



Brancaster Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121131
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 280938
Inspection dates 12 January 2006 to 12 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Godfrey Bancroft LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Market Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		PE31 8AB
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01485210246
Number on roll	47	Fax number	01485210246
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Sophie de Winton
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Linda Hothersall

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small rural primary school where children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding which are typical for their age. The socio-economic circumstances of the community are broadly average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is average as is the number of pupils with special educational needs. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is low. No pupils speak English as an additional language.

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 is highly regarded by parents and the community and in which pupils enjoy learning. This overall judgement agrees with the school's evaluation of its own performance. Pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities achieve well. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average, but the school does not have a sufficiently structured approach for teaching pupils to spell correctly. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress and the provision for their learning is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. Sometimes, towards the end of lessons, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to talk about what they have learned and what they need to do to improve. The care of all pupils is very good. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils who have learning difficulties very effectively. The needs of those who are gifted and talented are also met well. The curriculum is good and there is a very good range of additional activities to enhance pupils' learning. The leadership of the headteacher is good. Governors are very supportive and well-informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school provides good value for money. The issues raised by the last inspection have been addressed successfully. Improvement since that time is good and the school is well placed to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop a structured approach to help the pupils to improve their spelling. - Use the final part of lessons to provide more opportunities for pupils to discuss what they have learned and what they need to do to improve further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The achievement of pupils from all backgrounds and abilities is good. Pupils who have learning difficulties do well. In Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average. Over the last four years standards at the end of Year 6, with some slight year-on-year variations, have been broadly average. However, pupils have tended to do better in reading and mathematics than in writing. The school has responded well to this problem and there is clear evidence that, because of good teaching, standards in writing are improving. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Years 3 to 6 are improving. The school did not have any pupils of the age to do the Year 6 tests in 2005. In the current Year 6, more pupils than in recent years are on course to attain the higher Level 5, in English, mathematics and science, and standards are above average. The school sets suitably challenging targets for pupils' attainment. These targets indicate that the pattern of improvement is likely to continue in the next few years. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are good and they respond thoughtfully during discussions and when answering questions. High standards are also evident in some other subjects, such as art and design, geography, history and religious education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies and visits to the nearby church contribute well to these aspects of their development. The school also works effectively to ensure that pupils are aware of the beliefs and traditions of people from other cultural backgrounds. Pupils work very hard during lessons and apply themselves very well. The school is very good at helping pupils to become increasingly sensible and mature. Older pupils are good at working independently and they sustain their interest in their work very well. Pupils behave very well and are caring and supportive towards each other. Attendance is average and pupils are rarely absent for unacceptable reasons. Pupils clearly enjoy their learning. The school works very effectively to promote pupils' awareness of how to be safe and how to take good care of themselves. It also provides them with good opportunities to take exercise and develop their understanding of the need to eat healthily. Pupils are very aware of how they can make a positive contribution to their community. They are also sensitive to the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. This was exemplified in the generosity with which they supported the Asian tsunami appeal. They also acquire the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are outstanding, enabling pupils to become increasingly confident learners. Teachers plan their lessons well, ensuring that activities are matched well to the full range of ages and abilities in each class. Teaching assistants work very effectively and are very well informed about the pupils whose learning they support. This applies particularly to the support they provide for pupils who have learning difficulties. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good. Teaching for the youngest pupils is effective at helping them to recognise the sounds made by letters and the first part of words. However, the school does not have a sufficiently structured approach for teaching pupils to spell correctly. Teachers use questions effectively to challenge pupils to think for themselves and to extend their understanding. Teachers also provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening abilities. This enables pupils to respond thoughtfully to questions. Sometimes, in the latter part of lessons, teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to talk about what they have learned and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It meets the legal requirements for teaching the National Curriculum and religious education. Good attention is given to development of pupils'

basic skills in literacy and numeracy and there are good opportunities for pupils to use computers to enhance their learning. Pupils are also enabled to make good use of the opportunities provided to develop their creative skills in subjects such as art and design and music. There is a very good range of extra activities, including opportunities for pupils to sail, to play golf, and to enjoy educational visits. These support pupils' learning well in subjects such as geography, physical education and religious education. The range of additional sports activities is very good, helping pupils to be fit and healthy. Links with the community are also very good, including those with local churches.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides very good care for all the pupils. In addition to ensuring their academic progress it contributes very effectively to their personal and social development. Very good support is provided for pupils who have learning difficulties. The needs of pupils who are gifted and talented are identified at an early stage and are met very well. The school has responded well to addressing the 'Every Child Matters' agenda and works effectively to ensure all pupils benefit from this. The governing body has a good range of policies to manage all aspects of provision for health and safety and ensures these are put into practice. The school is very good at ensuring that parents and carers are well informed about how their pupils are getting on. It also has very good systems for checking on pupils' progress and responding to their needs. Pupils are aware of the targets that are set for their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership of the headteacher is good and provides a clear sense of direction. She promotes an environment in which pupils learn with enthusiasm and achieve well. She also ensures that the staff are supported well and enabled to work effectively. The governing body are very supportive and their work is greatly appreciated by the headteacher and staff. Many governors are regular visitors to the school and they are well-informed about its strengths and weaknesses. Governors manage the school's financial affairs well and ensure that the available resources are used wisely. For example, they have improved the quality of accommodation and ensured that pupils' learning is supported well by a good number of teachers and teaching assistants. Governors fulfil their role of 'critical friend' to the headteacher and staff. Arrangements for the headteacher and governors to evaluate the quality of provision and to contribute to the school's self-evaluation are good. There is a very clear school improvement plan, which provides a clear link between the priorities for development and the expectations of how well pupils will achieve, especially in writing and in science. The headteacher and governors work very effectively to ensure that parents and carers are well informed about the work of the school. Parents and carers think the school is very good and they hold the headteacher in high regard. The school is becoming increasingly popular and many parents and carers choose to send their pupils from outside its traditional catchment area.

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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	3	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?	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	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?	1	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

Thank you for helping me during the inspection. I think that your school is good. I know that you and many of your parents, carers and members of your community think so too. I think your behaviour is very good. You are also very good at caring for and helping each other. I particularly like the ways in which you all work hard in lessons and try to do your best. The ways in which you answer questions thoughtfully and join in discussions is very good. Your teachers and teaching assistants are good at helping you to do well. The staff are also very good at taking care of you and making sure you are safe. Your headteacher and school governors are good at finding ways of improving your school and at making sure that everything works well. They also spend your school's money very wisely. There are some things that your headteacher, the staff and governors will be doing to make things even better. They will be finding ways to help you to improve your spelling. They will also be giving you more opportunities, towards the end of lessons, to discuss what you have learned and what you need to do to improve further. Well done.