



Overstrand, the Belfry, Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121123
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 280936
Inspection dates 28 September 2005 to 29 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Anthony Knight LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cromer Road
School category	Voluntary aided		NR27 0NT
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01263579275
Number on roll	129	Fax number	01263579275
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Gordan Partridge
Date of previous inspection	27 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Stuart Brookes

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 28 September 2005 - 29 September 2005	Inspection number 280936
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by Anthony Knight HMI.

Description of the school

Overstrand, The Belfry Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a small school situated in the village of Overstrand, just outside Cromer in Norfolk. Pupils come from the village and neighbouring areas and live in owner-occupied or rented accommodation. There are 129 pupils on roll. There are no pupils whose first language is not English and fewer pupils than are found nationally are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special needs is below average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is in line with the national average. The school is going through a period of considerable disruption as new school buildings are being built on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Overstrand, The Belfry Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School correctly judges its overall effectiveness as satisfactory because while there are many positive features, other aspects require more development. The school is very welcoming. Pupils are well cared for and positive values are consistently shared, developed and celebrated. All pupils behave very well and are polite and courteous. They are keen to contribute more to the work of the school. Good provision is made for pupils in their Reception Year and they settle quickly. Standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Achievement and standards in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are satisfactory. The quality of teaching is varied and is satisfactory overall. While there is some very good teaching there are occasions when time is not used effectively. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Important developments have been started this year that will help to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching. However, progress since the last inspection has been slow. Insufficient attention has been given to checking the quality of teaching and learning. The curriculum is inadequate because information and communication technology (ICT) does not receive enough attention, and the recommended minimum hours of teaching time are not being met. However, there are sensible plans to increase the length of the school day. The building works taking place in the school grounds have clearly inhibited progress particularly over the past year. Staffing issues have also had to be resolved. Some parents feel that the school does not communicate with them well enough. The headteacher and governing body are fully aware of the need for more urgent action and demonstrate the capacity to make the necessary improvements. Overall the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching through effective monitoring procedures so that good practice can be shared and appropriate support given.
- Improve the provision for ICT and physical education.
- Increase the contribution of senior staff and subject leaders.
- Involve parents and pupils more fully in the development of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Overall, standards at Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the national average although the percentages of pupils achieving the higher levels are below the national averages. At Key Stage 2, standards rose in 2005 following a fall in the previous year. It should be noted that the number of pupils taking the tests is relatively small and such fluctuations are normal. However, the tracking of pupils' attainment from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 highlights that some pupils do not make as much progress as that expected nationally. The 2005 Key Stage 2 targets for pupils achieving Level 4 and above were met in English and mathematics. The Level 5 target was just missed in both subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are generally very positive about the school and are keen to attend. However, the level of attendance has decreased, largely as a result of holidays taken in term-time, and is now broadly in line with the national average. The school has appropriate strategies to improve attendance but would benefit from more support from the education social worker. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils feel safe and know where to go when they need help. The church ethos of the school is seen clearly and positive values are effectively developed and celebrated through a well-planned programme of themes based on common class rules. Behaviour is good, but games in the playground can be over-boisterous as some pupils feel the need to 'let off steam' when they leave their classrooms. Some pupils also find it difficult to focus their attention back onto work when they return to the classroom. The pupils' awareness of social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues is raised well through assemblies and the teaching of personal, social and health education. The pupils also participate in a range of community events. Most pupils have a sound understanding of the benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle, although some items on sale during the morning break are not healthy options. Pupils do not have enough formal opportunities to express their views about the school and are keen to contribute more directly to its ongoing development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is varied but is satisfactory overall. There is some very good teaching but there are occasions when the time is not used effectively. Work is carefully planned but the activities are not always sufficiently matched to pupils' abilities. Although teachers are clear what they want pupils to learn, too much work is aimed at the whole class so that while some pupils are unchallenged, others find the work too difficult. However, the skilful use of well-judged questions lifts the quality of work considerably. The pupils enjoy personal challenge and discovering that they can do even better. Working relationships are always good and teaching assistants provide good support particularly in one-to-one situations and in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage. The pupils are captivated by stimulating teaching which stretches their thinking and encourages them to try out new ideas. Marking is conscientious although comments often give praise without indicating how the work could be improved further. Some marking is excellent; colour coded comments clearly tell the pupils what they have done well and what they could do better, but this does not happen in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum is inadequate overall, because concerns raised at the time of the previous inspection have not been addressed. The provision for ICT is still inadequate and the minimum recommended time for teaching has not been reached. However, the planned changes to the length of the day will enable the school to achieve the minimum recommended time. The school is aware that the two-year curriculum programme requires revision to ensure that there is sufficient focus on systematically building knowledge and skills in each curriculum area. The provision for physical education has suffered as a result of the building programme. Constant attention is needed to ensure all pupils receive regular and appropriate physical exercise. The pupils are keen to participate in extra-curricular activities. A good range of opportunities is provided by staff, governors and parents. An analysis of attendance shows that these are accessible for all pupils and well-attended. Clubs include choir and recorders, drama, country dancing, football, rugby and cricket.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

All pupils are well supported pastorally. Teachers know the pupils in their class very well and work hard to ensure that every pupil is at ease. Considerable skill and care is shown by teachers in the classes where pupils are less settled because of previous instability in teaching. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are also well cared for by their class teachers and by the teaching assistants. However, the quality and extent of support for these pupils is variable. While teachers write clear individual action plans for them, the activities are not always well matched to their ability. The special educational needs co-ordinator does not systematically review the provision to see whether it is effective in helping pupils to learn well. Some parents are rightly concerned about the quality of lunchtime support. The school is aware that more work is required to achieve a more unified approach that matches the caring ethos of the school. The extent to which pupils feel informed about their progress varies. In one class, simple tests are used very effectively to provide detailed information that pupils can use to improve their work, but this does not happen throughout the school. The records of the pupils' achievements in the Foundation Stage are excellent. Comprehensive information is supported impressively by well-selected photographs that illustrate positive features of each pupil's work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Some important developments have been achieved over the last year, although there has been insufficient progress in many of the issues raised in the last inspection report. One area where progress has been made is in the improvement of the accommodation through the building of a new school. However, this area of success has worked against progress in the other

areas. The necessary management of the rebuild has dominated the time and energy of the headteacher from the start of his appointment in September 2004. Instability of staffing has also inhibited progress. There are now clear records of pupils' attainment so that progress will be able to be tracked more easily and work planned more effectively. Staffing issues have been resolved and there is now a dedicated team of staff that work very well together. There is a realistic view of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. For example, there is clear awareness of the urgent need to develop ways of checking the quality of education that the school provides and how well pupils learn as a result. The roles and contributions of the deputy headteacher and subject leaders also need to be developed. The school is fully committed to revising the school development plan to reflect and prioritise the issues raised in this report. Governors are active and have designated areas of responsibility. For example, they have been involved in the review of the Foundation Stage. A significant minority of parents is concerned about the quality of communication they have with the school and governors are considering new ways of ensuring that all feel more involved. For example, they are considering introducing governor surgeries where parents can meet different governors at designated times during the term to discuss issues of concern. The governing body is aware of the need for more critical analysis of the progress of the school. There is an active 'Friends of the Belfry' that works hard to support the school. The education authority has provided some helpful support but this has been insufficient to help the school progress quickly.

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?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	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	No	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	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?	4	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	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	No
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

Dear Pupils I enjoyed visiting your school and watching you learn and play together. I particularly enjoyed talking with you about your work. What I liked most about your school I found that your school welcomed me and that you were very polite and helpful. I noted that you are very kind and considerate towards each other at playtime. The teachers look after you well and make sure that you are happy. What I have asked your school to do now I want the teachers to make sure that you all do as well as you possibly can because I feel that some of you could do even better in lessons. I have asked your headteacher to make sure that you all learn to use ICT and have regular physical education lessons. I have asked your headteacher to make sure that you and your parents are involved in helping make the school even better. Yours sincerely
Lead inspector Anthony Knight HMI