



Wortham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124620
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281767
Inspection dates 7 March 2006 to 8 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Michael Madden LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bury Road
School category	Community		IP22 1PX
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01379 898484
Number on roll	70	Fax number	01379 898484
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Tina Wilby
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2004	Headteacher	Mrs. J Grosvenor

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 7 March 2006 - 8 March 2006	Inspection number 281767
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small primary school is in the Suffolk village of Wortham, near Diss. Pupils come from various socio-economic backgrounds. Few of them are eligible for free school meals. Many have had previous nursery education. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Overall, the pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The school's headteacher retired in December 2005 and a replacement is to join the school in April 2006. Meanwhile, the school's only permanent full-time teacher has taken responsibility as the acting headteacher. The school was inspected in March 2004 and found to have serious weaknesses. It was inspected further in November 2004 to assess the progress that had been made in implementing the action plan: to comply with statutory requirements regarding information and communication technology (ICT); to enhance provision for the Foundation Stage; to collaborate more with parents and the local education authority; and to strengthen leadership, management and governance.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory, but it is not as good as its self-evaluation claims. The present circumstances are difficult for the staff but they are working hard. The pupils attend and behave well. They show a high level of interest and develop strongly in the personal attributes needed for the next stage of their education. They work for and achieve high attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. The staff have made clear improvements since the previous inspection and are building further on them. Collaboration with parents is growing. Closer working with the local education authority is helping the school to change and to improve. However, while the teaching is satisfactory, not enough of it meets the wide range of needs in classes. Assessment is not fully exploited to promote learning. The school's curriculum is satisfactory, but its impact is restricted, in part because too little time is spent on teaching in Key Stage 2. Work spaces are not sufficiently well planned and stimulating for the pupils in the Foundation Stage. Management arrangements are, overall, satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation, however, are not sufficiently robust to promote longer-term improvement. Interim leadership is highly effective. Despite the difficulties, the school runs smoothly from day to day and the pupils are making sound progress. It provides satisfactory value for money. However, the induction of the new headteacher will be an important step in enhancing the capacity of the staff to continue improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop more robust systems for checking how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve further.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is of good quality.
- Make full use of assessment for monitoring and stimulating pupils' progress.
- Make learning more interesting by providing a stimulating Foundation Stage learning environment, and extending the curriculum, within and beyond the school day.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, the pupils' achievement and standards are good. The pupils make good progress from their average attainment on entry to reach high overall standards in Year 6. They respond well to the teaching when they start school. The youngest pupils settle quickly and make steady progress. This continues through Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 their attainment is broadly average. The pupils in the current Year 2 are well supported. Their reading, writing, number and exploratory work in science indicate that they are likely to meet the school's realistic targets. In Key Stage 2, most of the pupils make good progress. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress throughout the school. Overall, standards in Year 6 are high, though with variation between subjects. In 2005, the pupils' attainment in the national tests was particularly high in English and science and average in mathematics. The oldest

pupils work hard and with interest, including with the school's recently extended range of information and communication technology (ICT) resources.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development is good and provides them with a sound foundation for their future well-being. Attendance is good and is higher than the national average. The pupils arrive punctually and spend much of their time in school productively. They often enjoy their lessons and show pleasure and pride in what they do. They behave well in classrooms and about the school. Most have a growing understanding about their health. Many make wise choices in eating and engage in suitable physical exercise. The pupils are also aware of hazards and are usually careful in their actions. Older pupils respond helpfully to occasional playground accidents. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Most of the pupils have good social skills and a sound understanding of right and wrong. Those in the older years contribute willingly to the school community by taking turns to help the staff, for example with running assemblies and managing playground equipment. The older pupils have clear aspirations to do well and are beginning to look forward optimistically to their transfer to secondary school. Topic work and lessons in a variety of subjects such as art, geography and history, have given some of the pupils a sensitive curiosity and interest in people, their pursuits and traditions at other times and in other places.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Good use is made of experienced classroom assistants to lead sections of the school's mixed age classes. The teachers draw on sound knowledge of subjects and choose resources well to engage the pupils' attention. Good teaching challenged pupils well, for example to acquire new vocabulary, to record using ICT or to infer meaning from text. For many of the pupils learning is helped considerably by their strong interest and reliable behaviour. The staff encourage learning outside school, for example through parents helping their children to master spelling and number facts. The staff's use of assessment and planning of lessons does not, however, fully exploit the enthusiasm of the pupils. The teachers are well aware of the wide range of attainment among the pupils in their classes. They arrange different activities, but they do not plan to ensure the right degrees of stimulation, challenge and support. In whole class teaching, for example, the teachers' use of questions does not always require pupils to listen to and comment on their peers' responses. Teachers' briefing and the resources provided for more capable pupils do not always challenge their thought and support them sufficiently in working independently and in tackling harder tasks. The pupils' work is checked and marked. However, this does not often lead to practical targets to guide pupils' in independent work. In lessons, this often leaves more capable pupils too dependent on their teacher.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. It places considerable and successful emphasis in the mornings on English and mathematics, with science and the range of other subjects usually taught during the shorter afternoon sessions. Recent improvements and new resources are helping the staff to meet statutory requirements for ICT. Yearly and termly curriculum planning is sound and enables the teachers to create helpful links between subjects. The staff also make good use of display to share stimulating information and to celebrate pupils' work. The varied spaces in the school are used frequently to alleviate the cramped conditions in the three principal classrooms, particularly to enable more practical, exploratory and team work activities, for example in art, music and science. However, the range of other activities for the pupils is small. The school arranges a residential visit for the pupils in Year 6. Some pupils join in an after-school French club. Parents have been keen to help the school develop these activities. Some of them, including governors, are co-operating to provide further activities out of school. Other school arrangements restrict the impact of the curriculum unhelpfully for some pupils. For those in Key Stage 2, the time used each week for teaching is less than the recommended minimum. ICT resources are not yet fully exploited. No space in the school currently provides the well planned and stimulating environment needed for work in the Foundation Stage.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall but with strengths in the pastoral care of pupils. The teachers know their pupils well and provide good support for them through well-informed advice and sensitive daily supervision, with a strong commitment to inclusion. A programme of personal education helps the pupils to explore and understand important topics such as health, relationships and safety. Pupils' understanding about diet is reinforced well by the school's provision of meals and fruit. Formal child protection and safeguarding arrangements are broadly sound and the staff routinely make risk assessments, helped regularly by governors. The pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are identified quickly and receive suitable and effective support. The staff take swift action on the rare occasions when relationships between pupils deteriorate. The large majority of pupils feel safe, and confident of finding help from staff if they are troubled. As a result of concern expressed by some parents, sensible plans are being made to strengthen the supervision and management of lunchtime play. The school's assessment arrangements include standardised testing and a variety of methods of gauging pupils' National Curriculum attainments. Parents are invited to an open afternoon each term to give them the opportunity to look at work throughout the school. They receive an annual report of their child's progress and are invited shortly afterwards to an individual consultation. However, assessment and the tracking of individual attainment do not provide pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 2, with enough advice and practical targets to help them work independently.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher's good leadership is maintaining morale well, drawing committed, energetic support from the school's part time teachers, a temporary full time teacher and a strong team of support staff. In this period of interim management, priority is being given sensibly to maintaining standards in the classroom. The impact of recent steps to improve the school has been satisfactory. The staff recognise where improvement must be continued. They are working steadily to use computers more and to build on improving relationships with parents. After a change in its leadership, the governing body is beginning to change so that it can hold the school to account more effectively than in the past. Governors are active in supporting the school and promoting improvements where possible in its buildings. They are, for example, drawing on the local education authority for further development of accommodation for the Foundation Stage. Spending is planned and controlled well. The school is providing satisfactory value for the above average level of expenditure associated with its small size. Longer term improvement is steered by a suitably detailed plan, and the staff and governors rightly wish to involve the new headteacher in deciding the next priorities. Recent self-evaluation has accurately identified some of the school's strengths. However, the school's monitoring arrangements do not make robust enough use of evidence yet because the current staff have had little training and experience in this. This is recognised by the school as a priority for 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?	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?	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?	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	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

I visited your school a little while ago. I wanted to find out how well you are taught and looked after. Thank you for making me so welcome and for answering my questions. You and many of your parents like the school and I agreed that it does some things well. I liked especially: - the good job Mrs Grosvenor is doing as your acting headteacher; - how well the school works each day; - your good manners; - the way your teachers get you working; - your interest and the way you work hard in lessons; - how clever you become; - how well you help each other and your teachers when there is trouble; - how the teachers are trying to make your school even better. I have asked the teachers to do a few things so the school can go on getting stronger. These are to: - get you, especially in the older classes, to think more for yourselves; - give you a bit more help, such as more targets to aim at; - find more time for your learning; - make a few changes to the Reception class area so that children can learn better; - take a harder look at their own work and make more of it like the best. I hope you will go on helping your teachers, and will give your new headteacher a good welcome after Easter. Thank you once more for your help when I visited.