

Kelsale Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124735
Local Authority	SUFFOLK
Inspection number	293094
Inspection date	9 July 2007
Reporting inspector	John Francis

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	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A G Finbow
Headteacher	Mrs C Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2003
School address	Carlton Road Kelsale Saxmundham Suffolk IP17 2NP
Telephone number	01728 602297
Fax number	01728 602297

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average primary school. While it takes children from the village of Kelsale, the majority come from outside of the village. There are more boys than girls in the school and some year groups have a significant gender imbalance. Fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. Attainment on entry to the school fluctuates each year, with the low numbers coming in, but is mostly well below that normally expected for children of this age. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties, mostly boys. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups.

The school has a Football Association Charter Standard.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

With the excellent guidance of the headteacher and the commitment of all staff, the school provides a good quality education. This is seen in both pupils' good academic achievement and their outstanding personal development. Through effective teaching, an excellent and engaging curriculum and outstanding relationships at all levels, pupils respond well and make good progress throughout the school. Good teaching and an excellent range of activities in the Reception class mean that children start well, make very rapid progress, and come close to the expected levels by the time they move into Year 1. Pupils continue to make good progress and, by Year 4, attain above average standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. They also reach good standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and art. Careful planning and good support for the many pupils who have learning difficulties enable them to do very well and exceed the averages for similar pupils nationally.

The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and provide a safe, secure and caring environment. While teaching is good, the guidance given to pupils through marking is sometimes less effective than it could be in following up on some of the recurring errors they make. Pupils have a strong sense of social responsibility and make an outstanding contribution to the school and the wider community. They have excellent attitudes to school, thoroughly enjoy what they do and have a strong commitment to their own learning. Behaviour is generally good and pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They have an excellent understanding of what it means to be healthy. With their good social skills and the above average standards they achieve in literacy, numeracy and ICT, pupils' are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education and their future economic well-being.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives outstanding direction to the work of the school and a very strong lead to the staff. The detailed monitoring of the school's performance by the headteacher results in very accurate self-evaluation. The school's improvement plan, clearly based on this monitoring, is detailed and comprehensive but lacks clarity in explaining how the intended outcomes will be monitored and evaluated. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is well led by a knowledgeable and active chair of governors. However, the governing body lacks systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school that would also help them evaluate their own effectiveness. The good progress since the last inspection shows the school has a good capacity for continuing development and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Address the recurring errors pupils make in their work more effectively.
- Develop more observable or measurable criteria to evaluate the success of the school's priorities and measure the progress towards these at agreed points.
- Involve governors more in directly monitoring the work of the school so they can evaluate its effectiveness, and their own contribution, more accurately.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. Good monitoring and guidance by the headteacher has given consistency to planning, assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress. This has led to consistently good

teaching across the school enabling pupils to build on the excellent start they get in Reception. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Year 2 in 2006 were average, with little difference in the performance of boys and girls. This has been a similar picture over time. With changes to the organisation of literacy and numeracy as a result of monitoring and detailed data analysis, the rate of progress has increased over the last year. Current evidence shows that standards remain broadly average at Year 2. However, at Year 4, these changes are resulting in more rapid progress and pupils attain above average standards. Those pupils who have learning difficulties achieve well in comparison with similar pupils nationally, particularly in writing and in mathematics, where they come close to attaining the national average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their social awareness and the contribution they make to the school and wider community are outstanding. They are keen to take responsibility for their own community through the school council and additional roles in school, and do so to good effect. Pupils' excellent attitudes show in their great enjoyment of school, their commitment to learning and consequent good achievement. Pupils behave well and feel safe. The few who find it more difficult to manage their own behaviour receive good adult support. Pupils' excellent understanding of what it means to be healthy is supported by the school's initiatives in working towards Healthy School status. The healthy lunches provided also benefit from the pupils' efforts in growing their own vegetables. Good social and teamwork skills and a strong commitment to doing their best mean pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future economic well-being. By the time they leave the school, pupils are well motivated and well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Excellent relationships have been established between teachers and pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance and pupils respond confidently. Pupils consider learning fun and they like the many opportunities they have to work with partners or in groups. Teachers use praise and encouragement well and are skilled at managing the few instances of unsatisfactory behaviour. Good monitoring and helpful guidance by the headteacher has created a culture that promotes a commitment to high quality learning. She has created a strong sense of teamwork in which teachers support each other well and share good practice to improve the quality of their teaching.

Good, regular use of ICT by teachers and pupils enhances learning and adds further variety to the wide range of approaches teachers use. Teachers' marking is generally good. It is regular and supportive but does not always identify and follow up enough on some of the recurring errors pupils make.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of popular enrichment activities, extra-curricular activities and additional projects. The provision for pupils' physical development is outstanding with many sporting and other physical activities. The provision for ICT is excellent. Regular use

of ICT by teachers and pupils ensures that pupils develop good computer skills which link well with the work being done to enhance pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The outstanding provision for the Reception children enables them to experience the full range of physical and creative activities necessary for this age group. There is an excellent balance between teacher directed activities and those the children choose themselves. The strong emphasis on personal, social and health education provides pupils with an excellent understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy and form good relationships. Cultural development is well supported through music and the high quality art seen around school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The arrangements for the care and safeguarding of pupils are excellent and reflect the high priority the school places on pupils' well-being. Pupils feel secure in school and confident of adults' response to any problems. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school; relationships are very strong and reflected in the many positive comments on the parents' questionnaire returns. The school has good systems to check on how much progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics and has used this information well to modify the curriculum and class organisation. Pupils' performance in these subjects is monitored and evaluated well to set suitably challenging long-term targets for improvement. Equality of opportunity is actively promoted. Those pupils who have learning difficulties are well provided for and receive regular, good quality support from very capable teaching assistants. The school works extremely well with outside agencies and provides good support for pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties enabling them to make similar progress to their peers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and direction to the school and fosters a strong team approach. With a relatively inexperienced staff, the headteacher has provided excellent guidance that has secured consistently good teaching and developed good classroom management skills. The commitment to continued improvement is seen through the quality and rigour of the monitoring and effective analysis of data. Through this the headteacher has a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas for further development.

These are translated into a detailed improvement plan. The weakness is in not identifying clearly what the outcomes will look like when they have been achieved or precisely how these will be monitored and evaluated. This does not help the school's leaders or give the governors the opportunity to become involved in monitoring to gain a better understanding of what is being achieved. Nevertheless, governors are highly supportive and good financial management enables them to keep a close watch on spending and ensure that resources are used well.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
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?	1
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	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	1
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	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

10 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Kelsale Primary School, Saxmundham, Suffolk. IP17 2NP

Many of you will remember that I visited your school a little while ago. I want to thank you for making me welcome. I was pleased that those of you I talked with enjoy school and wanted to share your work and ideas with me. This letter is to tell you what I found out about your school.

You go to a good school. Mrs Taylor and the staff have worked very hard to make your school bright, attractive and an interesting place to come to. The school council also works hard to improve your school and has some very sensible and responsible members working on your behalf. All of you make an excellent contribution to your school and the village community. You told me you enjoy school, work hard and try your best and I can see this in the work you do. You said your lessons were interesting. In the ones I saw I would certainly agree with you, particularly in the way you and the teachers use the interactive whiteboards to help you learn. It was good to see that you all work and play together well and behave sensibly. I was also very impressed by the many ways you all keep fit and healthy. I particularly liked your vegetable garden and the way it was encouraging you to eat healthily.

To help you do even better we have asked your teachers to make sure that when they mark your work they give you even more help to correct some of the regular mistakes you make. You can help by working on the mistakes that the teachers point out. One other thing I have asked Mrs Taylor and the governors to do is to make sure that they have good checks in place to enable them to work out whether the changes that they make are improving your school.

Yours sincerely

John Francis (Lead inspector)