



Walton on the Naze Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115300
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279570
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Stephen Abbott LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Standley Road
School category	Foundation		CO14 8PT
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01255 675657
Number on roll	251	Fax number	01255 851695
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Dr. Jonathan Geldard
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2000	Headteacher	Miss. Diane Jeffries

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Walton-on-the Naze Primary School is a popular primary school of average size. The seasonal tourist industry contributes to above average movement of pupils into and out of the school during the year. The vast majority of pupils are of white British heritage. One in five pupils has learning difficulties and three pupils have statements of special educational needs. Most year groups have more girls than boys. As a result of tragic circumstances at the beginning of the summer 2005 holiday, an acting headteacher was in post during the inspection, and other teachers had taken on new responsibilities. Walton-on-the-Naze Primary School is providing satisfactory education and value for money. This is a notable achievement, given the difficult circumstances. The acting headteacher and the governors are providing effective leadership and all staff are showing a high level of commitment and teamwork. Parents express very strong support for the school. The school evaluates its strengths and weaknesses accurately and satisfactorily identifies priorities for improvement. It has demonstrated its capacity for improvement by raising standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 and addressing gaps in provision for the Foundation Stage. It is now appropriately developing a strategy to improve pupils' writing. The school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils. Its partnerships with other agencies and its involvement in local networks of schools contribute to the good arrangements to promote pupils' personal development and well-being. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has some effective teachers who provide good role models for teaching and learning. Recent circumstances have caused some classes to be allocated to teachers without previous experience of the age-group concerned. As a result the quality of teaching and learning is uneven. Because the Foundation Stage co-ordinator is temporarily deployed in Key Stage 2, her expertise is missing from the reception class and current provision is unsatisfactory. The classroom currently lacks focused zones for developing different areas of learning. This weakness of curricular planning is affecting teaching and learning adversely, though procedures for assessment remain satisfactory.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Walton-on-the-Naze Primary School is providing satisfactory education and value for money. This is a notable achievement, given the difficult circumstances. The acting headteacher and the governors are providing effective leadership and all staff are showing a high level of commitment and teamwork. Parents express very strong support for the school. The school evaluates its strengths and weaknesses accurately and satisfactorily identifies priorities for improvement. It has demonstrated its capacity for improvement by raising standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 and addressing gaps in provision for the Foundation Stage. It is now appropriately developing a strategy to improve pupils' writing. The school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils. Its partnerships with other agencies and its involvement in local networks of schools contribute to the good arrangements to promote pupils' personal development and well-being. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has some effective teachers who provide good role models for teaching and learning. Recent circumstances have caused some classes to be allocated to teachers without previous experience of the age-group concerned. As a result the quality of teaching and learning is uneven. Because the Foundation Stage co-ordinator is temporarily deployed in Key Stage 2, her expertise is missing from the reception class and current provision is unsatisfactory. The classroom currently lacks focused zones for developing different areas of learning. This weakness of curricular planning is affecting teaching and learning adversely, though procedures for assessment remain satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of planning, teaching and learning in the reception class, so that it is clear how children will make progress in all areas of learning.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching so that learning is equally good in all classes, pupils learn to think more effectively for themselves and the more able achieve higher levels.
- Ensure that teachers who are new to their classes or positions of responsibility know what they are expected to achieve and continue to receive the support they need.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are broadly in line with national expectations and the school's own targets, though relatively few progress to the higher levels for their age. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. Detailed analysis of 2004 results, the latest available, shows that no group of pupils achieved significantly more or less than any other. Key Stage 1 and 2 test results were in line with the national average in 2004. Despite a significant improvement in mathematics, provisional 2005 Key Stage 1 results are below average, because of a decline in writing, which also affected Key Stage 2 results. The school is now involved in a project to improve the quality of writing. Standards at the end of

each key stage have declined slowly since 2002, but at Key Stage 2 this is partly explained by a corresponding downward trend in pupils' prior attainment. Recent Key Stage 1 results have been adversely affected by staffing problems. In recent years, standards and progress in the Foundation Stage have been satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' overall personal development is good and provides the large majority with a sound foundation for their future well-being. Most arrive punctually and spend their time in school purposefully. Attendance is satisfactory, but a little below the national figure. In the main, the pupils enjoy their lessons. They behave well in classrooms and about the school, showing care and courtesy for each other and for adults. They have good regard to safety and most engage in suitable physical exercise and make wise choices in eating. Some also make a variety of willing contributions to the school community; for example, as council members or librarians. Pupils have been closely involved in the creation of a garden memorial to their late headteacher. The pupils' social development includes a good grasp of what is right and wrong and older pupils extend their understanding of moral problems in the practical role of 'Problem Busters'. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The sound self-esteem developed by many from their entry to the school grows steadily into an understanding of the need to learn, though older pupils are not always sufficiently inclined to exercise initiative in their work, partly through lack of opportunity. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, but many have only a restricted understanding of the global range of cultural traditions.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, the quality varies from consistently good teaching in four classes to occasional inadequate lessons in others, including the reception class. The inadequate teaching is associated with staff who are new to teaching the age-groups concerned. Their planning is less effective and they do not secure pupils' attention at key moments. Senior staff are providing appropriate support. The commitment of staff, the presence of good role-models and effective teamwork provide the conditions for improvement. The best teaching is based on good knowledge of subjects and planning that meets the needs of all pupils in the class. Pupils concentrate well because they are interested and enjoy what is provided. They are made to think for themselves, a feature largely missing from lessons which are satisfactory rather than good. Teachers use informal assessment to guide their lessons, ensuring that pupils learn well and make rapid progress. Information is gathered by a variety of means and used to set targets and identify under-achievement. Two areas for improvement are already recognised in the school improvement plan. One is that able pupils would benefit from greater challenge to enable more of them

to exceed the expected level in national tests. The other is for class teachers to have greater involvement with the individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, who are currently supported satisfactorily.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall and good in Key Stages 1 and 2. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and statutory requirements are met. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are emphasised to support learning across the curriculum and to enable pupils to develop the skills needed for future well-being. The curriculum has been revised carefully to ensure that, in future, pupils in mixed-age classes do not repeat anything unnecessarily or leave anything out. This is an important improvement since the last inspection. Enrichment activities, visits and visitors are particularly strong features that support teaching in many subjects. As a result, most pupils learn what they should and enjoy their work. In the reception classroom, the deployment of learning resources and the planning of learning opportunities are not good enough to ensure progress in all areas of early learning, despite good advice from the co-ordinator.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The staff provide good support for the pupils through their day-to-day care, commitment to inclusiveness and generally well-informed guidance. Pupils are given good opportunities to explore and learn about a wide range of topics, including safety and relationships. They benefit from a generally good learning environment. The school makes strong contributions to pupils' understanding of factors affecting their health. Where relationships occasionally deteriorate they are successfully and sensitively rebuilt. The school's assessment arrangements have been improved recently. Commercial software is being introduced to set appropriate targets and monitor pupils' progress. A range of helpful intervention measures is being developed for under-achieving pupils. Pupils who have learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and receive suitable degrees of support through additional work with specialist staff. Their work in class, however, is not always informed by sufficiently specific targets. The school's arrangements for safeguarding and protecting pupils are satisfactory, but the new co-ordinator needs to bring her training up to date.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher has made a good start under difficult circumstances and is well supported by her colleagues. Many staff have taken on higher levels of responsibility, including most of the senior management team, and many are coaching their successors. With so many co-ordinators and senior staff being new to their roles or in temporary positions, it is important to clarify what

they are expected to achieve and to maintain support to help them adjust to their new responsibilities. The governors have played a vital role in steering the school through its recent crisis. They hold the school to account and fulfil their responsibilities very well. Financial procedures are sound and spending is regularly compared with similar schools. The local authority also provides good support. Consequently, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and the quality of care and education is being maintained. The school has sufficient suitable staff to ensure the protection of all pupils. It is committed to equality of opportunity, as evident in the arrangements it has made to provide for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. There are good arrangements for monitoring the work of the school, including reviewing pupils' work, analysing test results and examining test scripts to identify common strengths and weaknesses of teaching. Parents, pupils and other stakeholders are consulted. The findings are evaluated satisfactorily. The impact of school improvement measures is satisfactory, and the school has addressed issues identified in its last inspection report.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I visited your school a little while ago with some other inspectors. We wanted to find out how well you are taught and looked after. Thank you for making us so welcome and for answering our questions. You and your parents like the school and we agreed that it does many things well. - Your acting headteacher and the school governors are doing a good job. - The school makes sure that you carry on learning, even when there are problems. - Your teachers know what the school does well and what it needs to make better. They have made improvements since the last inspectors came. - You are kept safe and taught about healthy eating and exercise. - You behave well, help each other and understand right and wrong. - The school teaches you the right things and takes you on interesting trips. - You have some good teachers. We have asked the school to make a few improvements. - The reception class can learn better if a few changes are made. - More lessons should be like the best ones we saw. - Your teachers should get you to think more for yourselves so more of you can get high marks in the national tests. - Teachers should be helped to do their new jobs. You can help your teachers by working hard and behaving well as most of you did during our visit. Thank you again.