

# Old Catton CofE Middle School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121050
<b>Local Authority</b>	NORFOLK
<b>Inspection number</b>	291979
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Missin

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>	Middle deemed primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8–12
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	157
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Alison Clabon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Wright
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Church Street Old Catton Norwich Norfolk NR6 7DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 426973
<b>Fax number</b>	01603 424029

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<b>Age group</b>	8–12
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This middle school is smaller than most primary schools and it is due to be reorganised as a junior school in September 2007. Attainment on admission is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Almost all pupils have White British heritage and none is at an early stage of learning English. A below average proportion is eligible for free school meals. There has been a high turnover of staff in the last two years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and gives sound value for money. An important strength is its strong caring ethos. It is a welcoming school where pupils feel safe and they are looked after well. All staff work effectively together and this results in an orderly, respectful community where pupils behave well and show good attitudes to school and to each other. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy what the school offers and attend regularly. They have a good appreciation of healthy lifestyles and make a positive contribution to the school and wider community.

The school responded well to the key issues from the last inspection report and recovered well from a significant dip in performance soon after that inspection. This response was based on a comprehensive three-year development plan which was clearly aimed at raising standards in English, mathematics and science. Good work was done on strengthening commitment to the school ethos and aims and several externally accredited achievement programmes were undertaken. Important successes have been the way in which overall achievement has improved year-on-year since 2004 and the improvement made in provision for mathematics. This whole school initiative has led to rising standards and achievement. However, recently, the drive to secure further improvement has lessened. It has been weakened by changes in both teaching staff and senior leaders and by the challenges posed by a forthcoming major school reorganisation in the area. There has not been sufficient detail in the final part of the three-year plan to accelerate the pace of change and co-ordinators and senior staff do not have sufficient leadership responsibility to monitor and encourage improvement. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

Most pupils are reaching standards which are above average when they first enter the school and most make satisfactory overall progress to achieve above average standards in Year 6 and by the end of Year 7. The proportion reaching the expected levels in Year 6 and Year 7 are well above average and these pupils make good progress. However, higher attaining pupils do not make sufficient progress considering their starting point. An important reason for this is that teachers do not consistently provide enough extension work to fully challenge these more able pupils. Teaching overall is satisfactory with some good features. The use of assessment of data to set targets in mathematics is good, but it is less well developed in English or science. The use of data to monitor the progress being made by classes, year and other groups in the school is not yet fully effective.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and it is enlivened well by a good range of clubs and well-planned visits and visitors to the school. This adds to pupils' enjoyment and commitment to their learning. A weakness is that planning for continuity and progression in English and science is not yet as well developed as that for mathematics. The school's own view of its effectiveness is too positive because it does not take sufficient account of the impact of the overall progress which different groups of pupils make. Self-evaluation procedures and the school's capacity to improve are satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the leadership roles of subject co-ordinators and senior staff to ensure their work impacts more effectively on school improvement planning and in accelerating the progress which pupils make.
- Raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially those who are more able.

- Use assessment data more effectively to track the progress being made by different groups and to set learning targets for pupils in English and science.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

When pupils first enter the school, most are reaching standards that are above those expected for their age. By the end of Years 6 and 7, pupils are attaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science. This was also the finding of the last inspection team. This represents satisfactory overall progress. The rate of progress which pupils make has improved each year since a marked dip in 2004, and the proportion reaching the expected Level 4 in Year 6 is well above average. These pupils make good progress. However, the proportion reaching the higher Level 5, while just above that of all schools, is not high enough considering the level at which pupils begin school. Pupils make the best progress in mathematics. In 2006, progress in this subject was in the top quarter of all schools. This has been achieved as a result of a well planned, whole school focus on raising standards. Progress in English is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties make sound progress towards meeting their own learning targets.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, are good. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is above average. Their behaviour is good. They have good attitudes to their work but in some classrooms pupils' work is not displayed so opportunities are missed to show them that their efforts are valued. As a result pupils do not always recognise or take pride in their achievements. Relationships with staff and one another are good. Pupils know that any isolated incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to stay safe. Pupils are enthusiastically involved in a very wide range of sporting activities and they are developing a good understanding of environmental issues. The school council plays an important role in the school, representing pupils' views well. Pupils learn to help others by raising funds for charities, such as Comic Relief and Jeyam House, the Goodwill Children's Home in Thandigudi. Pupils get a good foundation in basic skills preparing them for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good features. In the lessons where teaching is most effective, teachers manage pupils well and secure their attention and positive attitudes by planning interesting and challenging activities and teaching at a brisk pace. These teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and show them clearly what they need to do to get better. Questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding and to develop their confidence in speaking and listening. However, the quality of teaching is too inconsistent. An important weakness in some otherwise satisfactory lessons is that work planned for more able pupils is not consistently challenging.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Strengths include provision for music with a school band and a choir that performs in local festivals. Sport is another strength, with pupils recently winning local cross-county competitions. Since the last inspection pupils have more opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects. Provision in mathematics has been improved. A whole school focus has ensured that pupils now make better progress in developing their basic skills. Opportunity in information and communication technology has improved with a new computer suite but a lack of facilities in classrooms means that opportunities to enhance learning are missed. Progress in planning for the development of skills in English and science are less well developed. The school makes satisfactory provision for supporting the needs of different groups of pupils and good provision for personal, social and health education. Popular extra-curricular activities and residential visits add to pupils' enjoyment of school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall with strengths in how pupils are cared for. Provision for all aspects of pupils' safety and well-being are good. Secure safeguarding and child protection procedures meet requirements. Adults provide good role models for pupils. Some pupils with particular needs are given good individual support but targets in some individual learning plans for pupils with learning difficulties are not precise enough. Additional support is not always available in lessons. In mathematics, new procedures for setting targets and tracking pupils' achievements are working well. Procedures for ensuring that all pupils understand how to improve their work in English and science are not yet consistent across the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has worked successfully to secure a shared view of the aims and ethos of the school and has encouraged the school's participation in several external accreditation programmes. He has produced a detailed, three-year term development plan which is clearly focused on raising standards in English, mathematics and science. The plan has successfully improved pupils' achievement each year since 2004. However, the pace of improvement has been slowed by changes of senior and teaching staff and more recently by uncertainties caused by the reorganisation proposals. This has meant that some important features such as the use of assessment data and teachers' contribution to the current development plan are not sufficiently developed. The management responsibilities of senior teachers are promoted well but their ability to lead, particularly in promoting higher standards and encouraging more rapid progress, is less well developed. Governors support and challenge the school satisfactorily.

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## Annex A

## 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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	3

### 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	2
The attendance of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<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>	3

<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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

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

21 March 2007

Dear Pupils,

Old Catton Church of England Middle School, Church Street, Old Catton, Norwich Norfolk NR6 7DS

Thank you for making us so welcome when my colleague and I came to the school recently to see how well you were doing.

Here are the things that we think are best about your school.

- The school provides a lot of extra things for you to do. The achievements of the school band and the cross-country running team are very impressive.
- You told us how much you liked mathematics and that the targets you were set helped you to work hard and do your best.
- All adults in the school community look after you well.

These are the things which we think could be better.

- The information about how well you are doing in English and science could be used even better to ensure that you all make the best possible progress.
- Your senior teachers could work even more closely with your headteacher to help the school get even better.
- Your teachers could provide those of you who find learning quite easy with even more challenging extension work.

Thank you again for your help. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Missin Lead Inspector