

Raleigh Infant School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120993
Local Authority	NORFOLK
Inspection number	291943
Inspection dates	21–22 February 2007
Reporting inspector	Kathleen Yates

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Louise Langley
Headteacher	Mrs Daphne Rothwell
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2002
School address	Admirals Way Thetford Norfolk IP24 2JT
Telephone number	01842 762810
Fax number	01842 762519

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average infant and nursery school situated in an area of mixed private and social housing. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is average. Most pupils are of White British ethnic origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average. A few pupils come from families at the nearby military bases and the number arriving and leaving during the year is a little higher than average. When children come into Nursery their skills and knowledge are broadly average but an increasing number have lower social and language skills. The school is receiving an increasing number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. A new deputy headteacher was appointed two terms ago and the partnership with the headteacher is already strong. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear awareness of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve. They are beginning to move the school forward by developing a consistent approach to assessment which is starting to provide secure information to allow pupils' progress to be tracked more accurately. The school therefore has satisfactory capacity to improve and it is providing satisfactory value for money. Subject leaders are developing their leadership roles and the next step will be to monitor teaching and learning in a more focussed way. The school's view of its performance is largely accurate though a little generous on some aspects.

By the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are at the expected levels and teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory. This sound start continues in Key Stage 1 where by Year 2 high standards in mathematics have been maintained since the previous inspection. However, attainment in reading and writing has fluctuated in recent years and has fallen steadily: although average in 2006. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but it does not consistently provide enough challenge to promote good learning. The increasing analysis of the school's wealth of assessment data is helping the school to keep a closer track on pupils' progress and set more frequent targets to help the pupils learn.

Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good and attendance is satisfactory. Links with other organisations to promote the well-being of learners are good. Pupils are happy and the growing numbers of different groups of pupils are well included in the life of the school. The curriculum is satisfactory, and enrichment activities are a strong feature. The school takes the views of parents into account and their responses show that they are happy with the school's provision for their children. Care, guidance and support are good. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that subject leaders have a clear understanding of their role in focusing sharply on raising standards.
- Monitor teaching and learning more rigorously to ensure work is matched accurately to pupils' abilities and needs.
- Raise standards in reading and writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

With good lively teaching, children in the Nursery make a good start. Children make satisfactory progress overall in the Reception classes and most attain the levels expected. Standards are close to those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. While pupils achieve well in mathematics to attain high standards, there has been a decline in standards in reading and writing.

With good support the pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well with the targets in their individual education plans. For the growing numbers of pupils from ethnic minority groups, and particularly those who have English as an additional language, achievement is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' overall personal development is good. Most pupils arrive punctually and enjoy their time in school. Attendance is satisfactory. The youngest pupils settle well into the Nursery, develop sound social skills and show a considerable interest in learning. Throughout the school, the pupils acquire an understanding of right and wrong and grow steadily to be sensitive to others, to share and to work together. Most recognise how their health and welfare depends on choices, including about what they eat and do. Many eat sensibly and engage readily in physical education and exercise. The pupils feel safe in school. Almost all behave well. The pupils also show a good interest in the school and its wider community. Some willingly accept responsibilities in a school council and in activities such as recycling, and many show sensitive interest in the traditions of other cultural groups. The pupils' basic skills and range of knowledge provide a sound basis for the next stage of their education and future well-being. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The pupils are keen to learn. The teachers have good control of the pace and direction of lessons and use a variety of resources and activities to capture and maintain pupils' interest. At times lessons are good, particularly where the teacher's high expectations are backed up by detailed plans to create and maintain a high pace of work. Pupils respond well to these demands and benefit from the good support provided for them by skilful teaching assistants. The teachers respond sensitively to pupils' work and some provide steady and constructive advice through talk or marking, and increasingly by giving pupils practical targets to help them improve their work. There are, however, some lessons when expectations are not high enough. Here, activities provide little challenge for the pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The range of work and activities that children undertake is satisfactory. There is strong provision in mathematics and the school is currently working towards improvements to information and communication technology. The school is working hard to strengthen the provision in literacy in order to effectively raise standards for all pupils in reading and writing.

There is a good range of extra-curricular activities in which children take part enthusiastically. Examples are music, art and dance clubs, where pupils enhance their creative skills which culminate in school productions. Professional coaching in a variety of sports adds significantly to pupils' experiences and helps encourage an active and healthy lifestyle as well as developing good social skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The staff provide good care, guidance and support with close day-to-day supervision. They also provide well-informed and effective guidance on matters such as health, safety and relationships. There is good provision for the pupils who have learning difficulties and also for

those pupils who have English as an additional language. Risk assessments are made and suitable attention is paid to checks on adults to safeguard the pupils' welfare. Arrangements, responsibilities and training for child protection are suitable and kept up-to-date. The attentiveness of the staff and the good behaviour of the pupils create a climate in which learners can thrive. They use rewards to recognise and build good patterns of behaviour. The teachers help this further through their responses to the pupils' work. The school is beginning to gather together all the information it needs about the pupils' attainment in order to track their progress more closely. It is not yet making full use of information to create and maintain challenging targets for higher attainment for all pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and the new deputy headteacher have enabled the school to drive forward important recent developments through a sharper focus on school development planning on what needs to be done to raise standards. The school has recognised the need to assess and analyse pupils' attainment and progress more effectively. This is demonstrating that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Teachers with subject responsibilities have been involved in a national leadership initiative. They are beginning to develop a clearer understanding of their roles in order to enable them to drive forward the necessary changes. The school acknowledges that the monitoring of teaching and learning needs a more rigorous focus on planning and pupil achievement.

While some classrooms are crowded, the school is endeavouring to make the best use of its resources, including the accommodation. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school and follow cautious financial policies.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

23 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Raleigh Infant School and Nursery, Admirals Way, Thetford Norfolk, IP24 2JT

As you know a team of inspectors came to your school recently to carry out an inspection. This letter is to thank you for helping us with our work and to let you know what we found out about your school.

This is what we liked about your school.

- You reach high standards and do well in mathematics.
- Most of you behave well and enjoy school.
- Your teachers and all the staff at your school take good care of you.
- Your school is a happy place to work and play in.

These are the things which could be improved.

- We have asked your teachers to help you to do better in your reading and writing. Maybe you can help too by reading as often as you can at home.
- We have asked teachers who are in charge of subjects to do these jobs more effectively.
- Last of all, we have asked the leaders in your school to check up more often on how well you are being taught and on how much you are learning.

With our very best wishes for your future at Raleigh Infant School,

Mrs Yates and Mr Madden

(Inspectors)