



Lakenheath Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124539
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281746
Inspection dates 6 June 2006 to 7 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Robert McKeown HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Mill Road
School category	Community		IP27 9DU
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01842860256
Number on roll	200	Fax number	01842861940
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Derek Banks
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs. Nicola Harrison

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Lakenheath is an average sized community primary school situated in a village in Suffolk which is close to two US air bases. Most children are from White British backgrounds, although a significant minority come from the USAF families. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is low. The number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is typical for this size of school. A small number of children are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. Many children start school with standards which are below those expected for their age. The headteacher has led the school for four years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Lakenheath Community Primary School provides children with a satisfactory education. There have been a number of improvements made since the last inspection but in the words of the current headteacher, 'there is still much work to be done'. Parents' views of the school are mostly positive although a small proportion of the questionnaires returned to the inspection team identified some aspects that they would like to see improve. The leadership team and governors have encountered a number of challenges in the last year which has slowed down the rate of improvement. These are now mostly resolved and the school is ready to move forward positively. The school provides satisfactory value for money. At Lakenheath most children make satisfactory progress. They receive a suitable start in the Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress, although many children leave the Foundation Stage with skills which are below the expected level. Children make good progress when they are in Years 1 and 2. The results in national tests in Year 2 have improved in three of the last four years and were above expected levels in 2005. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory overall but children make better progress in the classes where the teaching is more effective. As a result, the standards reached at the end of Year 4 are not as high as they could be. The progress of some children in Year 3 has been slowed by inadequate teaching and the school has taken steps to remedy this. Expectations for the way children present their work are too low in some classes and too many books are untidy and contain careless mistakes. Most children say they enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure when they are there. Relationships between adults and children are good and children report feeling confident about sharing any problems they may have. Some children say that there are occasions when the behaviour of a few is unacceptable but that staff deal with this successfully. The loss of 'golden time' is a sanction that children hold in high regard. Behaviour was one issue highlighted on a small number of questionnaires returned by parents but no incidents of unacceptable behaviour were seen during the inspection. Children's views are represented well in school council meetings and the elected representatives have been involved in discussing improvements such as encouraging children to eat more healthily at lunchtime and generating ideas for more play equipment for the playground. The school strongly promotes the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and good improvements have been made in the lunchtime menus. The investment made in improving the facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) has proved a positive benefit in developing children's computer skills. Attendance is improving but is still below the level expected. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and leadership team are clear about what requires improvement and are trying to raise standards further. Curriculum subject leadership has improved since the time of the last inspection but is still not effective enough. Suitable improvements are planned for the systems by which teachers keep checks on children's achievement. The current arrangements are not precise enough to enable the school's leadership team to keep a close eye on the progress made by all children. The governing body is experiencing a period of transition with recent and impending changes in membership. Governance

is satisfactory. Although governors give the headteacher and staff their support, their role in evaluating the school's effectiveness needs sharpening.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons and increase the proportion that is consistently good or better. - Set up an effective system for tracking children's progress that enables teachers and leaders to identify underachievement and any weaknesses in teaching and learning. - Expect more from children in the presentation of their work so that the quality is consistently good in all classes. - Track absences more thoroughly, raise expectations for and promote full attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, standards and achievement are satisfactory, although they vary across the school. Many children enter and leave the Foundation Stage with skills which are below the expected level. In 2005, the overall profile at the end of the Reception year was lower than the average for all schools in Suffolk with boys doing considerably less well. Children make good progress in Years 1 and 2. The results in the national tests in 2005 were above expected levels. Results in the 2006 tests are not expected to be as high but progress for these children has been good. Progress is not as good in Years 3 and 4. The results in Year 4 in 2005 indicated satisfactory progress for children in reading and writing but less than expected progress in mathematics. Improving standards in mathematics is a school priority. The targets set for the current Years 3 and 4 are ambitious and on the evidence seen in some lessons and in work in children's books they will do extremely well to meet them. Some of the teaching in Year 3 is not good enough to enable children to continue to make satisfactory progress. Insufficient emphasis is placed on monitoring closely the progress children make and on ensuring suitable intervention is taken should progress slow down. Progress for children with specific needs is satisfactory; the arrangements for setting targets for children with learning difficulties are good in most year groups. Children whose first language is not English are making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Provision for children's personal development and well-being is satisfactory and in some respects good. Attitudes and behaviour in the lessons observed were always at least satisfactory and good when the children were kept busy by purposeful teaching. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is suitable and is enhanced by the social and cultural links with the American families attached to the local air bases. Visits to the school's nature garden give children the chance to find out about living things and marvel at the wonders of the insect world; this adds a spiritual dimension to their learning. Healthy lifestyles are promoted positively with fresh fruit eaten at morning break times and drinking water available. Older children have the

chance to learn to cycle safely and the school has the bonus of having its own learner swimming pool. Attendance rates are broadly average and some children are granted more than the recommended holiday entitlement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with good teaching in Years 1 and 2 but some inadequate teaching in Year 3. In many lessons, especially in Years 1 and 2, teachers plan learning that meets the needs of the range of learners or ask focused questions to probe children's understanding and move learning forward. In some classes, this is not the case and most children do the same work regardless of their ability. As a result, the more able children are not challenged to do better and the less able children find the work too hard. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to interest children and keep them engaged in lessons. Children often work with a partner and this enables them to share ideas and to rehearse what they want to say. Self-assessment strategies are being used effectively in some classes, such as 'thumbs up or down' for children to say whether they think they have learned what they should. Learning targets are not used consistently well in all classes to challenge thinking, focus marking and help children know how to improve. Teaching assistants are well-trained and included in planning meetings and so most give good guidance and support to children when they work in groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum planning is satisfactory and ensures learning gets harder as children move up through the school, although too much focus is placed on what children will do rather than what they will learn. The decision to link subjects under topic headings is resulting in more interesting lessons which children say they enjoy. This was evident in an excellent lesson when children's designing and making of shields in art and design were supporting learning about castles in history. Planning in the Foundation Stage ensures the curriculum is broad; the outdoor learning area is a new and an improving resource that is used effectively to support learning. Opportunities for children to use literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are satisfactory overall. The use of ICT to support and enrich learning is good and results in good progress especially in Years 1 and 2. Enrichment opportunities are good. A varied range of visits and visitors makes a strong contribution to children's awareness of the wider world. The number and variety of lunchtime clubs are satisfactory but there is very little provision for children after school. The nature garden is used well to bring learning to life in some aspects of science.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care arrangements are good. Children are well-supervised and looked after if they need help or support. Child protection procedures are secure and are constantly under review to ensure their effectiveness. Checks to ensure children are kept healthy and safe are followed conscientiously by all staff. Systems to ensure statutory checks are made to confirm the suitability of staff and volunteers are satisfactory. Support and guidance for children's learning are satisfactory. However, not all teachers use targets effectively to guide learning and teaching. Some marking does not give children enough guidance on what they need to do to improve their work. Tracking and support for children with specific needs are good and enable them to make at least satisfactory progress. There is no specific provision for talented children although extension classes are planned in mathematics as part of the developing links with partner schools.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The current school improvement plan gives details of the development priorities but needs to be clearer about the likely impact of any actions taken. The monitoring of teaching and learning undertaken by the headteacher has helped to improve the quality of teaching in some classes and also tackle persistently inadequate teaching, much of which has now been removed. There remain some aspects of teaching which require improvement, such as ensuring the management and organisation of classrooms meets the agreed standard. Time has been set aside for monitoring and evaluation by subject leaders. This has not yet resulted in higher standards in all subjects because even when subjects are monitored and improvement priorities identified, not all teachers put these into practice. Appropriate procedures have been developed for the performance management of all staff. Regular training is provided for teaching assistants to ensure their continued effectiveness. Day to day management of the school is supported well by effective office administrators. Accommodation is satisfactory and recently improved with a computer suite and better outdoor facilities for Foundation Stage children. The governing body is relatively inexperienced but keen to see the school do well. It is providing the school with satisfactory support.

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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?	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	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?	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?	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	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	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	3	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	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 us with our inspection work when we visited your school. We enjoyed the two days we spent with you. Mrs Harrison and all the adults at school care for you well and want you to be successful. Most of you do well in your reading but some of you need to improve your writing and mathematics work. You should also try very hard to make the work in your books look really good. We like the idea of having targets to help you improve, so make sure you know what they are and work hard at achieving them. We enjoyed talking to you about the things you do at Lakenheath. We were pleased to see that you are learning about healthy lifestyles and that you have the chance to learn to swim and cycle safely. The nature garden and ICT suite are two really good places in which to learn about interesting things. I enjoyed talking to the members of the school council. They have an important job to do in thinking of ways to help improve the school. Do your best to give them plenty of ideas. At the end of the inspection, we asked your teachers to look more closely at how well you are doing from year to year and check if you have any gaps in your learning. We also asked Mrs Harrison to ensure that all your lessons are taught well so everyone makes good progress. Lastly, make sure you come to school as often as you can and don't miss too many school days. You have a lot to look forward to in the rest of the year, so enjoy it.