



Old Newton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124739
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281794
Inspection dates 6 October 2005 to 7 October 2005
Reporting inspector Ms. Ruth Frith LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		IP14 4PJ
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01449673257
Number on roll	48	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.P Seager
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Simon Rance

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 6 October 2005 - 7 October 2005	Inspection number 281794
----------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small voluntary controlled Church of England primary school situated in the village of Old Newton near Stowmarket. Most children who attend come from the socially mixed village of Old Newton and a few from other nearby villages and towns. The percentage of children receiving free school meals is well below average. Overall, children's attainment on entry is similar to that usually seen for children of that age but their personal, social and emotional development is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average. Nearly all children come from white British backgrounds. One child has English as an additional language but does not require specialist language support. The headteacher had been in post for a few weeks when the school was inspected.

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. Children make a good start to their formal schooling in the reception year because provision is good and they are keen to learn. They achieve well so that by the time they enter Year 1, they reach the standard expected for their age and frequently achieve beyond that. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school because lessons are interesting and develop children's confidence in their ability to do well. The children's behaviour is outstanding and this, together with their particularly good attitudes, aids their learning. Most reach standards that are above the national average by the time they leave school. The newly appointed headteacher has shown good leadership in the way he has brought together staff with a shared vision to do well. Areas for development have quickly been established and areas of strength highlighted. These reflect the evidence gained through inspection and indicate a good system of school self-evaluation. All areas for improvement have already been identified and include the need to develop aspects of writing across the school and to ensure that more children reach the higher level in writing in Year 2. A greater rate of progress is also needed for children in Year 4 if they are to reach their targets by the time they leave school. Staff have acknowledged that a closer focus on target-setting will help these children to progress as well as ensuring that children throughout the school become more aware of how they can improve their work. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and, together with recent developments, indicates that the school is capable of further improvement. Although costs are higher than average, this small school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to provide sufficient opportunities for the more capable children to reach a Level 3 in writing in the Year 2 national tests.
- Continue to develop and implement strategies to improve children's spelling and handwriting across the school.
- Continue to ensure that children in Year 4 achieve well so that they reach the targets set by the end of the year.
- Continue to develop the work on target-setting so children have a clearer idea how they can improve their work and know how well they are doing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From broadly average starting points, children generally make at least satisfactory progress and achieve well. Children are keen to learn when they start school and the good quality teaching they receive results in them quickly settling to the school routines and doing well. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Staff are particularly effective in ensuring that children reach the standards expected for their age but recognised that more needed to be done to encourage children to reach a higher level than this in writing. Children in the current Year 2 are being appropriately challenged and school records indicates that they are likely to meet the realistic targets set across all levels. Those children in

Year 4, although currently achieving well, are working below the level expected for their capability in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. An appropriate programme of work is in place to ensure more consistent progress so that they have a realistic chance of meeting the challenging targets set for them at the end of the year. Whilst the content of most children's writing is frequently interesting and grammatically correct, there are some weaknesses in spelling and handwriting which staff are currently beginning to address. Children with learning difficulties achieve well because their needs are quickly identified and good support is given. Gifted and talented pupils receive sufficiently challenging work which results in them also achieving well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good. Pupils make good progress in developing responsibility, co-operation and initiative. They are enthusiastic about their work and take justified pride in their achievements as could be seen during a celebration assembly. The relationships they develop with adults and each other are a particular strength and result in a friendly, warm learning environment where children feel confident to try out new things. They arrive at school keen to start the day and attendance is above the national average. Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall with particular strengths in the way staff encourage children to behave well and respect each other, the school and its resources. Pupils are exceptionally well-behaved without the need for close supervision. They make the most of the school's excellent grounds by developing their own games during lunch and play times and follow the school's lead in caring for each other. The school recognises that more could be done to improve pupils' cultural development to match the high levels of spiritual, moral and social education. Children have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, for example, through regular exercise and eating a range of good food. This is supported well by the school's curriculum and policies. Children follow the school routines well and act sensibly and safely when at work and play. Through lessons and assemblies they learn about their roles in the school and local community and make a positive contribution, for example, when taking part in Christmas community events. They develop literacy and numeracy skills that contribute positively to their future economic well-being and become aware of the needs of others when raising money for charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and helps children to achieve well. In the reception class children settle very quickly because they are familiar with the school through attending rising-five sessions, and respond well to the very welcoming atmosphere. The teacher's expectations of what the children can do are high and the

curriculum is interesting and relevant to their needs. Good use is made of the outdoor area by planning individual lessons such as one developing children's writing after a specific walk around the grounds. Children continue to do well throughout the rest of the school and are responding well to new teaching developments such as the introduction of a handwriting scheme. Because of the exemplary behaviour in the school, teachers are able to ensure the time available is used well to help pupils to make progress. Teachers know the children well and have developed very positive relationships with them. In return, the children are eager to please their teachers and work hard. Teachers mark work on a regular basis and some provide useful comments so that the children can see how to improve their work. However, children are not usually encouraged to say how well they think they have done. Planning is good and teaching is adapted to meet the individual needs within each class. The work set for those children with learning difficulties helps to ensure that their learning is taken forward at the right pace and teaching assistants further support these children well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, that is broad and balanced and generally meets the children's needs. There is a strong focus on developing children's basic skills of literacy and numeracy which results in them frequently reaching the level expected for their age in the national tests but the school recognises that a few changes to the curriculum would raise standards even further. Staff are currently reviewing how they can improve the children's spelling. Staff have also recognised the need to develop children's science skills further and a recent 'science day' successfully focussed on extending their knowledge and understanding through observation and investigation. Plans are also in place to give the older children a wider experience of information and communication technology. This term, staff have offered a good range of clubs after school which are proving to be very popular and are successfully developing the children's interests and skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff care well for the children. They are sensitive to their needs, friendly and supportive. This helps to create an environment where children feel safe and keen to learn. Staff are aware of the procedures for the protection of children and those to ensure their health and safety. Parents' comments are overwhelmingly positive and confirm that children are keen to go to school and enjoy their learning. Staff have recognised, however, that children should be encouraged to play a more formal active part in developing the school and have plans to start a school council this term. The information gained from regular assessments helps to plan appropriate work but staff have recognised that better target-setting will help children to become more involved in their learning and be clearer about how to improve their work. This will make the guidance and support given to children more focussed and effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good overall. Aspects of this can clearly be seen in the way that the school has already identified the same areas for improvement as inspection and started to work on these. These include improvements in English, more target-setting and raising standards for the oldest children. Since his recent appointment, the headteacher has given clear direction to the school and has quickly gained the confidence of children, staff, parents and governors. He has high expectations and the staff are responding well to these. Morale is high. The school's evaluation of its work is good and parents have been asked to put forward their views to support this process. Some parents have commented on the wide range of recent developments and their responses are very positive. Leadership and management of the key areas of literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and special educational needs are developing well as staff become familiar with their new responsibilities. Clear plans are in place to improve provision and raise standards. Because of these recent developments and the previous good work, the school's capacity for improvement is good. The governing body has made a major contribution in appointing a headteacher with the drive to lead staff in this small school whilst also having responsibility for his own class. Their knowledge, support and commitment indicate a good capacity to improve but currently governance remains only satisfactory. This is because until now governors have not played a full part in identifying areas for improvement and planning the school's development.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------	--------------

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	3	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	1	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?	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?	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	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 very much for making me feel welcome in your school and for answering my questions. I saw lots of good things and particularly liked the following: - All staff work very well together as a team and want you to do as well as you can. They give you interesting work which helps you to do well, particularly in reading and mathematics. They enjoy teaching you. - You enjoy school a lot and are keen to do good work. You like the clubs that have recently started after school and also the rewards you are given that recognise how well you are doing. - Your behaviour is some of the best I have seen. You are kind to each other and you work and play together well. - Staff look after you well and you feel safe in school. Mr Rance has worked hard since he became your headteacher and already he has lots of ideas which will help the school improve. He has spoken to me about the following things he would like to do and I agree with him. - Make sure that those of you who are particularly good at writing get the opportunity to do as well as you can in the tests you take in Year 2. - Help you to improve your spelling and handwriting. - Continue to help children in Year 4 to do as well as they can in English, mathematics, science and ICT before they leave the school. - Find ways to make you aware of what you need to do to improve your work and achieve the targets that are set for you. Thank you once again and good luck in the future.