

Scarning Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121067
Local Authority	NORFOLK
Inspection number	291989
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roger Long
Headteacher	Mr Grahame Chambers
Date of previous school inspection	15 April 2002
School address	Dereham Road Scarning Dereham Norfolk NR19 2PW
Telephone number	01362692665
Fax number	01362 692665

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is currently about average in size but has a growing roll. Most pupils come from the local village, but a quarter live in the nearby town. Almost all the pupils are of White British background and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion eligible for free school meals is low. More pupils than usual have learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are currently taught in temporary accommodation. At the time of the inspection a major building project was underway to create a new school hall and additional classrooms. The school has an award for developing its staff and benefits from an educational trust that helps to fund enrichment and cultural activities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy, it is going through a period of positive change as it grows rapidly. Standards and achievement are rising and teaching is improving. Standards are broadly average and pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage where their natural curiosity is nurtured well through a wide range of exciting activities.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons and good attendance indicates they enjoy coming to school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are strengths in the teaching, especially in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6, where learning is rapid and purposeful. Sometimes pupils are not clear about what they have to do, or find the work too easy. On these occasions their concentration can lapse. There have been insufficient opportunities for colleagues to share some of the expertise and good practice that is already present within the school. The curriculum is inclusive and planned well to meet the needs of all the pupils. It is considerably enriched by a variety of visits, visitors and clubs.

Pupils behave well and treat one another with respect. A focus on their personal, social, health and emotional development results in good relationships and a happy atmosphere at the school. Pupils have a good understanding of living healthily. They feel safe in school and can turn to an adult if they have any worries. The school council is influential in representing pupils' views. Reading buddies and play-cadets successfully help younger children with their work and games. Pupils play a key role in their local community and support the elderly and village events. They are proud of their achievements and are looking forward to the next stage of their education.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy provide good leadership, especially in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being and in ensuring effective pastoral care. Recent improvements to monitoring pupils' progress give leaders an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. This information is not yet used consistently to set individual goals for pupils so that they know how to improve their work. Subject leaders are enthusiastic, but do not make best use of management time to influence pupils' learning through rigorous monitoring. The governing body provides a good level of support and challenge to the school. Improvement since the 2002 inspection has been sound, and there is satisfactory capacity for the school to continue to improve as it moves into the next exciting phase of its development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use tracking information to set individual goals for all pupils to help them improve their work.
- Improve teaching so that more of it is good or better by sharing more widely the good practice already in the school.
- Sharpen the impact of monitoring by subject leaders through making more effective use of their management time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. Standards have been rising over time and the school has successfully tackled weaknesses in science and mathematics. Children enter the Reception class with a wide range of abilities but overall their attainment is similar to that expected of four year-olds. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of the stimulating curriculum they receive and good teaching that channels their energy and enthusiasm into wide avenues of learning. Although the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 varies, pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards at Year 6 are average and while progress continues to be satisfactory in Key Stage 2 it is generally better at Year 6. This is because Year 6 pupils are involved more in their own learning and benefit from consistently good teaching. Good support enables pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to make satisfactory progress towards their personal targets. There are no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all good. They have good attitudes to learning because they find many lessons interesting and they enjoy taking part in the many extra-curricular activities. As one pupil said, 'There's something for everyone!' Despite working in cramped conditions while the building work is going on, they are considerate towards one another. Their appreciation of other cultures is enhanced by links with several schools abroad, and exchanges between the teachers, so that they meet people from countries as diverse as China, Slovakia and Italy. Pupils have a well developed understanding of how to keep fit and healthy. They have been successfully exploring 'smart' lunch boxes as they consider healthy eating options. They know about the dangers of drugs and how to keep safe. Their community involvement is wide ranging. They have contributed paintings to a local art exhibition and presented harvest donations to a local hospice. Pupils have designed and produced their school magazine to a professional standard, and attracted local businesses to sponsor it. They leave the school with the expected basic skills and are ready for their move to secondary school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In the main, teachers identify clearly what they want pupils to learn and use questions well to draw out their understanding. They make good use of resources, including interactive whiteboards where available. Relationships are good and pupils are motivated to work hard. Work is often planned well to meet the differing learning needs of individuals, but this is not always the case. Occasionally, more able pupils are set work that is too easy for them before they are given more challenging extension activities. Teachers generally use a good mix of strategies to engage, interest and involve pupils. Year 1 and 2 pupils programmed a small robot to move in certain directions and gave one another instructions using the correct vocabulary. This generated excitement and fun as well as developing their mathematical understanding. Pupils like the pace of the best lessons. One commented, 'They don't spend ages explaining it

to us - it's much more fun getting on with it!' At times, explanations are not clear enough and some pupils go to their groups unsure as to the purpose of their task. This slows their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well and included in all activities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of school. It meets the needs and interests of all groups of pupils well, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. There is effective use of information and communication technology to link subjects together to help pupils' understanding, as when Year 5 pupils generated plans for their dream playground. The use of literacy across the curriculum is not so well developed. All pupils learn a modern foreign language such as French or Spanish, and many learn musical instruments. They collaborate together well when working on projects. Pupils are enjoying preparing for their summer production of *Bugsy Malone* by making the costumes and props, including the notorious splurge-guns. The curriculum is enriched by an extended range of visits and clubs, including residential journeys and cricket, chess, culture, digital story-telling and construction club. The school benefits from an educational trust that supports transport costs and other expenses.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory. The school's caring ethos values each pupil highly, and ensures that the needs of those with learning difficulties and disabilities are met well. Staff know the pupils as individuals and have time for them. The headteacher sets an excellent example; he is often out on the playground or at the school gate at the start and finish of the day. Good pastoral care ensures that pupils feel safe, stay healthy and are happy in school. Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. There are good links with parents and outside agencies to provide support for vulnerable pupils. The academic guidance given to pupils is inconsistent. Improved tracking information shows teachers clearly how well their pupils are doing, but this is not always used to set individual goals to show pupils how they can improve. There are good examples of pupils assessing their own and others' work in Year 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and deputy are focused on raising standards and achievement. This vision for the school is shared by all staff. Changes to the way mathematics and science are taught have brought about improvements this year, with more emphasis on practical work and some grouping of pupils of similar ability. There is regular monitoring of teaching and learning, with clear points for development but not enough is done at present to help teachers learn from one another so that the school can spread the good and better practice more widely. Subject leaders do some monitoring, but not enough to make a real difference to standards and achievement. Their management time is not used as efficiently as it could be. Leaders have managed the presence of the construction teams on site with skill and diplomacy that ensure the smooth running of the school. The governing body takes a close interest in the work of the school and is well trained and equipped to act as an effective critical friend.

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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	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	2
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	3

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	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	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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	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

28 June 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Scarning Primary School, Dereham, NR19 2PW.

Thank you very much for making us so welcome at your school. We enjoyed meeting you and listening to your views. Yours is a satisfactory school that is getting better all the time. We are full of admiration for the way you are putting up with the building works. We know it will all be worth it once you are in your new building.

Here are some of the things we like about the school.

- Children in the Reception class get off to a good start.
- You behave well and are considerate towards one another.
- You are enthusiastic about learning and enjoy your lessons.
- You know all about staying safe and healthy.
- You help out in your village and around the school.
- Your teachers give you some interesting things to do.
- You use computers well in different subjects.
- There are lots of visits and clubs for you to enjoy.
- The school cares for you well, especially if you have any worries.
- Mr Chambers and Mrs Francis lead the school well.
- The governors take a lot of interest in how you are doing.

We know you have class targets, but it would help you to make better progress if you had individual targets so that you were clearer about how you can improve your work. There is some good teaching going on in the school, and it would be beneficial to you if teachers shared their best ideas more often with one another. Teachers are given time to look how well you are doing in different subjects and we would like to see them doing more checking so that they can help you to do even better in every subject.

Thank you once again for being so friendly. Your school has a bright future and you are very much part of it.

Yours sincerely,

Mr N. Butt

Lead Inspector