

INSPECTION REPORT

ALDBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Aldborough, Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120777

Headteacher: Mr Adrian Scargill

Reporting inspector: Dr B Male
14906

Dates of inspection: 14 - 15 February 2000

Inspection number: 188193

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Alby Hill Aldborough Norwich Norfolk
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Telephone number:	01263 761264
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Susan Mumford
Date of previous inspection:	April 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Aldborough is a community primary school situated outside the village of Aldborough. It takes pupils from four to 11 years old, and is maintained by the Norfolk Local Education Authority. It serves a wide rural area with many children coming from outside the village. Most pupils start school with standards of attainment slightly above those expected.

At the time of the inspection there were 122 pupils on roll, four of whom were under five years old. There are five classes for half of the week, and four classes for the other half. Eight per cent of pupils are eligible for free schools meals which is below the national average. Eleven per cent of the pupils are on the special educational needs register which is below the national average. There is no pupil for whom English is an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school where the level of pupils' achievement is high. There are very high standards of attainment in the core subjects, behaviour is very good, and pupils make very good progress across the school. This very good progress results from the quality of the teaching together with the pupils' excellent attitudes to their work, and the active support of parents. The targets set are realistically high, and the school is making very good progress towards them. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment in English and mathematics are very high.
- There is some very good and outstanding teaching by a hard working and dedicated staff.
- There is an outstanding ethos for learning, and pupils have excellent attitudes towards their work.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good, and promotes the excellent relationships and very good behaviour across the school.
- The close links with parents enhance learning.

What could be improved

- The school needs to carry out its planned review of the balance of literacy and numeracy across the week.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

The above suggestion is to improve what is already very good provision.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1996. Since then standards of attainment in the three core subjects have risen significantly. This has been brought about by a significant rise in the quality of teaching which now provides a high level of challenge to which the pupils respond very well. Attitudes and behaviour have also improved, with attitudes now excellent and behaviour very good. Progress in the Key Issues raised by the last inspection was slow at first, but has been good in terms of maintaining the strengths of the school, challenging the more able, establishing schemes of work, and developing multicultural education. Standards in information technology have recently improved significantly and the provision for religious education is being developed. Procedures for child protection are now sound and assessment procedures are much improved.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	A*	A*
mathematics	C	A	A	A
science	A	A	A*	A*

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

There has been a significant improvement in standards since 1996 and consistently high standards over the last three years. Standards in English and science were in the top five per cent of schools. Inspection evidence shows that present Year 6 pupils are maintaining these high standards in the three core subjects. This represents very good achievement for the pupils, and a very good response to the school's targets. Standards are now also well above average in the word processing element of information technology. All of this is a very significant improvement since the last inspection.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic, hard working and sustain their concentration well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	There are excellent relationships across the school. Behaviour is very good, both in the classrooms and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop very well personally. They learn to take responsibility, care for others, and to act in a self-disciplined manner.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is above average.

Pupils' very good behaviour and excellent attitudes to work contribute significantly to their very good progress and the high standards they attain.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

In the school as a whole, eight tenths of the teaching is good or better, and over four tenths very good or better. No teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching is very strong at the top of

both key stages, and at the top of Key Stage 1 it is often outstanding. This is a very strong profile indeed. The quality of the teaching encourages the pupils' excellent attitudes, and promotes the high standards. There is very good teaching of the basic skills of numeracy and literacy and good provision for the range of needs across the school. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils, and have high expectations. The school meets the needs of all its pupils well, and the quality of the teaching is reflected in the high quality of pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a focus on literacy and numeracy with a substantial proportion of curriculum time given to this. This is partly responsible for the rise in standards in these areas. The balance across the week is unusual and the national recommendations of daily numeracy and literacy are not followed. However, standards in English and mathematics are very high. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision made for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. There is very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a very high standard of care where each child is valued as an individual. A very good example of this is the partner scheme to help new pupils settle in.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher sets a very good tone for relationships and care across the school. He has set very clear educational direction where the highest standards are expected. Other staff managed their areas of responsibility effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a very good overview of the school and are closely involved in its work. They provide good support and fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is taking many effective steps to evaluate its progress and has developed a good overview of its strengths. It now needs to be more specific in its monitoring, especially outside the core subjects.
The strategic use of resources	The school's budget is used effectively to attain its educational goals, although the temporary arrangement of varying classes is not ideal.

The leadership of the school has ensured it is significantly improving standards. There have been significant improvements to the quality of teaching and the planning of subjects. This is a tribute to the quality of leadership and the hard work of all staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The good quality of the teaching.• The standards achieved by the pupils.• The quality of care given to pupils.• The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.• The way the school welcomes parents and listens to their views.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no aspect that parents see as being in need of improvement.

A high number of parents replied to the questionnaire and attended a meeting with the Registered Inspector. All were very supportive of the school. The inspection findings support all their positive feelings about the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards of attainment in English and mathematics are very high

1. The school's scores in national tests for 11 year olds in English were in the top five per cent nationally in 1999 and mathematics were well above average. The scores have been well above average since 1997. Inspection evidence indicates that these high standards are being maintained this year and prevail across the school. Pupils enter the school as four-year-olds with standards of attainment in these aspects already slightly above average, and make very good progress through the school. This results from the quality of the teaching they receive, especially at the top of each key stage, from the pupils' own excellent attitudes and enthusiasm for their work, and from the support pupils receive from their parents.
2. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been consistently high over the last four years. This is a tribute to the consistently high quality of the teaching these pupils have received. The rise in standards at the top of Key Stage 2 since 1996 when they were average is associated with the appointment of a new member of staff, and also a more focused approach to teaching across the school.
3. In mathematics, pupils have a good facility with number across the school. By the age of seven, pupils have already developed a good understanding of place value and recall of number facts. By the age of 11, a well above average number of pupils are achieving the higher level (Level 5). Pupils are able to use their mathematical knowledge well to solve problems; for instance some Year 6 pupils quickly converted fractions to the lowest common denominator in order to make a comparison and were able to reverse the operation to check their answers. Skills in data handling and the understanding of shape and space are also very well developed. Year 6 pupils were able to use their ability to calculate the area of circles along with their knowledge of averages and range to work out how many people would fit in the Millennium Dome.
4. In English, standards in speaking and listening are very high across the school. The older pupils are able to talk confidently in a wide range of contexts. They pay close attention to what others are saying when working in groups and their contributions take account of others' views. This was apparent in the high quality discussions within the group reading time. Pupils were very sensitive to the views expressed by others and were able to build on these in their responses.
5. Standards in reading are very high across the school. By seven, most pupils are already able to read a range of texts fluently and accurately. By 11, pupils are able to look for meaning beyond the literal and are very aware of the literary devices being used. They can identify the key points of a text and use examples to support their views. Some attain at a very high level (Level 6) in identifying different layers of meaning; for instance the significance to Willy of learning to ride Zak's bicycle in 'Goodnight Mr Tom'.
6. The particular achievement of the school is not just to attain such high standards in reading, but to develop such an enjoyment and enthusiasm for literature in the pupils. This is very evident in the pupils' reading, and in their response to the group reading. The very good range of carefully chosen literature available is significant in

developing this love of literature, and also important is the teachers' own enthusiasm and knowledge.

7. Standards in writing are also very high across the school. By the age of seven, pupils' writing is already organised, imaginative and clear, and words are already being used for effect. By the age of 11, there are some outstanding pieces of writing in which the literary devices understood in pupils' reading are used to very good effect in their writing. For instance, there are some outstanding pieces retelling the story of the Highwayman poem but written in the style of a modern newspaper. These capture exactly the style and the structure not just of newspapers generally but of the specific local paper.

There is some very good and outstanding teaching from a hard working and dedicated staff

8. In the school as a whole, eight tenths of the teaching is good or better, and over four tenths very good or better. No teaching is unsatisfactory. This is a very strong profile indeed and a significant improvement since the last inspection. The very good teaching encourages the pupils' excellent attitudes, and promotes the high standards. Teaching is particularly strong at the top of each key stage. At the top of Key Stage 1, the teaching is often of the very highest quality and is consistently at a very high level.
9. Across the school, teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and they care for them as individuals. Pupils respond well to this and want to please their teachers. The relationships and care also encourages the pupils' confidence and develops their excellent attitudes. Teachers listen well to their pupils and value their contributions and this encourages pupils to be creative in their thinking because they know their thoughts will be valued. This is particularly evident in the group reading where all adults concerned are willing to listen to and value the pupils' thoughts and ideas rather than just look for 'the right answer'.
10. There are very high expectations of the pupils both in terms of attainment and behaviour. Teachers have a very good focus on the requirements of the National Curriculum and set clear learning objectives for their lessons. In the best lessons, these objectives relate well to what the pupils already know, and are shared with the pupils so that they are aware of what they must do to improve. The use of review techniques in final 'plenary' sessions and the involving of pupils in reviews of their own learning are very effective in helping pupils to be aware of their own progress.
11. There is a generally high intellectual challenge to which the pupils respond well. For instance, in a Year 1/2 lesson, the teacher used terms such as 'distinctive rhythms' and 'compound nouns' and because the teacher is so clear in her explanations, pupils understood these terms and were able to use them to understand the poems they were studying. In a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were studying a speech from a Shakespeare play, and the teachers' very good questioning brought out the layers of meaning. This was very high level of challenge to which pupils responded very well.
12. Teachers make use of a very wide range of very effective teaching techniques. There is particularly good use of paired discussion and co-operation to involve pupils and extend their understanding through talk. The technique also extends

speaking and listening skills and provides good social development. There is a good balance of individual, paired, group and whole-class teaching that meets particular learning needs, and pupils are involved in a very good range of written, research, problem-solving and open-ended situations. This wide range extends learning, increases interest and involvement, and encourages pupils' excellent attitudes to their work.

13. Teachers are very well prepared in their lessons and use good structures to guide learning. They are well supported by some very good ancillary staff and volunteer helpers. The quality of both the preparation and support are well illustrated in the group reading session where the Year 5/6 teacher had prepared not only the texts but also the questions for the parent helpers, who then used these very effectively indeed to promote thought and discussion and to promote learning.

There is an outstanding ethos for learning, and pupils have excellent attitudes towards their work.

14. It is unusual to find a school where there is such a strong ethos for learning. There is a real commitment to attaining the highest standards from pupils, teachers and parents. The commitment is manifest in the way pupils listen to their teachers and apply themselves to their work. The climate for learning is outstanding, all pupils want to get on and there is no peer pressure within which it is not acceptable to succeed. The excellent relationships allow high challenge to be made without causing stress, because all pupils feel valued and supported.
15. Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons and keen to learn. For example, in a Year 3 English lesson, pupils said that writing was their favourite activity and they co-operated particularly well in pairs, discussing each idea before writing to ensure that their story was as good as it could be. Pupils in the Year 5/6 class, engaged in a calculator exercise, were totally absorbed in their conversations, all of which were about their work. Pupils sustain their concentration well and take learning seriously; for instance in discussing the books they are reading .

There are excellent relationships across the school, provision for pupils' personal development is very good and pupils' behaviour is very good.

16. Across the school there are excellent relationships between teachers and pupils, and between the pupils. Teachers show excellent concern for their pupils and provide very good role models of how to relate to others in a caring and valuing way. Even young pupils respond to these examples; for instance, a Year 1 pupil enquired of a classmate whether she had finished her work and then said, "Well done. You have worked hard this morning." Two pupils in the Year 4 class working on fractions together walked over to a larger group to see if they had come up with the solution. "It's harder for us," they pointed out, "Because there's more of you." The larger group was quite happy to help out.
17. There is a structured programme for personal development through 'circle time' for younger pupils and personal, social and health education lessons for older pupils. These make a very effective contribution. Above this there is very effective provision for personal development through the general life of the school. Even

young pupils are given responsibilities and there is a high expectation that they will rise to these. For instance pupils in the Year 1/2 class are allowed to use the computer at breaks to complete their work, and are expected to record for themselves that they have done so. Older pupils have responsibilities such as ringing the school bell which they carry out without prompting.

18. A particular feature of the school is the partnership scheme in which older pupils are matched to younger ones to help them settle into school. This works very well indeed with opportunities being taken in assemblies to reinforce the relationship. Older pupils take very good care of the younger ones and there was one instance in which an older pupil noticed that a younger one was by herself in the playground and went over to her saying, "Are you alright? Would you like me to get your partner for you?" This is a very high standard of care indeed. Such relationships are very rare and very special.
19. Pupils' behaviour is very good across the school, both in class and in the playground. Self-discipline is very successfully encouraged and the systems of control are not overt. Pupils respond to this very well. For instance pupils come in from the playground when the bell sounds without having to be told to do so, or being lined up and supervised. The excellent relationships and very high expectations underpin this very good behaviour.

The close links with parents enhance learning

20. The school has a very close partnership with parents, and this has a very beneficial effect upon pupils' learning. A very high proportion of parents replied to the inspection questionnaire and came to the meeting with the Registered Inspector. They were overwhelmingly supportive of the school, and very pleased with the educational provision that it makes. The school is very open and welcoming to parents and keeps them very well informed through newsletters, workshops and written reports on pupils' progress.
21. Parents take a very active part in supporting pupils' work at home. The school has an effective homework policy and this is fully supported by parents who hear their children read and support them in the other activities they do at home. The homework diaries are completed very helpfully, and there is clearly an ethos in which pupils take their homework very seriously. This close involvement of parents significantly enhances learning.
22. A large number of parents and governors help in classrooms on a regular basis. The support is very well used by the school to enable activities to take place, that might otherwise not be possible. For instance, the group reading scheme for Years 4,5 and 6 depends upon the very high quality of support of a number of parents and governors. This commitment is very significant to the success of the project and is to be commended.
23. There are very active Friends of the School Association that raises a considerable amount of money for the school each year and arranges events that bring the school and community together. This improves the provision that the school can make and enhances its position within the community.

24. Above all, the parents' own very positive views of the school underpin the pupils' excellent attitudes, and their effect upon learning cannot be over-estimated.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school needs to carry out its planned review of the balance of literacy and numeracy across the week.

25. The school plans to review its present timetable of teaching literacy and numeracy as it adjusts to the new National Curriculum starting in September. Such a review is urgent and important as the present balance of time is heavily to numeracy and literacy during the week, and particularly so on Mondays. The emphasis has undoubtedly contributed to the significant increase in the standards in English and mathematics, but it may now be possible to adjust the emphasis whilst maintaining the standards. This would enable the school to fulfil its goal of raising standards in other subjects as well.
26. In its present arrangements, the school does not comply with the national recommendation to teach a daily numeracy lesson. Although its standards are nevertheless very high, this is only the first year of the national strategy, and the long-term effect of ignoring the recommendation needs to be monitored very closely and agreed with the local education authority. The school meets the overall weekly time recommendation for teaching numeracy, particularly for younger pupils, and an adjustment to the timetable would easily allow the daily recommendation to be met.
27. There is a similar situation in English, where the National Literacy Strategy is taught for only three times a week rather than the recommended five. Again, the standards in English have risen recently and are now very high. However, the school has ignored the national recommendation without formal agreement, and needs to consult with its local authority.
28. The three-hour morning sessions are given over to the teaching of numeracy and literacy when the recommendation is for an hour of literacy and less than an hour of numeracy. An adjustment to the timetable would release time for other subjects, or give time for other initiatives such as extended writing or group reading.
29. In many schools, the failure to comply with the national literacy and numeracy recommendations would be a matter of very serious concern, but as the standards are so high in this school a longer view can be taken. However, the school's alternative arrangements need to be formally agreed with the local education authority and monitored very closely indeed.

Overall

30. This is a very good school where the level of pupils' achievement is high. There are very high standards of attainment and behaviour, and pupils make very good progress across the school. This very good progress results from the quality of the teaching together with the pupils' excellent attitudes to their work, and the active support of parents.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	5

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
14	36	36	14	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR -Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	112
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR -Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	14

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	11	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	11
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86	91	100
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	11	11
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	20	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91	100	100
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	4	9	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	3	4
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	13	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100	92	100
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92	92	92
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	117
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27.45

Education support staff: YR - Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	217,559
Total expenditure	212,093
Expenditure per pupil	1,782
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,522
Balance carried forward to next year	8,988

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	122
Number of questionnaires returned	75

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	27	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	40	4	0	5
The teaching is good.	79	19	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	31	8	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	20	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	13	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	71	28	1	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	83	16	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	44	15	3	7