in their roles as play leaders and 'squaddies'. They make excellent contributions to the community, for example through a comprehensive range of sporting initiatives. A rich and integrated curriculum, augmented by an impressive range of extra-curricular activities including music and art, visits and visitors, and good community cohesion, contribute to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Teaching and learning are good. All pupils persevere extremely well. In occasional lessons, learning is not checked sufficiently to address pupils' misconceptions as they arise. In these lessons, teachers use a limited range of activities to support learning and they do not always fire the imagination and interest of all groups, particularly those who are less academically inclined.

Outstanding leadership and management encourage all staff to be highly ambitious for pupils' success, and committed to improving provision. Occasionally, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not effective enough to secure prompt improvement. The governing body is highly visible and energetically engaged in promoting provision throughout the school and in the community. The partnerships with local schools support pupils' achievement very well, particularly in sport. Parents and carers are highly supportive. Their high level of engagement promotes pupils learning exceptionally well.

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The school provides outstanding value for money. Resources are wisely and imaginatively deployed, ensuring the highest possible outcomes for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to match the best by:
 - ensuring that teachers' assessments of pupils' learning in all lessons are used consistently to inform lesson planning
 - including more practical activities to meet the increasing range of ability in the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' attainment in English is higher than in mathematics. However, the slight dip in boys' attainment in mathematics last year has been rectified through well-focused interventions. In a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson, pupils who were grouped by ability made good progress because the work matched their individual needs, and they were confidently engaged with the learning. Within a Key Stage 2 topic about the Tudors, there was a real buzz of excitement as pupils identified features of good performance, using photographs of them acting from the day before, before embarking on a piece of persuasive writing. Pupils become successful and self-assured learners who participate in all activities with great enthusiasm. They discuss issues productively, and actively look out for the welfare of younger and potentially more vulnerable pupils. Pupils are proud to be members of the school council, and eco-warriors. They take their roles very seriously and graphically describe their work and achievements. A small minority of pupils learn to play different musical instruments. About a quarter of the pupils sing in the choir. Their engagement with sporting activities is excellent. A parent of a 'shy and easily angered child' summed up the school's outstanding achievement in promoting pupils' personal development as follows: 'In partnership with us as parents, the school has helped our child mature, growing in confidence and self-discipline. He is now enthusiastic and well equipped to make his next move to high school.'

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
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

How effective is the provision?

Pupils make rapid progress because they are excited by learning. In the outstanding lessons, activities are practical and relevant to their individual needs, although in the good lessons there are not always enough practical activities to fully engage the less-able pupils. Teachers extend pupils' thinking through the use of searching questions. Pupils relish the challenges set by teachers. They have high levels of concentration and their contributions are insightful and considered, demonstrating outstanding learning skills. Teachers use new technology imaginatively to promote understanding, and they check every pupil's progress throughout the lesson. Pupils know how to improve their work because of the very helpful way in which teachers mark their books. Subject specialists in music and physical education make major contributions to the quality of learning and pupils' personal development. An innovative and interesting curriculum helps pupils to make connections between subjects. Full use is made of exciting cross-curricular events and pupils enjoy working in mixed-age groups. The high quality of care, guidance and support very successfully promote pupils' learning. The school maintains an excellent oversight of each pupil's development and academic progress. Comments from parents and carers confirm the excellent contribution this makes to pupils' successes, for example: 'Every effort to assess my child's needs has been made by the school team and any recommendations to help with his learning have been put into place quickly.' Requests from a few parents and carers for more information regarding their children's progress are being addressed urgently by the school.

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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 senior leadership team and curriculum coordinators powerfully promote provision, using a wide range of first-hand evidence, including discussion with pupils.

The new headteacher has instigated greater accuracy in assessing pupils' work, and staff confidence has improved. In occasional lessons, opportunities are missed to check and reinforce learning through assessments. Morale throughout the school is high and the developments in the curriculum, vigorously pursued by new leadership, have released high levels of energy within the staff. Recent efforts to engage more parents and carers have resulted in excellent attendance at workshops and parents' evenings. Extensive reviews of each pupil's progress ensure the school's aims are met excellently in promoting equality of opportunity. A current priority is to engage the small minority of pupils who do not attend an after-school club. Well-trained staff and members of the governing body, who have high levels of awareness, promote excellent safeguarding practices, although some details in policies are not fully up to date. The school has made a significant impact on its local community, and has ambitious plans to promote community cohesion beyond the immediate environs. Despite the school's cramped accommodation, imaginative solutions have been found to ensure a stimulating and effective context within which pupils thrive.

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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	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's outstanding performance in the Early Years Foundation Stage is due to dedicated and gifted teaching, coupled with close working partnerships with parents and carers. Every opportunity is taken to extend children's understanding through a wide range of relevant and stimulating activities. While a group of five children were reading Meg's Cat, they learned about page numbers, how to spell out words, how to look carefully at pictures for clues about the story, how bees make honey, and why Meg's fat cat needed exercise. Children who are engaged in self-selected activities are supported to learn through adults' pertinent and probing questioning, respectful relationships, and skilful encouragement to complete tasks successfully. Support staff promote learning very well and are vigilant about recording children's significant progress. Parents and carers value the feedback and one remarked, 'The School Diary is an excellent idea providing up-to-date information on the child's progress.' Leadership and management are insightful and imaginative. High standards are maintained through high quality monitoring and evaluation, and excellent partnerships with parents and carers.

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	1

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

Stage	
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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The response rate to the parental questionnaire was well above the proportion normally received from primary schools nationally. About half of the questionnaires contained helpful comments and indicated the high level of involvement of parents and carers.

Seven parents and carers felt they did not receive sufficient feedback about their child's progress. The school is aware of inconsistencies in this regard and is attending to the gaps. The new headteacher is making great efforts to engage more parents and carers. The school makes outstanding provision for its pupils, enabling them to reach very high standards in their academic work and personal and social skills.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Blofield 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 127 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 216 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	81	64	43	34	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	68	35	28	6	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	30	78	61	9	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	39	72	57	0	0	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	92	72	35	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	52	41	73	57	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	55	57	45	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)	56	44	56	44	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	39	68	54	5	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	30	79	62	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	34	74	58	7	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	74	58	48	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	81	64	45	35	1	1	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



23 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blofield Primary School, Norwich NR13 4RH

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school this week. We really enjoyed our time with you, taking part in your lessons and other activities, talking to you and looking at your work.

We found your school to be one of the best. You relish learning new skills and knowledge, and taking part in all the many activities the school provides for you. As a result, you learn a lot. Your behaviour and attendance are impeccable. With the help of your teachers and your parents and carers, you are developing into confident and successful learners, and responsible young people. You help each other to keep safe and healthy, and to learn. We were very impressed by your perseverance in lessons, and the scope of the after-school activities. We understand why you are so proud of your school and your successes.

In order to make your lessons even better, we have asked your teachers to:

- check that you are learning throughout lessons and
- increase the number of different and exciting ways they use to help you learn.

You can all help them by telling them when you do not quite understand, and asking them to explain.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Hooper
Lead inspector

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