



Palgrave Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124740
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281795
Inspection dates 6 December 2005 to 7 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. John Messer LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Palgrave
School category	Voluntary controlled		IP22 1AG
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01379642507
Number on roll	56	Fax number	01379642507
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Rod Clarke
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Kim Kelway

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Children are taught in three classes in this small primary school, in which a quarter of pupils come from outside the immediate area. There are more boys than girls and attainment on entry is average. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. Nearly all pupils are from White English speaking families. A small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Many pupils enter and leave this school part-way through their education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school's self-evaluation shows that its overall effectiveness is good and inspection findings confirm this view. It is a school with many strengths. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and they make good progress. Most pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress in English, mathematics and science and standards are above average. However, the faster learners do not always make as much progress as they should in writing. Good work was seen in art and design. Pupils are confident and voice their opinions clearly in class and school council meetings. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors. Parents are closely associated with the school and a group of parents run popular after school clubs. Sports and games feature strongly in the curriculum. Teaching is good but the quality is uneven in Years 5 and 6. Teachers keep good records of pupils' attainment but pupils do not have sufficiently clear or challenging targets to help them or their parents to understand precisely how they can improve their performance and reach the next stages in their learning. The leadership and management of the school are good. The governance of the school is very good. Governors have led an initiative to join this school with a neighbouring school. The headteacher, who is new to this school, leads and manages the two schools. The initiative is still in the pilot stage but already many benefits are becoming evident. The school provides good value for money. Parents are very pleased with the education their children receive. There have been many improvements since the last inspection, particularly in pupils' personal development. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenging tasks that stretch the faster learners and help them to attain higher standards in writing. - Devise clear and challenging targets for pupils that help them to understand exactly what they should do to reach the next stages in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress. They enter the school with attainment that is average and leave at the end of Year 6 with standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science. Children in the reception year make good progress and attain the early learning goals that children are expected to reach. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in reading and writing and attain standards that are above average, progress in mathematics is satisfactory and standards are average. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Pupils have challenging targets to reach. The above-average standards that pupils attain by Year 6 are not always reflected in national test results, which fluctuate from year to year due to the very small numbers taking the tests. The high number of pupils entering and leaving the school has a negative impact on the

continuity of their learning. The school's performance in science is very good and in 2004, and again in 2005, most pupils exceeded the national target of Level 4 and attained the higher Level 5 standard. This was not the case for writing where the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard was well below average. This is mainly because teachers do not always expect enough of the faster learners when they set writing activities. Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to succeed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' self-confidence is a strength of the school. New pupils are welcomed into a warm and supportive learning environment. They settle rapidly in the reception class and become self-assured learners. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' views and pupils discuss their work sensibly. They take their responsibilities as playtime 'buddies' seriously and are eager to help those who may be feeling lonely. They have a good understanding of the principles of citizenship and the class and school councils provide a good platform for them to express their opinions. The school council was given one hundred pounds to spend on play equipment and this helped them to understand how to prioritise and make spending decisions. Relationships between staff and pupils are friendly. Pupils are well behaved, enjoy school and attendance is good. Pupils' moral and social development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils work and play happily together. The school supports various charities and pupils develop a good understanding of their responsibilities to those in need. Pupils have a good understanding of how important it is to eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise. They learn a good range of key skills that provide a good basis for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons carefully. The interactive white boards are used well in most classes. Teachers are increasingly skilled at preparing material on their laptop computers for projecting onto the whiteboards. This new technology is having a marked impact on the quality of teachers' presentations and helps to sustain high levels of motivation among pupils. In the best lessons teachers explain exactly what new skills they expect pupils to learn during the lesson. Teaching is less successful where this does not happen. Teachers adjust activities to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and the slower learners. This helps these pupils to achieve success in completing tasks and feel pleased with the work they produce. However, work is not always sufficiently challenging for the faster learners in writing and some do not make as much progress as they should. Also teachers do not set enough targets for pupils, to lead them from one stage in their learning to the next. Consequently teachers cannot be sure that all groups are making

as much progress as they could. Teaching assistants give good support and are particularly skilled at helping the slower learners.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets legal requirements. It is enriched by a good range of visits to places of interest, such as Norwich Castle, and a good number of visitors, such as theatre workshops. There are good after school and lunchtime activities. Parents make a strong contribution by running after school clubs, such as the popular craft club and cookery classes. Excellent links have been forged with other schools, especially sports links with the local secondary school and the rugby club. Through these links, equipment, training and expertise are shared. Regular swimming lessons are provided and it is rare for pupils to leave the school without being able to swim well. There is good provision for pupil's personal, social and health education. Pupils have a good understanding of how to look after themselves and stay safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a happy school with a friendly, family atmosphere which is liked by both pupils and parents. Pupils are particularly pleased with the small size of the school and the small class sizes, 'It makes it quiet and peaceful, not noisy like big schools'. The very small classes help staff to get to know and understand the learning needs of each pupil. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and the best marking is constructive and gives pupils good guidance about how to improve their work. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents are kept fully informed about their children's individual education plans and about their progress. There is good liaison with external support agencies, such as the teacher from the Traveller Education Support Service. Child protection procedures are in place and are clearly understood by all staff. Good attention is paid to health and safety issues. Pupils report that bullying used to be an issue but that it has been tackled successfully.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The governing body provides very good support and has tackled potential problems associated with falling rolls, limited resources and difficulties with recruiting headteachers in an imaginative and creative way. Together with the governing body of a neighbouring school, they have organised a pilot project that involves linking the two schools together as one. The headteacher is new to this school but is also the experienced headteacher of the partner school. She shares her time between the two schools. Already many advantages are emerging as a result of this union. Teachers can now share planning with colleagues in parallel classes. The two schools are working together to develop a more exciting curriculum. Staff training sessions and school facilities are shared and so costs are

reduced. The headteacher does not have a class teaching commitment and can therefore concentrate all her energies on leadership and management issues. She has accurately identified the main priorities for improving both schools, and has correctly recognised the need to create a more precise school improvement plan with a clear focus on how this school can raise standards further. Parents are kept well informed about school issues and their views are taken into account. They are very pleased with the education provided for their children. There have been many improvements since the last inspection and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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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	NA	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?	2	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

I enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful. This is what I thought about your school. - You are confident and talk about your work sensibly. - The very small classes and the family atmosphere help to make you feel comfortable and happy. - You work and play happily together and you do not allow any bullying. - You are good at reading, writing and mathematics and very good at science. - The school organises a good range of games and sporting activities. - You are kind and you help new children to settle quickly and happily. - The teachers and classroom helpers work hard to help you in your learning. - You know how to look after yourselves and stay safe and you have a good understanding of the need for a healthy diet and regular exercise. - Your parents are very pleased with the school and work in partnership with teachers to help you in your learning. - The link with Gislingham School is a good idea and your new headteacher has lots more good ideas to make your learning even more interesting. There are two main things that the school needs to do to make things even better. - The faster learners need work that makes them think harder so that they produce high quality work in writing. - It would be helpful if you all had much clearer targets to aim at so that you know exactly what you should do to reach even higher standards in English and mathematics. I wish you all every success in the future.