



Southwold Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124610
Local Authority SUFFOLK
Inspection number 293052
Inspection dates 29–30 November 2006
Reporting inspector Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

Type of school	First	School address	Cumberland Road
School category	Community		Southwold
Age range of pupils	4–9		Suffolk IP18 6JP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01502 723137
Number on roll (school)	50	Fax number	01502 723137
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr B Duncan
		Headteacher	Mr R Turner
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–9	29–30 November 2006	293052

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Southwold Primary is a small school for pupils aged 4 to 9. It is situated in the seaside town of Southwold though about 85 per cent of the intake lives in the surrounding villages. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. However, the proportion eligible for a free school meal is above average. Due to changes in the local population, the number of pupils on roll is falling and currently stands at 50. As the number of pupils is small, they are taught in two mixed-age classes. The proportion of boys to girls is high: currently 34 boys and 16 girls. The attainment on entry is broadly average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs and a relatively small proportion are identified as having learning difficulties. Nearly all pupils are of White British background and all speak English as their first language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Southwold is a good school where pupils thrive. Standards are above average and achievement across the school, including in the Foundation Stage, is good. Staff have created a very positive environment for learning which effectively encourages pupils to enjoy learning and motivates them to work hard. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging and feel safe at the school. Social skills are well developed though some pupils, particularly boys, do not always listen attentively enough to others. Pupils' good attendance and behaviour contribute well to a calm, orderly and stress free atmosphere. Older pupils willingly look after younger ones. Bullying is dealt with very effectively on the rare occasions it occurs. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and their progress carefully monitored. In most respects, pupils are very well looked after and cared for. However, the school's risk assessment procedures are not rigorous enough and the health and safety policy is inadequate in some respects. Matters of concern regarding health and safety have been reported to the school. The school works effectively in partnership with others to ensure the well-being of pupils. Relationships with parents are very good and parents are very positive about the school.

The good quality of teaching makes a positive impact on pupils' learning. Curricular provision is good and successfully meets the range of needs in mixed-ability and mixed-age classes. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is well developed and younger Year 1 pupils also benefit from being able to participate in practical, hands-on activities designed for children in the Foundation Stage. The excellent links with the community make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Hence, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles. These, together with good quality lunches, result in pupils adopting good eating habits and taking regular exercise.

Class teachers assess individual pupils' progress well and are very clear about how well pupils in their classes are doing. Good use is made of this information to inform planning and to ensure that appropriate support is provided for those pupils who need it. Leadership and management are good and the headteacher has created a unified staff team whose members work well together. The school's self-evaluation is both accurate and realistic, and the headteacher has a clear picture of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. The school's work is monitored effectively and appropriate performance management arrangements are in place. As a result, the school is focusing on the right priorities for development. However, monitoring and evaluation are at times a little informal. Opportunities are also missed for the headteacher to carry out some monitoring activities jointly with the two other teachers in the school. Governors carry out their duties effectively and know the school well. The school has good capacity to improve based on the good trend of improvement to standards over the last few years and improvements since the last inspection. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Teach pupils to develop better listening skills so that they are more attentive when others are speaking.
- Make monitoring more systematic so that the school is even more sharply focused on improving performance.
- Address the health and safety issues raised during the inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's standards of work are usually in line with national averages by the end of the Foundation Stage. By the end of Year 2, standards are a little above average. The results of national tests for seven year olds in 2006 were above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. There has been a good trend of improvement in these test results over the last few years. Standards are comfortably above those expected nationally by the end of Year 4, especially in English. A good focus on developing enjoyment in reading has seen standards in reading improve by Year 4. Standards are also high in science and subjects such as art, design and technology and music. Pupils develop good skills in using information and communication technology (ICT).

Achievement is good across the school. Able pupils make good progress because they are suitably challenged. Good support for those with learning difficulties means they make equally good progress. Good progress is also evident across the Foundation Stage, and this is especially so given that some pupils spend only one term in the Reception year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and attend regularly. One parent commented that her son did not like holidays because they got in the way of school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and the wide range of other activities organised for them. For example, they participated eagerly during their 'Roald Dahl day' where they showed real delight in dressing up as characters from his books. A very positive atmosphere nurtures pupils' self-confidence and self-assurance, and makes them feel safe. Behaviour is good and contributes to pupils' sense of safety. There have been no exclusions at the school for many years. Incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils learn to care about others and take an active role in raising money for good causes. They are thoughtful and express their opinions articulately. However, they do not always listen carefully enough to one another, especially some of the boys. Pupils have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles. Most help themselves to pieces of fruit placed strategically around the school on their way out to, or in from, morning break. A very high proportion opts for the good quality,

healthy school meals. The good progress that pupils make in literacy, numeracy and ICT prepare them well for the next step in education and future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are carefully planned and work is well matched to the needs and interests of different groups of pupils ensuring their effective engagement. Teachers also take good account of the different age groups within their classes when planning lessons and make good use of support staff to ensure that the needs of all pupils are well catered for. Because expectations are high and work is challenging, pupils reach good standards in their work. Questioning is of good quality and teachers usually encourage pupils to provide full answers but occasionally opportunities are missed to ask pupils to explain their thinking to the rest of the class. Pupils' work is thoroughly marked and errors accurately corrected. However, teachers' written comments do not always provide pupils with a clear idea of how to make their work even better. Teaching staff have good relationships with pupils, who as a result, are confident about asking for help when they need it.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is full coverage of both the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The school has already introduced a modern foreign language. Good adjustments are made to the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers make good links between subjects in their planning. For example, knowledge gained about electrical circuits and magnets in science is used well to make electronic games in design and technology. Excellent links with the community mean that there are regular visitors to the school and visits to places of interest. These, along with the many community activities in which pupils participate and the good programme of personal and social education, contribute very well to pupils' personal development. The curriculum provides good opportunities for sporting and musical activities, however, the range of extra-curricular activities offered at school is limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory, though in many respects the school provides good quality care for its pupils. Those with learning or behaviour difficulties are well supported and their progress in relation to their identified needs is effectively monitored. Good attention is paid to most aspects of health and safety, for example, pupils are well supervised in the school and the playground, risk assessments for trips are thorough and appropriate background checks are completed for all new staff.

Pupils' work is thoroughly assessed and their progress monitored by their class teachers. This information is effectively used to guide and support pupils through their next steps in learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a clear direction for development and is well focused on achieving high standards. He has established good working relationships with staff, parents and governors. All are encouraged to play an active and full role in the school's work. The headteacher has achieved an effective approach to managing a small school where he and the teaching staff carry multiple responsibilities. While the headteacher knows the school well, opportunities are sometimes missed to focus even more sharply on areas for improvement because monitoring is not always systematic enough. Governors are strongly committed to the school. The chair of governors visits regularly and has a clear view of the kind of school he wants Southwold to be. Governors are well focused on the strategic aspects of school development. They are working to market the school in order to increase pupil numbers and are managing the declining budget effectively so that the school remains well resourced. The school provides good value for money. Inspectors brought to the attention of the headteacher and governors a weakness in one aspect of risk assessment and the school's health and safety policy.

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	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

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?	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.

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

1 December 2006

Dear Pupils

Southwold Primary School, Cumberland Road, Southwold, Suffolk, IP18 6JP

I enjoyed visiting your school very much and most of all I enjoyed visiting your classrooms and talking to you. I would like to thank you very much for making me feel welcome. In particular, I was very impressed with how polite and helpful you were. I am pleased to say your school is a good school.

I saw a number of things that were good including ways in which you help to make the school as good as it is:

- You do well in your school work especially in writing and mathematics.
- You get on well with one another and older pupils are good at helping younger ones.
- You have a good understanding of healthy living and try hard to eat well and take regular exercise.
- Teaching is good and you enjoy your lessons.
- You have excellent opportunities to participate in local community activities.
- The headteacher leads the school well.
- Your parents are pleased with the school and how well you are doing.

There are, as is the case in all schools, some things that could be better. These include:

- Improving your listening skills by making sure that you pay attention when others are speaking.
- Making checking of the school's work more systematic.
- Ensuring that the school pays better attention to your safety around school.

You can certainly help to improve the school by making a bigger effort to listen and by understanding what good listening is.

With best wishes

Gulshan Kayembe

Additional Inspector