



Woolpit Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124549
Local Authority SUFFOLK
Inspection number 293028
Inspection date 29 January 2007
Reporting inspector John Messer

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

Type of school	First	School address	Heath Road
School category	Community		Woopit, Woopit
Age range of pupils	4-9		Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk
			IP30 9RU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01359 240625
Number on roll (school)	133	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr A Patterson
		Headteacher	Mrs A O'Connell
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
4-9	29 January 2007	293028

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector in one day.

Description of the school

Pupils are taught in five classes in this small village primary school. All pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly typical of children nationally but the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average as is the proportion with statements of special educational need. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is much higher than at the time of the last inspection.

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. Pupils' personal development is a particular strength and consequently behaviour is excellent. Children settle happily in the Reception class where they become increasingly independent learners and quickly develop self confidence. Care, support and guidance for pupils are good. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. They know how to look after themselves, eat sensibly and stay healthy. They would like more opportunities for exercise in order to keep fit. Although pupils have targets to help them improve their work, most do not have a clear understanding of how to reach the next stages in their learning nor do some of their parents.

Teaching and learning are good. Children enjoy the rich learning environment in the Reception class. Here, the teaching is imaginative and sometimes outstanding. Hence, the youngest children make good progress and most attain all the early learning goals expected by the end of the school year. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 4 and all groups of pupils achieve well. The teaching assistants are skilled and take a lead in making sure that pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress. National assessments at the end of Year 2 showed that pupils attained standards that were above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, they attain standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science because there is a strong emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy. Although it sometimes lacks vitality, the curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs. Pupils are taught about the importance of conservation, recycling and the need to look after our planet. Pupils use computers confidently and develop a wide range of skills in information and communication technology (ICT). They have made a good start in developing the skills necessary to support them in their working lives. The school has correctly identified the need to devise a more creative and imaginative curriculum by, for example, replacing uninspiring worksheets with more stimulating activities.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher gives good leadership and since her appointment several years ago, has led a series of effective initiatives to improve the quality of education and improve pupils' progress. She has introduced good systems to measure the amount of progress that pupils make and to set clear targets to accelerate pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy. The governing body supports the school well. Governors are fully involved in creating plans to raise standards. As a consequence of this work, the school produces a good improvement plan that clearly identifies the most important areas for development. The school's self evaluation is accurate and it is realistic about the need to raise standards further. Most parents are pleased with the education provided for their children. One parent's comment was typical, 'My daughter has flourished at this school. They have allowed her to excel in subjects that she is particularly good at. The school is well organised and looks after the children well.' Finances are managed efficiently and the school provides good value for money. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to reach next stages in their learning and that their targets are also shared with parents.
- Make the curriculum more exciting so that teaching more readily captures pupils' imaginations.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, achieve well. Children's achievement in the Reception class is good. Pupils' achievement in reading, writing, mathematics and science is good in Years 1 and 2 and they attain above average standards. National tests and assessments show that pupils' performance by the end of Year 2 was usually exceptionally high until two years ago when standards began to decline. Standards are still above average but are not as high as they were due to a large increase in the number of pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4 and by the end of Year 4 standards are above average. Pupils with learning difficulties are particularly well supported. In Year 3, for example, a special programme has been devised to develop pupils' social skills and self esteem and this is proving highly effective.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Parents confirm that their children enjoy school, hence attendance is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and friendly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are polite and enjoy discussing their work with visitors. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and willingly support charities, such as collecting shoes for the Blue Peter appeal. The school council takes its responsibilities seriously and say that 'our job is to make the school better'. They are currently raising money to plant trees in the school field to create more shade. Older pupils act as road safety officers and raise awareness of safety issues. Pupils develop a wide range of key skills such as reading, writing, and self-confidence that prepare them well for transfer to middle school and for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Children get a good start to their schooling in the Reception class where there is a strong emphasis on encouraging them to become independent of too much adult support. They enjoy choosing from the rich range of inviting activities that have been carefully prepared each day. They choose instruments and organise themselves into

a band effectively. They enjoy dressing up to act in their own mini productions of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', which relies on children working and playing together happily.

Teachers plan and prepare lessons thoroughly so that lessons run smoothly and pupils learn effectively. Teachers, teaching assistants and parent volunteers work together to create a productive learning environment. Teaching assistants provide particularly good support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Tasks are adjusted to provide suitable challenges for the more able pupils so that they also make good progress. The school has identified the need to make teaching more exciting, particularly by using ICT more extensively to enrich learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

In Reception there is a strong emphasis on fostering children's personal, social and emotional development. In Years 1 to 4, priority is given to developing reading, writing, mathematical and scientific skills. Carefully planned visits to places of interest extend pupils' learning well. The curriculum is appropriately balanced so that pupils receive a well rounded education. Parents recognise this as a strength. One parent commented that 'my child is receiving an excellent education, not only academically but also in terms of personal and social development.' The school has identified the need to make the curriculum more exciting by linking subjects together more creatively in order to make learning even more stimulating. Resources are good and classrooms are bright and colourful. All classes have interactive white boards. The school grounds have been developed well for active learning, such as gardening, which is a strong feature of the curriculum, encouraging pupils' scientific and general knowledge.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All groups of pupils are looked after well. Pupils say that the school is a friendly place where they feel safe and secure. Child protection arrangements meet requirements and are understood by all staff. Teachers offer pupils good guidance about their personal development and talk to them about how to improve their work. The school has identified the need to provide pupils and parents with better guidance about the next steps in pupils' learning so that they can be sure that they are making as much progress as possible.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides good leadership. A productive climate for learning has been established. This permits the school to monitor pupils' progress carefully and pay close attention to the particular needs of all individuals. The school reacts swiftly to any evidence of a decline in progress. It recognised that pupils were not making as much

progress as they should in Years 3 and 4. Plans to remedy this were put in place and there is now clear evidence that all groups are making much better progress.

The school improvement plan focuses strongly on raising standards in English, mathematics and science and acknowledges that achievement could be improved further. There is also a strong commitment to maintaining a well balanced curriculum that provides a broad education. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and the key issues in the last report have been tackled successfully. Good communication with parents is a strength. The school has a good web site that is updated once a week. A parents' forum has been established to support the partnership between parents and the school. Governors monitor the work of the school closely. They assist with annual surveys of parents' views and help to analyse the findings to identify any particular issues that may need addressing. They work alongside staff during an annual 'Think Tank' day when plans for improvement are formulated. They are fully involved in assisting with the school's self-evaluation and take a leading role in the 'Healthy Schools Task Force'. Financial control is good and money is spent wisely.

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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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

29 January 2007

Dear Children

Woolpit Primary School, Heath Road, Woolpit, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP30 9RU.

What a lovely school! I thoroughly enjoyed the day I spent with you. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming.

I think that there are lots of good things about your school. Your behaviour is excellent. You are keen to learn and you work hard. Children in the Reception class are really good at organising themselves and playing happily together. They also get a good grounding in developing reading, writing and number skills. You think hard about important issues, such as recycling, saving energy and looking after our planet. The school council is working hard to raise money to plant more trees on the school field so that there are more shady areas. The school buildings and grounds are great and have been developed well for work and play. You are good at bird spotting and make sure that there is always enough food on the bird table for the birds and for the grey squirrel! The teachers and support staff work hard and help you to learn lots of new things. You are good at reading, writing, mathematics and science. You are confident at using computers to help with learning.

You told me that you think that you go to a good school and there is not much that you would like to change, except to have longer play times, harder maths and more exciting books. I think that there are two main things that need to be done to make the school even better. It would help you to have clearer targets in literacy and numeracy so that you know exactly what you have to do to reach the next stages in your learning. It would help if these targets were shared with your parents. Also, I think that your work could be made more interesting and exciting so that you develop even greater enthusiasm for learning more about our world.

With all best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Messer Lead Inspector