

Norton CEVC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124710
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380962
Inspection dates	8–9 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Richard Blackmore

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Bishop
Headteacher	Stella Hart
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2008
School address	School Close Norton IP31 3LZ
Telephone number	01359 230520
Fax number	01359 233445
Email address	head@norton.suffolk.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed six lessons taught by four teachers. Meetings were held with the leadership team, curriculum leaders, members of the governing body and the school council.

Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's improvement plan, documents and policies detailing how pupils are kept safe, pupil progress data to see how well pupils are doing and analyses of the standards pupils reach. Inspectors studied 55 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, together with 10 from staff and 32 from pupils.

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

- How quick is the progress made by boys in writing?
- How good is the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures?
- How are communication, language and literacy skills developed in the Early Years Foundation Stage?

Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. Almost all pupils are White British and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. There are higher than average proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The school has achieved national Healthy School status, Eco School bronze and silver awards and the Activemark.

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

Norton Church of England Primary is an outstanding school. Pupils achieve well, are extremely happy and enjoy their learning because of the highly positive relationships, very sensitive pastoral care and an excellent curriculum. This is the result of early and very accurate identification of pupils' needs and interests and the provision of high-quality support through an excellent range of school-based programmes. As one parent wrote of the school, 'They get to know your child extremely well, sometimes more than you think!'

From starting points in line with those expected, the vast majority of pupils reach levels of attainment well above that expected of them by the time they leave. This was also evident in the work in pupils' books. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make excellent progress and gain a very wide experience of the six areas of learning because their needs are very carefully assessed and their progress tracked closely. Pupils throughout the school behave exceptionally well and make many helpful and much valued contributions to the school community. For example, members of the eco school council talk enthusiastically about their frequent and productive meetings and are very proud of the improvements they have been involved in such as the development of the wildlife garden and computer club. Pupils say they feel 'really, really safe' and like coming to school. This is because everyone is caring and friendly, and they are confident that adults will help them if they have any concerns. As one pupil said, 'They will always help you, any time at all.'

Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding because teachers make lessons interesting and challenging by using resources that bring learning alive and build knowledge in small and well-chosen steps. This approach keeps lessons moving forward rapidly and teachers involve pupils well in discussions that extend their knowledge, skills and understanding. There are rare occasions when teachers make explanations too lengthy, confusing pupils, and when they miss opportunities to use pupils' mistakes to clear up misunderstandings.

The leadership of the school is highly focused on outcomes for pupils and highly ambitious for higher rates of progress and standards. Leaders and managers are ceaseless in their search for improvements to the quality of pupils' experiences, acknowledging if expected improvements do not work, but then striving to find an alternative solution, very often being successful. The governing body, excellently led, gathers much information from surveys and frequent visits to the school, which informs its priorities. A trend of improving achievement since the last inspection, the

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school's robust and timetabled plans for improving teaching and the highly effective leadership and management, demonstrate that the school's capacity to sustain improvement is excellent. A high rate of attendance and significantly above expected skill levels by the time they leave means pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of achievement and raise the quality of teaching to that of the best by:
 - making explanations of tasks clear and concise
 - ensuring pupils' mistakes are used to highlight to them how to improve their skills

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils really enjoy learning because they understand the reason for undertaking each activity. In Year 2 they knew the importance of finding the correct amount of money to buy different items because this skill is needed in real shops. Pupils make good progress during their time in the school and the gap between girls' and boys' attainment has narrowed significantly, although boys are still marginally behind in writing. This improvement is due to the carefully coordinated efforts of staff to consistently engage all pupils and to select resources that interest different groups. For example, one approach has helped all pupils, but specifically boys, to write down their good ideas with clarity and precision. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and some make outstanding progress. They receive highly effective support and timely interventions from a range of staff, including external specialists, to ensure they focus on what is to be learnt from each lesson.

Pupils behave very considerately towards each other and respond quickly to any additional guidance from staff about how to conduct themselves. Pupils are interested in the school's health promotion strategies and understand the main threats to their health and how these can be avoided. Consequently, they have a very good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles, particularly the essential aspects of a balanced diet and how participation in a variety of physical activities helps them to stay fit. Pupils make outstanding contributions to school life through the many tasks they undertake including 'Share Days' when pupils and their families come together to tackle important jobs. Recently the 'Wonderful Wellie Workout' encouraged members of the community to dig, plant and weed the school grounds to improve their appearance. One parent commented on this experience, 'How fantastic – every child smiled continuously.' In the wider community pupils help to keep the school's surrounding area tidy with a litter pick of the village. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This is because there are numerous opportunities to reflect on ethical issues and experience other cultures

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and as a result pupils are able to discuss in depth issues relating to recycling and deforestation. To develop their understanding of the wider world, pupils have made an African Keyhole Garden, Ndebele patterns and safari handprints.

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	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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well planned and teachers create an exciting climate for learning. Reading and writing are very good across the school and in subjects other than English. Pupils enjoy writing because they take a pride in the quality of what they write and how they do it. They use description well and consequently writing is lively and interesting. Pupils’ behaviour is managed very effectively so that lessons are calm, purposeful and have a buzz of excitement. In an outstanding Year 4 mathematics lesson pupils worked frenetically to discover whether the ratios for Leonardo da Vinci’s ‘Vitruvian’ man were similar to their own. Questioning draws out pupils’ ideas and develops their independent thinking and reasoning skills. Teachers evaluate learning carefully and provide work at the right level to match pupils’ different ages and learning needs in the mixed-age classes because assessment is accurate.

The school has an exciting curriculum which is helping to speed up progress and engage pupils. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about building ‘bug hotels’ from a secure knowledge of habitats as part of the minibeast project. There are many clubs that pupils thoroughly enjoy, including cheerleading and ‘cool cookery,’ and visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. The Year 4 residential trip to the ‘African

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

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Adventure’ at Sizewell combined learning about traditions other than their own at the same time as developing team skills. There is a strong focus on enhancing pupils’ opportunities to develop basic, artistic as well as industry-related skills well.

‘Enterprise Week’ encouraged pupils to design and make cakes and lemonade to sell to other pupils and parents and carers, while developing a keen sense of how to make a profit and avoid a loss.

Pupils receive very effective academic and pastoral support because the school’s system for monitoring pupils with particular needs is in-depth and includes extensive information on personal development and particular skills. For example, ‘finger gym’ helps pupils to improve control and strength of their hands and fingers for important techniques including pencil grip. The commitment to each pupil leads to the well-organised and excellently led arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Well established processes and events such as ‘Come and join in’ days ensure smooth induction into Reception, while carefully managed transitions into future schools beyond Year 4 have been established through very effective links with different middle schools. Well-directed help is given to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable but all pupils are well known, valued and cared for as individuals. This gives them the confidence to learn, and enables pupils new to the school and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make the same good progress as others.

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 very capable headteacher ensures self-evaluation arrangements, including the regular monitoring of pupils’ performance, are well established and have a beneficial effect because they are extremely accurate. This has ensured that issues from the last inspection have been effectively addressed and current priorities closely reflect the needs of the pupils. Monitoring and support by subject leaders ensure teaching is good across the school and planning is founded on robust evidence, but the observations are not always sufficiently focused on learning. The school’s assessment of the quality of teaching and learning has led to effective training and support that has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement. The outstanding governing body ensures statutory responsibilities are fully met and fulfil their role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school very rigorously. They take up a range of training and this helps members to be fully engaged in challenging senior staff and reviewing the school’s effectiveness and in setting new

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priorities. Relationships with parents and carers are well developed and the school has a range of ways to communicate and inform parents and carers of important events and developments. Parents and carers appreciate the school’s commitment to the pupils’ enjoyment of school. A comment from one parent concisely reflects the views of the vast majority saying, ‘Our child loves school.’

There are good arrangements to safeguard pupils. All safeguarding policies are in place and regularly monitored and staff are all carefully vetted. Staff are trained in child protection procedures which are rigorously applied, although some risk assessments need to be updated. Provision for community cohesion has been carefully analysed and an action plan has been implemented. The school itself is inclusive, and there are very strong links with the local area and other parts of the United Kingdom to help pupils understand what life is like in different towns and cities. Pupils have great respect for people further afield and this has been developed excellently through the ‘Bollywood’ dance initiative and Africa Experience. Through music, pupils of all ages quickly develop an understanding of the lifestyle and customs of people from a wide range of other countries.

Excellent partnership links with parents and carers, local schools and various support agencies contribute to the school’s excellent provision. The school deploys these and its own resources extremely well, particularly to improve provision for pupils who need extra support or challenge. The quality of provision and current outcomes for pupils show that the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination very effectively.

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	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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Children clearly enjoy school and know the routines very well, playing happily both individually and together. They undertake a huge variety of whole class and group activities. Learning is exceedingly well balanced between tasks led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. Children are given plenty of opportunities to chat to adults about what they are doing. Very well trained and capable staff encourage children to learn how to share, consider others and develop their communication skills. Children showed high levels of awareness and care for each other as they worked in the digging area. They are highly engaged in activities that promote reading, writing, counting and creative play because they are challenged very effectively at their different levels of skills and abilities. Consequently, they progress very well. Communication, language and literacy are developed effectively because children are provided with interesting and frequently changing opportunities to practise skills both independently and aided by each other and adults. For example, children were highly motivated in the ‘fancy dress shop’ swiftly improving speaking, listening and writing skills when taking ‘telephone messages’ and ‘orders.’ There are very effective links with parents and carers and very positive relationships within the setting make an effective contribution to children’s personal development. Behaviour is excellent and children show mature and sensible attitudes to their learning. Children become confident in their learning by exploring through play. They know how to play safely and have a good awareness for their age of the importance of being healthy, for example in drinking water throughout the day.

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

Views of parents and carers

The response rate to the questionnaire was above average. Almost all parents and carers agree that their children enjoy school and most agree with all the remaining statements on the questionnaire. The inspection findings support these views. A few parents and carers disagree that their children are prepared well for the future although some do not direct this at the school but to the possible changes to Year 5 and 6 pupil placement in schools. Inspectors found that while a few parents and carers disagree that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns, the school has the normal range of opportunities for parents and carers to express views and suggestions. A very large majority of parents and carers are happy with their children's experience at school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Norton CEVC 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 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 102 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	76	12	22	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	37	67	15	27	1	2	1	2
The school informs me about my child’s progress	33	60	18	33	3	5	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	69	11	20	4	7	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	38	69	14	25	2	4	1	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	38	69	14	25	2	4	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	69	14	25	3	5	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)	29	53	15	27	3	5	2	4
The school meets my child’s particular needs	35	64	17	31	1	2	2	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	56	18	33	1	2	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	44	21	38	4	7	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	35	64	14	25	1	2	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	39	71	13	24	1	2	2	4

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Norton CEVC Primary School, Norton, IP31 3LZ

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school and sharing your views with us. You go to an outstanding school. I will remember your excellent rainforest assembly and how extremely polite and considerate you all were and how well you all behaved. Here are some of the best things about your school.

- You get off to a superb start in the Reception class and make good progress through the school.
- You reach standards by the end of Year 4 that are much better than most pupils of your age.
- You all enjoy learning very much and your attendance is extremely high.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are extremely sensible; you know how to keep safe and can talk very knowledgeably about keeping yourselves fit and healthy.
- Your school cares for you extremely well and teaches you a lot about other cultures.
- You have excellent links with your local community, who are fully included in things that you do at your school.
- Your headteacher and the governing body lead the school extremely well.

The one thing I have identified for staff and the governing body to improve is to:

- speed up your progress by making the teaching even better.

You can all help by continuing to work really hard.

My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore
Lead inspector

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