



Reffley Community School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120925
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 280916
Inspection dates 24 April 2006 to 25 April 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Joy Richardson LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Reffley Lane
School category	Community		PE30 3SF
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01553671045
Number on roll	553	Fax number	01553 670462
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Ian Kearsley
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Miss. Pamela Foskett

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a very large primary school on a spacious site. It has 548 children on roll aged from three to eleven, including 44 who attend the nursery. There are two or three classes in each year from Reception to Year 6. The school serves the surrounding housing estates on the outskirts of King's Lynn. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average, although social and economic indicators for the area are broadly average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. A few pupils come from a minority ethnic background and several are at an early stage of learning English. There is rather less mobility within the school population than is generally found. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, is around average. Following an unsettled period, the school is being led by an acting headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher, pending the appointment of a permanent headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The school has been through a very difficult period of staff changes and instability in the school's leadership and management. As a result, it has lacked the means to evaluate how well it is doing, to ensure consistency across the school, and to make sure that pupils are achieving as well as they are capable of doing. Although it views its effectiveness as satisfactory, this is not justified because pupils do not make as much progress as they should. Its overall effectiveness is inadequate and it does not provide satisfactory value for money. Children make a good start and achieve well in the Nursery and Reception, because good provision is made for them. Pupils' progress is satisfactory over Years 1 and 2 but pupils do not make as much progress as they should between Years 2 and 6. There has not been a clear overview of pupils' progress across the school as a whole, and sights have not been set high enough for the most able pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but work is not matched closely enough to pupils' abilities. Across the school, the monitoring of teaching and learning and pupils' progress has not been focused enough to ensure consistency, to identify what could be better and to take action where needed. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently appointed acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are developing the school's vision and building teamwork among staff to lead the school forward. Initiatives to remedy weakness in pupils' writing and to track progress more effectively through the school are being put in place. Improvement since the last inspection in 2000 has been satisfactory overall, although interrupted by discontinuity in leadership. The school has the capacity to bring about further improvement, but the recent fragility in the school's leadership means that there is much catching up to do. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to: pupils' achievement and the school's monitoring of its performance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace of pupils' progress between Year 2 and Year 6, tracking pupils' progress each year and taking action where needed.
- Ensure that work in lessons is matched to pupils' capabilities, and that able pupils are challenged to achieve their potential.
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning to build consistency and extend good practice.
- Establish effective processes for the school's self-evaluation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils reach average standards by the time they leave, but they do not make progress fast enough as they move up through the school. Children start in the Nursery with skills which are broadly typical for this age. They make good progress through Nursery

and Reception and achieve good standards by the end of this stage. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. They reach standards which are above average overall. In Year 6, standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science, but pupils do not make as much progress as they should between Year 2 and Year 6. This is evident in the results of Year 6 pupils in 2005, and in the school's assessments of pupils currently in Year 6, as well as in the information being collected for each year group. In particular, higher attaining pupils do not make as much progress as might be expected. Although the school broadly met its targets in 2005, it fell well short in the percentage of pupils reaching a high level in English. Changes in staffing and discontinuity in leadership have meant that progress has not been robustly monitored. The setting of targets has not taken enough account of pupils' starting points and the pace of progress required in each year. Sights are not set high enough for the most able pupils and, in lessons, work is not matched closely enough to the capabilities of different pupils. Although teachers have worked hard with individual classes, there has been a lack of overview to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should from year to year. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make satisfactory progress towards the targets that are set for them. Standards are satisfactory in information and communication technology, and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The personal development and well-being of pupils are satisfactory. Attendance is above average, but there are too many days when pupils are absent without a good reason. Most pupils enjoy school. They demonstrate good attitudes and are caring towards each other. For example, pupils in Year 5 build friendships with younger children when they act as reading partners. Teachers present good role models of politeness, which pupils respond to well, so relationships are nearly always good. Behaviour is generally satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils understand the importance of working together and co-operating with others. They contribute to their classroom rules, bringing their developing knowledge of right and wrong to this activity. The school council involves pupils in thinking about how to make the school better. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of healthy diets, the effects of regular exercise and strategies for keeping themselves safe. They make satisfactory contributions to the community, for example by raising money for charity or singing in the choir. Arrangements for pupils' transfer to secondary schools are satisfactory. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to develop the literacy, numeracy and computer skills which help to prepare them for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and help to ensure that most pupils are well-motivated and work hard. Teachers generally manage classes well. However, a minority of pupils are easily distracted and do not apply themselves fully. This occurs mainly where pupils are not involved actively enough or clear classroom routines are lacking. There is some good teaching throughout the school and teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage. The best teaching is lively and purposeful. It secures pupils' interest and attention and sets high standards. However, teachers do not always match work in lessons, or their expectations of what should be achieved, to pupils' different abilities. Pupils often do very similar work which is not hard enough for the higher attaining pupils. There are times when learning is restricted because pupils are not involved sufficiently. Teachers provide answers too readily, rather than helping pupils to discuss and to work things out themselves. Teachers take care to ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn in lessons. Pupils are also becoming increasingly well informed about the targets for their learning. However, some are still unsure about their targets and the steps needed to achieve them. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but do not consistently focus on how the work can be improved, or the progress being made. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning, providing good support for lower attaining pupils. Teachers involve teaching assistants effectively in planning for and assessing pupils' learning. There is some monitoring of teaching and learning through the observation of lessons. This has not focused enough on identifying areas for improvement across the school as a whole, to ensure consistency and extend good practice. Until very recently, the school did not have the means to track pupils' progress through the school and to question whether it was good enough. The school is now beginning to do this, and to involve all staff in regularly checking the progress being made. As a result, current work to raise standards in writing is having a positive impact. The school recognises that there is more to be done to track progress consistently over time, to identify where progress is slow, and to lift expectations for higher attaining pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory in its breadth and balance. The curriculum in Nursery and Reception is well designed to promote learning at this age. Across the school, teachers work together in teams to plan pupils' learning, ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all. Good links are made between subjects, for example developing pupils' writing skills through writing on a wide range of topics. Additional programmes in literacy and mathematics provide effective support for lower attaining pupils. There is a satisfactory range of additional activities. These include badminton and basketball clubs, led by parents who are qualified coaches. The school provides a good range of educational visits, including a residential experience in Years 3 to 6. Some good

opportunities are provided in music. Pupils appreciate the school's attractive and spacious grounds, which provide many opportunities for play and for learning about the natural environment. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily across the curriculum. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for pupils. Staff ensure that children are safe and give them suitable guidance about how to keep healthy. Child protection arrangements are clearly understood by all staff and they are regularly reviewed. Pupils are confident that they could talk to an adult if they had any concerns. Risk assessments are attended to carefully. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are cared for well and supported effectively. A number of parents have expressed concerns that their children are not achieving as well as they could, and that progress is not consistent. The school is responding to this and implementing systems for monitoring children's progress more rigorously. Pupils are becoming involved in evaluating their work, and in formulating their own targets. A good start has been made in the use of targets and the monitoring of progress, although systems are not yet fully established.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection in 2000 and has the capacity to improve further. However, there has been a period of significant disruption in the school's leadership and management. Despite the best efforts of staff, this has held the school back in developing purposeful evaluation and implementing plans for improvement. The acting headteacher and acting deputy now have a clear mandate to lead the school forward until a permanent headteacher can be appointed. They recognise that there is much to be done. In a short time, they have introduced a number of initiatives to develop the use of assessment data, to foster teamwork and consistency, and to broaden leadership within the school. Parents have confidence in the school's current leadership, which is well known and trusted. Staff appreciate the lead that they are now being given in working together for improvement. The school's evaluation of its own performance is unsatisfactory because it is at an early stage of development, reflecting discontinuity in the school's leadership and management. Staff and governors, parents and pupils have yet to be widely involved, but the school's leadership is beginning to work effectively to provide direction for the whole school community. The vision of 'being the best that we can be', though yet to be realised, is becoming a shared goal for staff and pupils. Governors provide satisfactory support in working towards this goal.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	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?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	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?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	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?	3	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	4	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	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

Thank you for being friendly and welcoming when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing your work. Many of you told us that you like your school and find learning fun. It was good to hear about the interesting visits you go on. You are lucky to have so much space for playing and we are glad that you take an interest in growing plants around the school. We think that you do well in science. You are also working hard to make your writing better and we enjoyed reading what you had written. We heard in assembly that you sing well too. Your headteacher and all the staff are working hard to help you learn. They want you 'to be the best that you can be' and they are looking for ways of helping you to be just that. We think that some of you could learn faster and do harder work in lessons, and we want your targets to give you a real challenge. We are asking your teachers to check whether you are learning well enough, and to make sure that you know how to improve your work. Everyone will be working together to make your school even better and to help each of you do as well as you possibly can.