



Spixworth First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120896
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 280911
Inspection dates 21 November 2005 to 22 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs. Marina Gough LI

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

Type of school	First	School address	Ivy Road
School category	Community		NR10 3PX
Age range of pupils	4 to 8		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01603898483
Number on roll	172	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Bryan Edwards
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2000	Headteacher	Ms. Catharine Smith

Age group 4 to 8	Inspection dates 21 November 2005 - 22 November 2005	Inspection number 280911
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school caters for pupils between the ages of four and eight who live in Spixworth and neighbouring villages. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, and the socio-economic circumstances of the pupils and their families are largely favourable. Only a small number of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. Levels of mobility are average. The pupils' attainment when they start school varies from year to year but is broadly at the level expected for their age. The school is very active within the local cluster of schools and is involved in a variety of initiatives including being the lead school for a 'Network for Learning' and the 'Well-Being Project' led by the LEA.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that has improved well over recent years because of the headteacher's strong commitment to raising standards. Standards are now above the national average at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing, and pupils of all abilities make good progress in these areas. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory progress, but although standards are broadly average, they could be even higher. The school has correctly identified what needs to be done to raise standards further and the strategies that have been introduced are working well, although they are not yet having their maximum impact. The school makes good provision for the children in the reception classes, and they make good progress in each of the areas of learning. Teaching is good. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning and show good levels of concentration. They behave well, and are kind, sociable and helpful. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for pupils in Year 1 to Year 3. The curriculum for children in the reception classes is good. The school provides good levels of care and support for all pupils, and pupils feel confident about approaching adults with problems or concerns. Parents are generally happy with the school, but would like to be consulted more about key changes. The school has already identified this as an area for development. Because of the strong and purposeful leadership of the headteacher, and the commitment and enthusiasm of other staff, the school is well placed for continued improvement. The headteacher, staff and governing body have made an honest and accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement that closely matches the inspection findings. The school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in mathematics by improving the pupils' problem solving skills.
- More actively seek and consider the views of parents when making key decisions about the life and work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When the children join the school in the reception class, their attainment is broadly at the level expected for their age across all areas of learning. Children of all abilities get off to a good start and make good progress, especially in their personal, social and emotional development. They are well prepared for their transfer to Year 1, having had a good grounding in basic skills of reading, writing and number. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain high standards in reading and writing, and in these areas they make good progress. Pupils of all abilities enjoy reading, and more able pupils read with good levels of fluency and accuracy. In writing, pupils are often imaginative and organise their ideas well. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory progress, and their attainment is average. Although the pupils have good skills of mental arithmetic, and a good understanding of place value, they are not as confident when recording

mathematical ideas on paper, and have difficulty in finding the correct mathematical operation to use when solving word problems.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils of all ages thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their good achievement and their positive attitudes to work. They prosper in an attractive and supportive learning environment, and develop high levels of confidence, self-esteem and independence. Attendance is average. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, and has a significant impact on their personal development, behaviour and attitudes. Relationships at all levels are excellent. The pupils have an excellent understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and lessons and assemblies provide very good opportunities for them to develop spiritual awareness. The pupils enjoy traditional English customs like maypole dancing and are developing a very secure understanding of the cultures and traditions of others. The pupils are encouraged to keep safe and healthy and the school is actively involved in the 'Healthy Journeys to School' programme. Pupils enjoy regular physical education lessons and appreciate the value and impact of taking regular exercise. They regularly support charitable appeals and are beginning to understand the importance of having enough money to buy essentials. The school equips the pupils well for later life by providing good opportunities for team work, encouraging the consideration of the ideas of others, and by ensuring that pupils have good basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching across the school is good, with some outstanding practice. Planning is effective, and teachers focus the pupils' attention on the concepts to be studied by clearly explaining learning objectives at the start of the lesson and then reviewing progress at the end. Teachers generally make skilled use of questioning to check the level of the pupils' understanding and to challenge the more able. Where teaching is at its best, learning is exciting and interactive, and the pupils are given outstanding opportunities to contribute to discussions. Expectations are high and behaviour management strategies are positive and effective, ensuring that all pupils learn at a rapid pace. Teachers and learning support assistants work well as a team and ensure that the needs of all different groups of pupils are met. Where teaching is satisfactory, lessons sometimes lack pace and tasks are routine. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of regular, detailed assessments of the pupils' learning to match work to the needs of individuals and groups. There are outstanding examples of marking in some classes where comments give the pupils a very clear appreciation of the next steps in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum for children in the reception classes is good. There is a good balance of activities the children choose themselves and those that are directed and led by an adult. In the infant and junior classes, the curriculum is satisfactory overall and some good work has been done to link subjects together to make learning more interesting. The school effectively meets the needs of pupils of all abilities. Very good support enables the full integration of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities enabling them to progress well in their learning. The school makes good use of visits and visiting speakers to enliven the pupils' learning and to enhance their understanding of the topics they are studying. A good range of after-school clubs is offered to Year 3 pupils, but at present there are no clubs on offer for younger pupils. The provision for personal and social education is good, and strategies to encourage the health, safety and well-being of pupils have been carefully woven into the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is an inclusive and highly regarded school where staff provide high quality care from the time that pupils enter the reception classes. The school provides good levels of care, support and guidance enabling the pupils to enjoy school and to make progress in their learning within a safe and secure learning environment. Rigorous child protection procedures are well known by staff and are implemented effectively. Risk assessments are completed and ensure that pupils learn in safety. Pupils of all ages feel safe and well looked after, and are comfortable about approaching any adult in the school for advice or to share concerns. Challenging targets ensure that the pupils are focused in their learning, and encourage them to do their best. Although there is no school council at present, the views of the pupils are regularly sought and acted upon. Relationships with parents are generally good, although parents would like to be consulted more widely about key decisions. Good links with external agencies support the pupils' learning well and effectively enhance their personal development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good and are effective in raising standards, improving the quality of teaching and learning, and in moving the school forward. The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership and with the able support of her two senior managers, constantly coaxes the school community to strive for even higher standards. The management is good and the school is a highly organised place that deals with day-to-day activity very effectively. The quality of self-evaluation is good and the work of the school is monitored regularly by staff and governors. As a result, staff have a clear understanding of the strengths and minor areas for improvement that exist. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and there is a good capacity for further improvement. The ethos of the school is very

positive and staff work well together as a team. Governors have a good understanding of their roles, are fully involved in the life of the school and through their various committees make a very valuable contribution to all aspects of school life. Statutory requirements are met with the exception of the need to provide a daily collective act of worship. Financial resources are managed very effectively and are targeted to priorities identified in the school development plan. The school provides good value for money.

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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?	2	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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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	1	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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 am sure that you remember that Mr Boyce and I visited your school a little while ago. Thank you very much for making us so welcome, and for taking the time to share your work with us, and answer our questions. You will be pleased to know that we think that Spixworth First is a good school. You are all very happy to come to school, and enjoy your lessons. You know that you can go to any adult if you have a problem, and we are happy to hear that the school makes sure that you know how to stay safe and healthy both in school and at home. Your teachers plan your lessons well, and always make sure that you know what you have to do. They give you chance at the end of lessons to think about what you have learned, and what you need to do next. You work hard in literacy lessons and do well with your reading and writing. In mathematics, although you can do sums well in your head, you sometimes have difficulty when you are trying to solve problems where you have to write the sum out yourselves. You were keen to talk about the visits that you have made to places of interest, and we were pleased to hear that Year 3 pupils have the chance to attend different clubs after school and at lunchtimes. We think that your headteacher is a good leader who manages the school well. She knows what to do to make the school even better - for example, by setting up the new School Council. Your parents agree with us that the school is doing a good job, but would like more opportunities to put forward their ideas about how the school could improve. When we talked with Ms Smith about this, she explained that she has already talked with the governors about ways of making sure that your parents are more involved in making decisions about the life and work of the school. I wish you every success