

# Sculthorpe CE Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121126
<b>Local Authority</b>	NORFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	292021
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	34
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sonya Lingwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Marshall-Grint
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	Creak Road Sculthorpe Norfolk NR21 9NQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01328862704
<b>Fax number</b>	01328862704

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 December 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	292021

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This very small school serves a mixed residential rural area. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to other schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is about average. The school is linked in partnership with another local primary school and shares a headteacher. Various activities, including planning, staff training and enrichment events, are carried out together. The current headteacher is a temporary appointment for two terms pending the arrival of a permanent headteacher in April 2008. The partnership is part of the Primary Leadership Programme to raise standards in English and receives support in mathematics. The school has an award for promoting healthy lifestyles.

## 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 school with good elements that include the personal development and well-being of pupils, the pastoral care pupils receive and curriculum enrichment. It is a welcoming village school, where each pupil is known and cared for as an individual, with a strong ethos based on Christian values. Parents are fully supportive of the school, and welcome the good opportunities that partnership with another small primary school has brought. They particularly praise the joint visits, specialist teaching in music and physical education, and increased participation in sporting events.

The interim headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and areas to develop. The school's own evaluations of its overall effectiveness and aspects of its provision are sometimes too optimistic. The school rightly identifies that standards are broadly average and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and work hard. The very good relationships between pupils and adults create a productive learning environment and small classes mean there is plenty of individual attention for pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have to plan for a very wide range of abilities in mixed-age classes, and sometimes the work is not challenging enough or lacks pace. There is an interesting thematic approach to the curriculum for children in Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum for Years 3 to 6 is based more around single subject lessons, and the school recognises that this needs reviewing to make it more creative and relevant for pupils.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school and behave well in lessons and around the school. One pupil said, 'Everyone's friends with everyone and gets on.' Pupils have a good understanding of living healthily and feel safe in school. They contribute well to the school community and get involved in village and other events. Pupils have decorated a Christmas tree as part of a festival in Fakenham church. They leave the school with the expected basic skills and are ready for the next stage of their education. The school cares for them well, a strength of its family atmosphere. Pupils receive good guidance in how to improve in literacy, but this is more variable in mathematics. There are not enough formal assessments of their progress to enable leaders to track their achievement throughout the year, although teachers know how well they are doing from day-to-day.

Governors are very committed to the work of the school, and help out in whatever ways they can. They have helped the school to make steady progress since its last inspection. It is being securely steered under the leadership of its present headteacher, who has ensured stability and continuity during a period of change. This means it has a sound capacity to improve as it prepares for its incoming permanent headteacher.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children in Reception receive provision that is appropriate for their age. They make the expected progress from their starting points in their first year at school, so that they are generally reaching the early learning goals as they enter Year 1. Assessment of the Foundation Stage is good, with digital photographs being used imaginatively to build up a picture of what children can do. This creates an attractive record for children to enjoy and for parents to keep. There is no dedicated outdoor space for the children, or a covered area they can use in all weathers.

However, they are able to go out in the school playground, but mainly for physical activities rather than to extend their learning in other areas.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure teaching is consistently good by planning activities that challenge and engage every pupil.
- Review the curriculum for Years 3 to 6, to make it more creative and relevant for pupils.
- Strengthen assessment procedures by tracking pupils' progress throughout the year at regular intervals in reading, writing and mathematics.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children enter Reception with a wide range of abilities that are broadly average. Pupils make satisfactory progress and leave Year 6 with standards that are also broadly average. In the 2007 Year 6 tests, there were only four pupils, so the data is not statistically reliable. There are fluctuations from year to year because of the small cohorts, but the general trend is one of rising standards at Year 2 and Year 6. The present Year 2 had an unsettled Reception year and are slightly behind where they should be, but are receiving good additional support to help them catch up. The few pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make sound progress as a result of effective support.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and work and play together harmoniously. There was much awe and wonder for the younger pupils when they watched chicks hatching in a classroom incubator and saw them growing up. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils research other countries and their traditions, and experience something of their music and art. The school accepts that more work is needed to increase pupils' awareness of life in a modern multicultural society. Pupils know all about eating healthily, especially since they can take meals cooked on site. One pupil remarked, 'The dinner ladies chop up the vegetables really small so we don't notice we're eating them!' They feel free from bullying and understand how to avoid danger. Pupils contribute to the school community through the school council and as playground monitors. They help with planting at a local nature reserve and visit the village church. They raise money for charity. Pupils enjoy being a big part of a small school, and attendance is good. They grow in confidence and independence and look forward to the move to secondary school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Classrooms are attractive learning spaces where pupils feel valued and are not afraid to make mistakes. The strong relationships that exist motivate pupils to try their best. However, not all teaching sufficiently challenges pupils. They cooperate together well and work independently.

Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning. Teachers group pupils appropriately to take account of the wide variety in ages and abilities, but some tasks are not well suited to the group, and opportunities to reinforce learning at the ends of lessons are sometimes missed. There is good support for children in Reception and Years 1 and 2, with effective liaison between the teacher and other staff. This is not so well developed in Years 3 to 6.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The partnership with another primary school means that costs can be shared and more pupils taken on trips and offered specialist tuition in music and sports. Together, the two schools have enough pupils to make up a rugby team, which did well in a local tournament. There is a good range of visits and visitors, and pupils relish the opportunities to take part in role-play, as when they learnt what it was like to be evacuees during the Second World War. The curriculum for Reception and Years 1 and 2 are planned around integrated themes and provide pupils with a good mix of stimulating experiences. In Years 3 to 6, there are some effective links across history, art and ICT, but generally the curriculum is subject-based and lacks sparkle. The school has identified the need to make it more creative and to adapt it to suit the specific needs of its pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

A parent wrote, 'The individual attention the pupils get is second to none,' reflecting the pride parents have in the care provided by the school. With such small numbers, there is a very strong family feel, so that pupils can thrive, knowing they are safe and secure, and any adult will help them if they have a problem. Similarly, there is good provision for the pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Individual education plans are written well and support is tailored to pupils' needs. Pupils' writing is marked well, with clear guidance as to how to improve. This is not so strong in mathematics, and pupils are less clear about what their targets are. Older pupils have been involved effectively in their learning by designing charts to help them learn their tables. Writing is assessed termly, but reading and mathematics no more than twice per year, so that it is not so clear how well pupils are progressing over time.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The interim headteacher spends half the week at the partnership school, when a lead teacher assumes responsibility. This system works well. Shared coordination of subjects across the two schools has enabled teachers to engage in dialogue and plan and train together. Monitoring of the work of the schools is at an early stage, although the mathematics subject leader has done a useful audit, which identified the importance of the transition from Year 2 to Year 3, because of the mixed-age classes. This led to a sharper focus on developing Year 3 pupils' mathematical understanding to combat a historical dip in achievement. Governors visit informally, but do not currently have a clear plan for monitoring the work of the school. The school's strategic planning identifies the right areas to improve and is a useful development tool. Value for money is satisfactory despite good use of resources, because the full impact of spending decisions is not yet seen in outcomes for pupils. Recent improvements to the building and the

new administration block help the smooth running of the school. The playground space is woefully inadequate, however, even for the relatively small number of children, especially as the school does not have a hall for physical education.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

4 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sculthorpe CE Primary School, Sculthorpe, Norfolk, NR21 9NQ

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed my visit. The school is satisfactory with some good parts to it, including the way you behave and talk to one another. You are keen on learning and work hard, and you enjoy school. Your attendance is good. You know all about living healthily and keeping safe. It is good that you help around the school and are involved in your local community. The school cares for you well, and puts on a good range of visits and visitors for you to enjoy, as well as enabling you to take part in a good variety of clubs.

You work together in classes with children of different ages, and sometimes the work is too easy for you. I have asked your teachers to make sure there is plenty to challenge you and make you think. You said that you like it when learning is active and fun, and I am encouraging the staff to look at the things you learn to make them creative and geared to your interests. I also think it would be a good idea for a record to be kept of your progress each term in reading, writing and mathematics, so that your teachers can see how well you are doing throughout the year.

Thank you once again for your help. My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr N Butt

Lead inspector