



Ringshall School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124604
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281765
Inspection dates 3 October 2005 to 4 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs. Helen Ranger LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ringshall
School category	Community		IP14 2JD
Age range of pupils	3 to 9		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01473658307
Number on roll	102	Fax number	01473657373
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Rebecca Upson
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2000	Headteacher	Ms. Jill Grosvenor

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector

Description of the school

Ringshall School is a small primary school that caters for pupils up to Year 4. About half of the pupils come from nearby villages. The rest are from the military base at Wattisham and these children come and go in line with their families' postings. As a result, the school population is much less stable than usual and many pupils leave or arrive at very short notice. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties is below average. While most pupils are from white British backgrounds, a few come from a range of minority ethnic groups. Almost all speak English as their main language. The youngest children join the nursery with knowledge and skills that are broadly average for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Ringshall School provides its pupils with a good education, in both their academic and personal development. The school cares extremely well for its pupils. It is outstanding at integrating the pupils who join the school at times other than the usual starting points, such as those from Wattisham Airbase. Children are given a good start in the nursery and reception classes and are then taught well in the rest of the school. Their overall progress is good and, by Year 4, they reach standards that are above those expected nationally. Within this good academic performance, the school has identified that writing is not as strong as reading and is tackling this. It has also recognised that spelling, handwriting and presentation could also be improved. The school succeeds well because the staff work together as a team under the headteacher's effective leadership. The senior staff work closely with the able governing body for the benefit of the pupils. Teachers' subject responsibilities have changed substantially in recent years and the current priority to develop the subject leadership role is timely. The school has a clear view of its strengths and where it wants to improve. The plans for its continuing development are flexible enough to take account of its ever-changing population. The school uses its budget wisely and gives good value for money. It has moved forward effectively since its last inspection and is well placed to continue to improve. The school maintains a good partnership with its parents who are generally very positive about its provision. A continuing challenge is to establish even closer links with those parents who visit the school more rarely, so that everyone is working together to achieve the best for each child.

What the school should do to improve further

-Continue to raise standards in writing, with a particular focus on spelling in Year 4, and handwriting and presentation across the school. -Enable subject leaders to check that teaching and learning are as effective as possible and identify where provision can be improved further. -Continue the initiative to involve all parents more effectively in their children's learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' progress is good. The school analyses pupils' performance and sets challenging targets for them which are generally met well. From an average starting point on admission to the nursery, children do well in the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes) and the oldest exceed the nationally expected levels. This good progress continues through the school. In recent years, pupils in Year 2 have exceeded national average standards in the tests in reading and writing, and have done particularly well in mathematics. In 2005, the school's records show that pupils made good progress in relation to their attainment when they started school. Although national data are not yet available for 2005, overall performance exceeded the 2004 national comparisons. Reading standards improved well as a result of focused action

by the school and mathematics performance remained high. Pupils continue to do well in Years 3 and 4. They reach standards that are above the levels expected by the National Curriculum. Pupils with learning difficulties do well for their capabilities. While pupils make good progress in writing and reach above average standards, the school is determined to raise writing standards further. Handwriting standards across the school and spelling standards in Year 4 are weaker than other aspects of English and are particular areas for improvement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They have positive attitudes to school and enjoy what it offers them. They behave well in class and in the playground and develop very good relationships with adults and other children. All ages mix well and pupils grow in maturity as they move through the school. The school council and the use of pupil surveys ensure that pupils feel suitably involved in decisions and that adults value their views. For example, pupils have been fully involved in deciding how the playground is organised and in the plans for the new gazebo. The school encourages healthy lifestyles well. Pupils work safely in lessons and know how to stay safe in their daily lives. Pupils are clear about how to keep healthy. Lessons in physical education, the encouragement of healthy foods and the range of sports clubs promote sensible eating and regular exercise. Pupils are prepared well for the later stages of their education and for adult life by opportunities to take responsibility and by their higher than average standards of literacy and numeracy. The oldest pupils help younger ones with their reading. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is enhanced by the opportunities to get to know children who have lived in different parts of the world and are now living locally. Attendance rose to a higher than average level last year and punctuality is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress because they are taught well. Most teaching is lively and interesting. Pupils enjoy their work and are keen to learn more. Teachers' planning is effective and caters well for the wide range of ages and attainments in each class. The teachers are supported well by the skilled team of teaching assistants. This team works efficiently with individuals and groups of pupils, ensuring that levels of adult attention are as high as possible. Throughout the school, teachers use questions well to extend pupils' ideas and assess how much they have learned. As a result of teachers providing clear explanations and instructions, pupils of all abilities know what is expected of them. Teachers use an effective range of assessment procedures to check learning. Individual targets are set most effectively in mathematics and are shared with both the pupils and their parents. In English, though useful targets are set for group reading

and for extending pupils' writing, practice is not quite as well established or as effective in raising standards further as it is in mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage places good emphasis on the children learning through first-hand, practical experience. Activities led by adults are balanced well with those the children choose themselves. The programme of work in Years 1 to 4 is tailored well to the needs of both single year groups and mixed-age classes. It benefits from close links with other local lower and middle schools. Teachers are forging more links between subjects so that learning is more exciting and relevant for the pupils. There is a good range of clubs that cater for sport and arts and also extend pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. A recently formed 'Writers' Club' gives good opportunities for talented writers to meet together. Pupils of all abilities value these extra activities. The good curriculum and good teaching mean that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care is outstanding. It is excellent for those pupils who are admitted during the year as their families move into the area. These pupils are rapidly integrated into the school family. Parents and pupils are very satisfied with this aspect of the school's work. Pupils say they feel safe and secure in school and are very confident that there are adults they can talk to if they are worried. This is because the school has effective systems for ensuring pupils' health and safety and for checking their views of how well the school is doing. Child protection arrangements are very firmly in place and the school has highly efficient systems for recording any playground accidents or incidents. Pupils are very satisfied that the rare incidents of minor bullying and racism are resolved swiftly by adults. Where pupils are given targets to improve their work, these are effective in supporting their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has maintained its good provision for pupils since its last inspection and continues to develop well because its leadership and management are good. The headteacher works closely with the deputy. They set a good lead and promote effective teamwork among the staff. Teachers, teaching assistants, the administrative team and the caretakers all make positive contributions to the quality of pupils' education and care. Adults act as good role models for children and establish a pleasant atmosphere for learning. There have been recent significant changes to teachers' areas of responsibility. While their subject leadership is satisfactory, there are good plans to ensure that the subject leaders become even more effective in their recently revised roles. A sharper focus on checking the quality of teaching and learning at first hand

has been planned by the school to help attain even higher standards. Effective arrangements for self-evaluation mean that the school has a clear view of where it stands and of how it intends to improve further. All interested parties have been consulted well and are kept well informed about developments. The school maintains a good partnership with parents, most of whom have positive opinions about its provision. It is currently trying to forge even more effective links by involving all parents in helping their children's learning. A good example is the successful 10 week numeracy course that is held for parents. Governors are active and support the school well. Many live locally and help to maintain the good links with parents and the local community. The budget is managed well for both the short and longer term, as far as is reasonable with the high mobility levels. Governors have drawn up detailed plans to deal with the possible fluctuations in the numbers of pupils to be admitted in the next few years. The school is in a good position to continue to do well. The staff team is strong and the managers have a clear vision for the future. Together they provide the local area with a good community school that is committed to doing its best for its pupils.

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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	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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?	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 welcoming me to your school. This letter is to tell you about the most important things I saw during my visit. These are some of the best things -You enjoy coming to school, make friends and behave well. -You make new children feel very welcome and the adults in the school care for all of you very well. -You do well in your lessons because your teachers help you to learn well. -Your headteacher makes sure that the adults who work in school and the governors all help you to make the most of your time at Ringshall. -Your views are important to your teachers in deciding how your school is organised. These are things that might be made a bit better -You read and write well but many of you could improve your handwriting and the way your finished work looks. -Some of you need help to improve your spelling. -The school would like to work as closely as possible with your parents so that everyone is working together to help you learn. -The teachers who look after particular subjects need to keep checking that your lessons are as good as possible. Keep enjoying all that your school offers you.