



# Howard Infant and Nursery School, King's Lynn

Inspection Report

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Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 120894  
**Local Authority** NORFOLK  
**Inspection number** 291901  
**Inspection dates** 7–8 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Jill Bavin

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Parkway
<b>School category</b>	Community		Gaywood, King's Lynn
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		Norfolk PE30 4QJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01553 774587
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	126	<b>Fax number</b>	01553 774587
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Marguerite Wright
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ann De'ath
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 February 2001		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–7	7–8 November 2006	291901

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average infant and nursery school serves an area of considerable social deprivation and more than half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are of White British background. Few schools have such a very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities: twice as many pupils have statements of special educational needs than is usual. Attainment on entry is exceptionally low.

## 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, making a significant and positive difference to its pupils, and has high aspirations for further improvement. Children quickly respond to the school's expectations because staff have a keen understanding of their needs. Teachers and support staff are particularly skilled at helping children become ready to learn. This is a significant feature, enabling them to make good progress and preparing them well for the future.

Attendance rates are below average but the school is working closely with parents and carers to improve this. Pupils enjoy school tremendously and have enormous trust in teachers and teaching assistants. One child said, 'We feel safe because teachers are around.' Pupils flourish as a result of being treated with consistent sensitivity and respect. Their growing confidence and self-esteem is evident in their friendliness with visitors and increasing readiness to share ideas with adults. The school values each individual and teaches pupils to be similarly tolerant and respectful of each other. Parents appreciate all that the school is doing for their children.

Currently, 59% of pupils in the school and 70% of pupils in Year 2 have identified learning difficulties and disabilities. For this significant majority standards on entry are extremely low. In spite of good provision in the Foundation Stage, and good teaching in Years 1 and 2, standards for this group are well below average by the end of Reception and the end of Year 2. Pupils who do not have learning difficulties and disabilities still join the school with less experience and fewer skills than expected for their age. They achieve well to reach average standards. Consistently good achievement across the school results from good teaching in an environment where pupils are looked after well, feel safe and behave impeccably.

Strengths identified by the previous inspection have been maintained while important changes have been introduced. The curriculum is satisfactory and developing as planning evolves. Teamwork and a shared commitment to improvement are striking; demonstrated by an ambitious review of how the school teaches reading and the links being made between speaking and listening and writing. New planning successfully trialled in Year 2 has accelerated pupils' learning and is to be extended to the other year groups. The school is in a good position to improve further.

Good leadership is ensuring the whole school is pulling together to share best practice, focus on raising standards and improve achievement. Subject leaders, class teachers and governors all contribute to supporting the senior management team in moving the school forward. The headteacher and senior managers recognise the need to ensure rigour and consistency in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's priorities by subject leaders and governors. They realise that this is the key to the continued improvement of standards and achievement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the recent curriculum planning initiatives to raise standards in writing to all year groups.

- Ensure that all subject leaders and governors monitor and evaluate school developments rigorously.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The minority of pupils who join the school without identified learning difficulties and disabilities still demonstrate below average skills on entry. However, they achieve well and reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Impressively, in 2005 boys attained higher than average standards. Good teaching means that all pupils, regardless of their level of need, make good progress. Most pupils join the school with extremely limited social and communication skills, which has a detrimental effect on all areas of learning. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because good teaching and strong relationships mean they become increasingly secure and ready to learn. The majority, who have learning difficulties and disabilities, make small but crucial steps in social and communication skills. However, the extent of their needs means that they do not achieve expected levels, only reaching the first steps towards the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. They continue to make good progress in small steps towards their specific targets, although their standards are well below average overall by the end of Year 2, and writing remains an area of particular weakness.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a strong sense of security for pupils and an impressive ethos of mutual respect between all members of the school community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils praise their teachers highly and say they feel very safe and comfortable in the school. Pupils thrive, knowing their efforts will be valued. They often work together and make very good progress in sharing ideas and empathising with others, preparing them well for the future. They develop a strong sense of right and wrong seen in their impressive behaviour and attitudes to learning. Opportunities for them to take responsibility in school are satisfactory. Pupils know that fruit is good for them and willingly participate in the good opportunities the school provides for physical exercise. Attendance is below average despite the work of the school to encourage parents to bring their children into school regularly and on time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Consistently strong features are exceptionally good relationships between adults and pupils, enabling all pupils to

participate well. In outstanding lessons expectations are ambitious and extremely well planned teaching strategies mean that all pupils rise to those expectations. Occasionally the introduction to lessons is too long and slows the pace at an important time. Teachers make good use of the new interactive white boards and pupils have plenty of chances to use them. This adds interest and excitement to their learning. Teachers regularly share learning intentions and expectations with pupils in helpful, child-friendly language. Teachers are also skilled at providing clear feedback, so pupils are well informed about what to do next to be 'even better'. Reading resources have recently been updated and guided reading in small groups introduced. While too soon for the full effect to be felt, the school is already beginning to see the benefit in higher achievement and improving standards. A greater emphasis upon developing speaking and listening skills to link closely with writing tasks has started in Year 2. However, it is too soon for the full impact of this to be seen.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. Pupils enjoy suitable and relevant activities, enhanced satisfactorily by trips out and visitors coming into school. They enjoy gardening club but say they would like more clubs. There is good emphasis on planning for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Since the previous inspection ICT has become far better resourced and teachers have increased confidence with the subject. The new ICT coordinator is currently ensuring that colleagues use computers and IWBs to enrich all subjects. New curriculum planning in Year 2 places a greater emphasis than before on ensuring that all pupils have many chances to develop speaking and listening skills. This is a well chosen route to develop pupils' writing and the school is extending this system to include Year 1 and the Reception classes.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff support pupils' well-being very effectively. The entire school community has a clear commitment to making a real difference to pupils' lives, most of whom are needy and vulnerable. Pastoral care is very good because teachers know pupils very well, care deeply about their well-being and enable them to learn. Child protection procedures and health and safety arrangements are robust. Both are subject to regular review and improvement. Teachers are new to using learning objectives to help children assess their own learning. Nevertheless, teachers guide academic learning well, particularly for the large proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is passionate about providing a high quality education for every pupil. She is steering the school successfully through a period of significant change while ensuring previous strengths are retained. Under her leadership the whole staff is committed to make increasingly effective use of records about pupils' progress in order to respond to their needs. The school knows itself well. The quality of teaching and learning is regularly and accurately monitored. This is developing consistency across the school and, increasingly, teachers are sharing examples of good practice. As a result, while standards remain well below average, pupils are achieving well and making good progress.

Governance is satisfactory. The governors are very supportive of the school, understand its challenges and are beginning to evaluate what the school is doing. However, their visits do not have sufficient focus on evaluating the school's priorities for improvement, something they readily acknowledge. More recently subject leaders have undertaken a greater responsibility for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. They are enthusiastic about developing this role and while not yet having all the rigour needed is beginning to contribute to driving the school forward. The school provides good value for money.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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**

9 November 2006

Dear Children,

Howard Infant and Nursery School, Parkway, King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE30 4QJ

I really enjoyed meeting you all when I visited your school because everyone was so polite, friendly and welcoming. Thank you for being so helpful to me.

I was really impressed by your behaviour in lessons, which was brilliant! I was amazed how well boys and girls in Year 2 pretended to be a princess in a drama session about feeling left out of a group. I was very glad when you told me how much you enjoy school and how much you trust the adults in school. I agree with you that the teachers are kind, friendly, keep you safe and are helping you to learn well.

A special thank you goes to the group of Year 2 children who spent some time talking with me at lunchtime. It was tremendous that you all knew what you had to do to improve your writing and your mathematics work.

I have asked your teachers to keep on encouraging you to speak up about your ideas, so I hope you will try hard even if you feel a bit shy. This will help you with your writing. I have also asked the governors who visit the school to make sure they help your teachers to do the things that have been agreed, to help you do even better.

Thank you again for all your help. I hope you always enjoy learning so much.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin

Lead inspector