



Costessey Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120800
Local Authority NORFOLK
Inspection number 291863
Inspection dates 28–29 September 2006
Reporting inspector Nichola Perry

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Beaumont Road
School category	Community		Costessey, Costessey
Age range of pupils	4–7		Norwich, Norfolk NR5 0HG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01603742856
Number on roll (school)	169	Fax number	01603746193
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Sharon Curtis
		Headteacher	Mrs Sally Wilson-Town
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Many pupils start school with weak personal and social skills, and language and communication skills. There are higher proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and entitled to free school meals than in most schools.

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 and has made outstanding improvement since the last inspection. This is because leadership and management are effective and the headteacher's vision and drive for improvement have nurtured and developed all in the school community so that they believe in their ability to succeed. Most governors offer good support and challenge. The effectiveness of subject leaders has improved significantly since the last inspection. The success of the school also results from excellent teamwork in all aspects of its work, and pupils and parents rightly hold the school in high regard. Inspectors agree with the school's view of itself. Its own evaluation is based on thorough processes which result in highly accurate assessments of its performance. This is a school which has a good capacity to improve further and provides good value for money. The school provides well for all groups of pupils so that they make good progress. This is because their needs are identified quickly and support staff are particularly effective in helping pupils who have difficulties. Pupils also achieve well because teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Pupils' progress is very regularly and rigorously assessed and tracked. Planning, which is very good, matches the pupils' needs very well. Children in Reception make good progress because of the well developed provision. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching moves them on so that many reach the standards expected by the time they are five. The very good links with playgroups and very effective planning by teachers helps children get off to an excellent start. Results this year have risen significantly and standards are now broadly average. Standards since the last inspection have improved markedly, especially in information and communication technology (ICT), and subject leaders are highly motivated to improve these further. Pupils' personal development is good and the provision contributes strongly to their good learning of skills for life. Pupils are generally confident. They love coming to school and are very proud of it. This is reflected in improved attendance and in their clear enjoyment of learning. Behaviour is good and the school makes very good provision for the few pupils who struggle with managing their own behaviour. Pupils know how to live a healthy life because of the strong emphasis on healthy eating and healthy living through outdoor physical education, especially the outstanding daily session of aerobics for all Year 2 pupils. Pupils feel safe and secure and staff provide good opportunities to discuss dangers and how to deal with them. They happily take part in community activities and are beginning to express their views and opinions through class councils. However, pupils do not always have the opportunity to develop greater responsibility, such as listening and responding to the views of others, through playground buddies or a fully developed school council. The care of pupils is very good and pupils are told how well they are doing. The school is using a sensible system of setting targets for specific groups, appropriate to their ages. However, pupils do not always have the opportunity to assess their own learning or to say how well they think they are doing. The curriculum has been reviewed and developed since the last inspection and is now good. It is responsive to local need, for example, emphasising multi-cultural awareness. Pupils receive a good foundation in literacy, numeracy, ICT and in personal and social skills. The breadth of the curriculum

means they are exposed to a good range of other experiences. Enrichment opportunities are extensive. The environment and displays highlight the vibrancy of the curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibility, especially through involving them in assessing their own learning and giving them more opportunities to make decisions and share ideas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Results in national tests and assessments over the past five years have been steadily improving and are now broadly average. They have improved well since the last inspection, and are no longer a cause for concern. There has been significant improvement in the most recent assessments and girls now achieve as well as boys. Standards in reading are higher than in writing, which reverses the pattern in previous years. Achievement across the school for all groups of pupils is good, including those with learning difficulties. Children in Reception enter with levels of attainment which are lower than those typical for their age. They make good progress and many reach the goals expected when they are five years old.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are happy, safe and secure and enjoy school and learning. They behave well in lessons and at other times. Healthy eating is very important to everyone so there are fruit snacks and well-balanced meals at lunchtime. Pupils' moral and social development are good. Their spiritual development has improved and now is also good. Cultural development is very good. There is a stunning range of activities and experiences for the children to learn about their own and different cultures including Indian Dancing and going to the 'Our World' festivals. Pupils are fully involved in the local community and are acquiring skills for later life when contributing to their class councils. However, opportunities for listening to the views of others, sharing ideas and decision-making are under-developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Some teaching is outstanding. Teachers assess pupils regularly and rigorously track their progress in English, mathematics and science. This information contributes to planning, which meets pupils' needs very well, so that standards have improved. Assessment in other subjects is developing well but

remains a focus for improvement for subject leaders. Pupils do not always have the opportunity to contribute to the assessment of their learning in lessons. Teaching is confident and knowledgeable and ensures good challenge, for example, through well focused questions. Pupils are effectively supported by well trained teaching assistants so that they learn well and make good progress. Good attention is given to developing pupils' confidence and independence.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

This is an exciting place to learn! The very good environment and the displays throughout the school reflect the rich curriculum. Pupils know how to use video and digital cameras and have made their own DVDs of their work. They have links with Africa and have worked with a range of artists, making the Viking boat, for example, where whole classes can sit together to enjoy stories. This all means that pupils enjoy learning and as a result are making good progress. The school has made significant progress since the last inspection. Provision for gifted or talented pupils is beginning to be developed. Provision in the Reception class is good. Staff plan activities well which meet pupils' needs from the outset. This is because of the sharing of information with local playgroups. The outdoor play opportunities are good and pupils benefit from the much improved outdoor area, a facility criticised at the time of the last inspection. Pupils love using the willow boat and clay dragon and activities around these contribute strongly in developing imaginative play.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a caring community where pupils and adults are treated with respect and valued. The school hall was packed with parents and children celebrating Harvest with music and poetry and learning the importance of giving, on this occasion to support Water Aid. The school has made excellent links with a range of agencies. Work with pre-school groups has improved the progress pupils make when they enter Reception. Links with the secondary school have improved pupils' work in physical education and science. Systems to inform pupils how well they are doing are developing, although there is not always enough emphasis on pupils' involvement in, and responsibility for, their own learning. Children are well cared for and supported and systems are in place to ensure pupils are safe.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership, management and governance are good. The headteacher is an excellent leader who has established a very strong team spirit and worked closely with staff to develop their leadership skills successfully, so that this is no longer cause for concern. Governors work very hard and are highly supportive of the school. Their evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses, criticised at the last inspection, has greatly

improved. Subject leaders are extending their role by improving their monitoring skills. There is still some work to be done in ensuring that assessment is as good as the best in all subjects. The school improvement and development plan is very effective in guiding the school towards continued improvement. There are many very effective links with the community and additional funding has been well invested in improvements to the very good accommodation and resources.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

2 October 2006 Dear Pupils Costessey Infant School, Beaumont Road, Costessey, Norwich, Norfolk. NR5 0HG Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school last week. You were very helpful answering our questions and helping us when we got lost. We both enjoyed ourselves very much watching you learn and make progress. You clearly enjoy coming to school and many of you said how much you like it. Lots of you said that this is 'the best school in the world'! We agree that you are well on the way to that goal! We think you behave well and work hard in lessons. Several lessons we saw were outstanding and Mrs Wilson-Town is an excellent headteacher. All your teachers work very hard to make your learning interesting and fun and your play leaders help you to learn special games at lunch times. We loved the willow boat and dragon and we can understand why you enjoy having these in the playground. Your lunches are great and very healthy and we enjoyed eating them with you. Your harvest assembly was excellent and we were very impressed by the way each year group performed their song or poem. I am sure that there will be requests to see further performances of the Little Red Hen Opera. The performance of the little ones in Reception was wonderful - and in only three weeks! We have asked your teachers to do a few things to make your school even better. The first is to give you more opportunities to listen and share ideas with other children. We would also like your teachers to find ways for you to decide how well you are doing in your lessons. We wish you good luck for your future and hope you continue to learn well and to enjoy your school so much. With best wishes Nichola Perry Lead inspector