



Nelson First School, Norwich

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120946
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 280924
Inspection dates 17 October 2005 to 18 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs. Marina Gough LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Northumberland Street
School category	Community		NR2 4DR
Age range of pupils	4 to 8		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01603620344
Number on roll	159	Fax number	01603660345
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Grayham Forsythe
Date of previous inspection	22 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs. Carole Shildrake

Age group 4 to 8	Inspection dates 17 October 2005 - 18 October 2005	Inspection number 280924
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of two Additional Inspectors over a period of two days. in

Description of the school

Most of the children who attend the school live within walking distance. A higher than average number of children are known to be eligible for free school meals, and there are pockets of social deprivation in the local area. The children's ability when they start school is poor for their age, especially in terms of their language and social skills. About one third of children have special educational needs, and a small number are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The school was recently awarded the Investors in People Award, and the 'Well-Being' Logo.

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 gives good value for money, and is well placed for further improvement. The headteacher provides a good lead, and has done much to improve the school since her appointment two years ago. Progress since the last inspection has been good. Together with the staff and governing body the headteacher has made a clear analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This honest evaluation closely matches the inspection findings and shows that the school knows itself well. There are very high levels of parental satisfaction. Children of all ages and abilities make good progress, often from a very low starting point. In Year 1 - Year 3, they do particularly well in science, a subject that many children really enjoy. However, they do less well in reading, which few children see as a pleasurable activity. Standards at the end of Year 2 are slightly below average in reading, average in writing and mathematics, and above average in science where the children show a good aptitude for solving problems and for finding out information. In the reception classes, children make very good progress in developing their social skills, and make good progress in the other areas of learning. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers provide many exciting activities which capture the children's interest. In the main, activities are well matched to the children's abilities, but some recording tasks in geography and history are too demanding for children with learning difficulties. Children throughout the school behave well, and enjoy coming to school. However, a small but significant number of children are frequently absent, and this affects their progress. The children are well cared for, and their well-being, health and safety are the shared concern of governors and staff. The school does much to promote the children's physical, personal and social development, and to give them a sense of citizenship.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards in reading by getting more children to read for pleasure; - match work more closely to the children's ability in all subjects so that the children can finish the tasks they have been given in the time allocated; - improve attendance for the group of children who are persistently absent by working closely with their parents.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The children's attainment when they start school is well below the level expected for their age, especially in the areas of language and social development. Many of the children have only a very limited vocabulary, and find it difficult to process information. Their social skills are weak, and in the early days in school they have much to learn about how to work with others and how to concentrate on the activities that are provided. Although they make good progress overall, and very good progress in their social and emotional development, the children's attainment at the end of the reception year is below the age expected level. In Year 1 - Year 3, the children make good progress overall. In mathematics and writing, the children's attainment is at the level expected

for their age, and higher attainers are very well challenged and stretched by some of the tasks that are provided. In science, where there is a very good emphasis placed on the children learning through investigation, standards are good, and the children have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. In reading, the overall picture of standards is affected by the high number of children who have special educational needs and for whom reading is a problem. Standards are slightly below the national average, and the school recognises the need to continue with its strategies for improving the quality of reading.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The children's personal development is good. The school values the children as individuals, and their enjoyment of school is seen in their enthusiasm for learning, and their good behaviour. The children say that they feel safe, and know that they can approach any adult with a problem or to share some good news. The School Council works very well, and the members show great pride in their achievements, and appreciate the way in which the school listens to, and considers their ideas. The deputy headteacher thoughtfully and skilfully helps the School Council to put its ideas into practice. Although attendance is satisfactory overall, a number of children are persistently absent and this has a detrimental effect on their learning. The school has introduced a range of strategies to improve attendance, but they have had only limited success. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children learn to understand and express their feelings, and to make a distinction between right and wrong. They are interested in the beliefs and customs of others. The school works hard to help the children to develop skills of citizenship, and the children make a good contribution to the local community, for example when the choir and recorder groups take part in local events. The children have a good understanding of the need for maintaining a healthy and safe lifestyle. The school provides an outstanding road safety programme, drawing on the expertise of an outside agency.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. In the reception classes teachers and support staff are highly effective in the way in which they foster the children's social and emotional development, gently encouraging the children to work co-operatively, to make choices and decisions and to talk about what they are doing. Good use is made of ongoing observations to ensure that the children are making the progress that is expected, and that they are suitably challenged by the activities that are provided. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, teaching is characterised by clear expectations of what the children can and should achieve, and by the use of well-focused questions which really extend the children in their thinking. Teachers value and celebrate the children's ideas so that children of all abilities have high levels

of self-esteem and confidence. Behaviour is very well managed in a calm and pleasant manner. Activities are exciting and there is good emphasis on the children learning through practical experience. At times, written tasks are too demanding for some of the least able children, and as a result there are unfinished pieces of writing in their topic books. In science, where there is more scope for the children to use charts, planning grids and diagrams to explain their ideas, children of all abilities enjoy the pleasure of successfully completing a given task. Teachers make regular assessments of what the children know and can do, and they know the children very well. They use written records well to track the children's progress and to identify those who need support and those who can be stretched further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides an exciting and stimulating curriculum for children of all ages. In the reception classes there is a good balance of activities that the children choose themselves and those that are directed by an adult. Very good emphasis on the development of personal and social skills helps the children to quickly learn the routines of the school, to develop good learning habits and to stay safe and healthy. Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children receive a well balanced curriculum that provides them with good opportunities to use and apply their skills of literacy and numeracy, and which encourages them to find things out for themselves. Older children think that the work they are given is 'fun', and they are very enthusiastic when talking about the wide and varied range of after-school clubs that run throughout the year, and the educational visits they make to places of interest. The provision for children with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good, enabling them to take a full and active role in all activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good levels of support, care and guidance for all children. Governors play a good role in ensuring that health and safety requirements are met. Child protection procedures are well understood by staff, and teachers and support staff are vigilant of the children in their care. The school works closely with parents so that concerns can be quickly resolved and so that the children are happy to come to school. Children are encouraged to do well and to achieve their potential. As a result, they enjoy their learning, especially the more able children who respond very well to being given 'hard work'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher, who has been in post for two years, has done much since her appointment to take the school forwards. Her leadership skills, and those of the deputy headteacher are good,

and together they have very successfully tackled some key areas of weakness. The headteacher has worked closely with staff to develop their leadership roles, and is now at the point of being able to confidently delegate some leadership and management responsibilities. The governing body is supportive and is keen to develop its role further. However, many governors are new, and their role in monitoring the school's work is therefore at an early stage of development. Governors have worked closely with the headteacher and local education authority to formulate a clear and sensible strategic plan to deal with the budget problems which came to light soon after the current headteacher's appointment. Although funding is for the moment tight, spending is well prioritised and is kept within the limits of the set budget. The school has made an honest and accurate appraisal of its relative strengths and weaknesses, which closely reflects the inspection findings. Areas for development are clearly identified within a good quality school improvement plan which is a useful working document. The school consults widely before making important changes, and parents are very pleased with the approachability of the school, and the way it responds to their comments and suggestions. There is a strong team spirit amongst staff and the school is well placed for continued and further improvement.

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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	3	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	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	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?	2	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	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	3	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

You may remember that Mr Fry and I visited your school a little while ago. Thank you very much for talking to us and for making our visit so enjoyable. Most of you work hard and do your best. You told us how much you like science and mathematics, because you like exploring new ideas, and we were pleased to hear this. You also told us that you are not very keen on reading. This is a pity because it means that your reading is not as good as it could be. We know that Mrs Shildrake and the teachers are going to come up with some fun ideas to make reading more exciting for you. Your work in your science books is lovely, and shows you really know how to make predictions and to carry out investigations. In your geography and history books though, we noticed that sometimes your work is not finished. We have asked the teachers to make sure that they give you more time to do your writing. We know that you like your teachers and lessons. Even so, some of you are often away from school, and this means that you miss some important work. We have asked Mrs Shildrake to come up with more ways of encouraging you to come to school every day, and we would be pleased if you could help her with this. We were pleased to see how well you get on with one another, and how friendly you are. Mr Fry really enjoyed the School Council meeting, and the 'buddy stops' sound like they will be a good idea for when you haven't got a special friend to play with. You told us that you can go to any adult if you have a problem, and that you feel safe in school. This is good. We also saw how much you enjoyed the work you did with the road safety officer, and were pleased that you understood how to be safe when crossing the road. You will not be surprised when I tell you that we think that this is a good school and that Mrs Shildrake is a good headteacher. There are many things that your teachers and Mrs Shildrake are doing well, and a few things which they need to make even better.