

Dell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124638
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359733
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Carol Worthington

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	3–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	349
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Howard
Headteacher	Beryl Hinds
Date of previous school inspection	10 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons led by 10 different teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other senior leaders, and two members of the governing body. Discussions were held with three groups of pupils from Key Stage 2. Many pupils were spoken to informally. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at records of assessments of pupils' attainment, tracking of their progress and samples of their work in books. All safeguarding documents were scrutinised. Inspectors analysed 90 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those completed by 127 Key Stage 2 pupils and 42 staff.

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

- Inspectors investigated how effectively school leaders are adapting provision for the extension of Key Stage 2 to include Years 5 and 6.
- They investigated the impact of admission changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage on children's attainment and progress, particularly the spring and summer-born children.
- They looked at the impact of intervention strategies on the progress made by all groups of pupils, but especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known to be eligible for free school meals.

Information about the school

This average-sized primary school is in an urban location. It is in the process of expanding from being a first school to a full primary school. The oldest pupils are currently in Year 5. Virtually all pupils are of White British origin, with hardly any from other minority ethnic groups. A greater than average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, particularly in the older classes. The proportion who have a statement of special educational needs is above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties, and are taught in the 'small class'. A further 'upper small class' serves pupils from Years 4 and 5 who are withdrawn from their usual classes for literacy and numeracy. The school has Healthy School status, Artsmark Gold and the Activemark award. It runs a breakfast club which forms part of this inspection.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Dell Primary School is a good school. Its pupils develop as responsible and caring young people, well prepared for the next stage of their education. Their good behaviour and attitudes make a strong contribution to learning throughout the school. Academic standards have improved significantly since the school's previous inspection. They are now above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. School leaders have managed the reorganisation from first school to full primary well. Pupils have made good progress from Years 2 to 4 over the last three years. Attainment in Years 4 and 5 is above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have achieved well from their various starting points. Pupils in the 'small class' make good progress and some are able to rejoin the main school in Year 3.

The headteacher effectively communicates a vision of excellence and ambition for success throughout the school, and this is fully supported by other leaders. Consequently, all staff work together as a highly committed team. Regular lesson observations have enabled teachers to improve their practice and there is a high proportion of good, and some outstanding, teaching. Teachers know the ways individual pupils learn best. Their good use of day-to-day assessment enables them to present a high level of challenge in most lessons, particularly English and mathematics. Pupils are often involved in judging their own learning and progress towards meeting their individual targets. This motivates virtually all pupils to achieve well and make good progress. This sustained improvement since its previous inspection shows that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Children's attainment by the end of Reception has clearly improved over the last three years, but, following changes in admission arrangements, assessments on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are insufficiently accurate to give a clear picture of children's progress from their starting points. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are, however, quickly identified and support promptly put into place, as in the rest of the school, and this is highly effective in removing barriers to learning.

Whole-school assessment procedures are carried out three times yearly throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. This, combined with day-to-day observations, provides data to give a clear overview of differences in the progress of significant groups of pupils, for example girls, boys, or those known to be eligible for free school meals. This allows individual underachievement to be quickly identified and effective individual and small group support to be put into place.

Pupils enjoy school and talk enthusiastically about their learning, for example their favourite authors, their love of scientific experiments and their enjoyment of performing in drama and music. Good pastoral care ensures that pupils understand how to keep safe, including how to avoid dangers posed by the internet. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and fit. Although many pupils attend well, overall

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attendance is average, despite the school's efforts to improve it. Pupils undertake many responsible jobs, making an excellent contribution to the life of the school, led by the influential school council. They have a strong understanding of the spiritual, moral and social values of their school community, but do not have sufficient knowledge or understanding of how these relate to those of the variety of cultures present in the United Kingdom.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve procedures to show how well pupils make progress throughout the school, by:
 - establishing attainment accurately on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - using regular assessments in the Nursery and Reception classes to show clearly the progress all children make towards meeting the expected goals for children of their age.
- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the customs and values of the range of ethnic groups present in the United Kingdom by providing them with first-hand experience through visits and links to other communities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 1 has risen over the past three years and is closer to that expected for five-year-old children. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, building on their improved starting point. Standards have risen from average to above average and are being further built upon in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 5 made good progress when enjoying the challenge of solving problems involving two- and three-dimensional shapes. In Year 4, pupils' excellent behaviour enabled them to make good progress in reading and writing through responsible choices in a small group literacy session. Year 2 pupils were able to demonstrate their own good progress through an electronic voting system in a mathematics lesson. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the 'small class' made good progress in describing how dinosaurs hatched from eggs, because of the excitement of drama and use of visual prompts to develop their vocabulary. In the 'upper small class', Key Stage 2 pupils made good progress in learning about angles through practical exploration of how they are used in construction.

Pupils say they enjoy lessons, and it is obvious that they do from the way they settle down quickly, persevere with their tasks and achieve well. Pupils' social skills are very well developed; they work and play harmoniously together and willingly take on responsibilities. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, gain confidence through music, drama and frequent presentation of their work to their classmates. Older pupils make useful decisions on the 'golden time' curriculum and have an influence on staff appointments. At break times, older pupils act as role models for good behaviour as they supervise the play of younger ones as their play leaders and 'buddies'. They enjoy very active playtimes and sporting clubs, through links with a local sports partnership. Pupils show their care for others through a wide variety of charitable giving, both in the immediate neighbourhood and further afield.

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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	2
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Teachers capture pupils' interests by imaginative planning of work with stimulating and relevant activities. Good use is made of talking partners and the interactive whiteboards to focus pupils on the learning objectives. In most lessons, pupils are encouraged to find things out for themselves, as seen in an excellent session exploring the life of Mary Seacole. Day-to-day assessment and marking are used well to establish how closely pupils are meeting their literacy and numeracy targets and to provide challenge to pupils of all abilities. This is particularly successful in establishing which pupils need extra support to keep them on track. Small focus groups set up as a result, enable individual pupils to make good progress.

The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well. The priority given to English and mathematics supports the ongoing improvement in attainment. The provision of a daily half-hour lesson focused on skill development includes sessions on touch typing which are much enjoyed by pupils, who are proud of the progress they make in each lesson. Older pupils have a considerable input to 'Golden Time', when they can develop their creative, practical skills through activities such as sewing, illuminated lettering and cup-stacking. Music is an important part of the school's provision. All pupils play at least two instruments and this develops their self-discipline and confidence. The varied programme of extra-

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curricular clubs and activities contributes well to enjoyment and appeals to a wide range of preferences.

Well-organised arrangements for the care of all pupils contribute to their good personal development and well-being, and support their learning effectively. Good care is extended to the breakfast club provision. The school's work with children and families facing challenging circumstances is outstanding. It includes valuable support given to pupils in potentially vulnerable situations, enabling them to be confident that they can talk to an adult if they are worried. There are many examples of barriers to learning being overcome for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good guidance is given to pupils and their families when they start school and plans are already made to extend this when the first Year 6 pupils leave for secondary education in 2012. The school applies a variety of strategies to improve attendance, but it remains average.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team has a clear vision for the school's development. Leaders are fully involved in effective monitoring and evaluation of outcomes, continually improving provision and the quality of education in their areas. Adults have high expectations that are communicated effectively to pupils. Challenging targets are set and usually met or exceeded. The above average standards in Year 4 have been successfully extended into Year 5.

The governing body's effectiveness is satisfactory. Its members meet regularly and fulfil their statutory duties, but they currently rely too much on information from the headteacher regarding the school's priorities for improvement. New members are currently receiving effective training to resolve this. The school gives a very high priority to training for safeguarding and child protection. Designated governors are vigilant in ensuring that good provision for safeguarding retains its high priority by regularly monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness. The school takes good account of the views of pupils and their parents and carers with regard to safety.

This is a school where everyone has equally good opportunities to succeed, and is expected to do so. The school promptly uses a very wide range of strategies and interventions to support individual pupils identified as being in danger of underachieving, so virtually all can be shown to achieve well from their identified starting points in Key Stages 1 and 2, but this is less clear in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All pupils, including those in the 'small class', have opportunities to take part in the extensive enrichment programmes.

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There is a good partnership with parents and carers. The school provides good opportunities for them to be kept informed of their children's progress, and is looking to extend this to more electronic means. It responds well to the views of parents and carers, and provides a wide range of opportunities for family learning. The vast majority who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were very positive about their children's experiences at the school.

The school has carried out an audit of its contribution to community cohesion but is in the early stages of implementing it. It has a good understanding of its own community and reaches out into its immediate locality through partnerships with other schools and local events such as Remembrance Day. The curriculum promotes positive cultural values and is enhanced by specific 'multicultural' days. Pupils do not get sufficient first-hand opportunities, however, to gain understanding of the wide variety of cultures present in the modern United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Owing to reorganisation of admission to Nursery in the current year, the school does not have reliable data to indicate children's attainment on entry. Inspectors judged it to be broadly at the levels expected nationally, but below in speech and language development. The consistent focus on developing speaking and listening, reading and writing skills results in good progress, particularly in Reception. In Nursery, however, children's progress slows down when they spend too long on the carpet in whole-class discussions. They make better progress when developing their speech in purposeful independent learning activities. In Reception, there are good opportunities for independent learning through play, with essential skills such as writing and reading developed through short, focused adult-led activities.

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Children are given good opportunities to develop their personal skills through a wide variety of friendship groups. Their behaviour is good, and they settle attentively on the carpet when required, eager to discuss their learning. Teaching is good, and activities are usually well matched to children's needs, so they make good progress, as shown in Reception children's 'Learning Journals'. Nursery children enjoy creative learning outdoors, where there is a wide range of stimulating activities to develop all the skills expected for children of this age. They watched excitedly, waving goodbye as their recently hatched butterflies were released. They enjoy developing their physical skills when riding trikes and other wheeled vehicles. Reception children have free access to sand and water play inside, but access to the outdoor area has to be timetabled at times during the day, as only the Nursery and on-site pre-school group have free access to it.

Leaders show a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of provision and have ensured that staff are well trained and priorities are clearly understood, although the weaknesses in data collection on entry hold back efficient tracking of children's progress. The welfare of all children has a similarly high profile to that throughout the school. There is a good partnership with parents and carers, which extends into the home through workshops on children's learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires expressed entirely positive views about the school. These included comments praising the school and its staff for the quality of education and care provided. One or two commented on individual incidents of bullying and bad behaviour, which had been fully dealt with, and properly recorded, in the school's incident book. Pupils themselves said that playground behaviour was sometimes boisterous, but any incidents were dealt with effectively by staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dell 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 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 349 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	60	35	39	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	63	70	26	29	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	42	47	48	53	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	48	45	50	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	53	41	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	49	45	50	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	49	45	50	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)	31	34	46	51	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	52	38	42	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	43	48	53	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	33	55	61	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	48	53	40	44	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	56	39	43	0	0	1	1

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.



31 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dell Primary School, Lowestoft NR33 9NU

Thank you very much for being so helpful to my colleagues and me during our visit. It was good to see you all so happy and willing to tell us about your learning. We think Dell Primary is a good school.

Your headteacher does a good job in running the school. Teaching is good, so you enjoy your lessons and work hard. Your teachers expect all of you to do well, and so you do, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Your typing lessons are a great help to your computer skills. You gain a lot of confidence and enjoyment from your music performances. Your behaviour is good, and most of you attend regularly.

All the adults take good care of you and in turn, you take care of each other. You learn how to keep yourself safe and healthy, and servers make sure that everybody has some salad and brown bread at lunchtime. Play leaders make sure everybody joins in with games at playtimes. You are very responsible and make an outstanding contribution to your school community, led by your school council.

There are two things that could be improved in your school:

- teachers need to find out more about the skills that Nursery and Reception children have when they start school, so they can clearly see how much progress you make as you get older
- school leaders need to find ways of helping you all to get to know more about people from different cultures who live in this country.

I wish you all well in the future and hope that you will keep on working hard, because you enjoy learning so much and want to do well.

Yours sincerely

Carol Worthington

Lead inspector

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