



Ringsfield CofE VC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124741
Local Authority SUFFOLK
Inspection number 293096
Inspection date 6 March 2007
Reporting inspector David Speakman

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Ringsfield
Age range of pupils	3-9		Beccles NR34 8NZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01502 713030
Number on roll (school)	46	Fax number	01502 713030
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Deborah Kehe
		Headteacher	Mrs Angela Hall
Date of previous school inspection	22 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Most of the pupils in this small school come from the surrounding area in rural Suffolk. All pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is similar to the national average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. The number of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is below average. Overall attainment on entry to the school is broadly typical for children of this age but covers a wide range. There has been a large number of changes in staffing since the last inspection, including the headteacher. There are two mixed-age classes; one for Reception and Years 1 and 2, and one for Years 3 and 4. Children only attend the nursery in the morning.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspection outcomes agree with the school's own assessment that its effectiveness is good. It provides good value for money. From the time they enter the nursery, pupils achieve well. School assessment data shows that standards, both in the Foundation Stage and at the end of Year 4, are generally good. Official results initially indicated that standards were average at the end of Key Stage 1. Subsequent closer investigation by the school, supported by the local authority, showed that the original assessments were not accurate enough and that a good proportion of pupils had achieved at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. School assessment data also shows that in Years 3 and 4 last year, pupils made good progress in reading and writing but progress in mathematics was weaker. The school has recognised this and current achievement in mathematics is more promising.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils say they enjoy going to school and attendance is above average. They feel safe and older pupils meet their responsibilities to care for other pupils well. Behaviour is generally good and any misdemeanours are handled very well by staff. Pupils have a good awareness of the importance of keeping a healthy lifestyle and willingly partake in the wide range of opportunities to eat healthy food and keep physically fit. Pupils make a good contribution to improving the quality of life in school, and to the wider community through a number of local initiatives. Good literacy and numeracy skills and a good ability to take on responsibility help prepare pupils well for the next stages in their education.

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good overall, but sometimes lesson planning does not sufficiently meet the variety of learning needs of the wide range of ages and ability in some classes. The curriculum is good and is planned well to provide a smooth transition between different phases, particularly the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The school shows good care for pupils' personal needs. A careful watch is kept on each pupil's academic progress to ensure they achieve well. The school is working well to improve the accuracy of its Year 2 assessments.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has secured the cooperation of all staff in pursuing it. The school is small and the burden of leading and managing falls collectively on many shoulders. There is a strong culture of teamwork. Governors, especially the chair and deputy, work closely with the headteacher to support initiatives for improvement and, if necessary, challenge the headteacher on the school's standards and effectiveness. Systems for self-evaluation are accurate and, through careful monitoring, the school has correctly identified the appropriate issues for attention. These have been prioritised into a good quality improvement plan, which is carefully monitored. The school has successfully addressed all of the issues for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection. It has, therefore, a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in mathematics in Years 3 and 4 so that it matches that in reading and writing.
- Ensure that teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 more accurately reflect pupils' attainment.
- Make sure that planning for lessons in classes where there is a wide range of ability and age meets the learning needs of all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. In the nursery they make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and this provides a good grounding for their further development and learning. By the end of Reception most have reached at least the nationally expected standards for that age. Year groups in this school are small and attainment at Years 2 and 4 varies significantly from year to year depending on the nature of the cohort of pupils. However, school assessment data shows that pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This year, attainment at the end of Year 2 is set to be above average overall in writing and mathematics and broadly average in reading. The school confidently predicts that, at the end of Year 4, attainment will again be strong in English and much improved in mathematics. This view is endorsed by inspection, pupils' current work and standards in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Behaviour is generally good. For instance, the attitudes and behaviour of children in the nursery are exemplary at times. There is a very small number of older boys who occasionally present challenging behaviour but are managed very well. Otherwise pupils behave well in class and around the school. Pupils take on responsibility well; school councillors and playground leaders make a significant contribution to the quality of school life. Pupils are involved with the wider community. They take part in local school dance festivals and maintain good links with pupils in a London school. Pupils say they enjoy school. They find lessons enjoyable and there is always a lot to do to make learning interesting. They know how to stay safe and take their own and others' safety seriously, both in and out of school. Pupils willingly and enthusiastically take part in opportunities to eat healthily and stay physically fit through sporting activity. They are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Some parents are worried about the effect of the wide age-range in classes but teachers generally manage this challenge well. However, there are occasions when activities are planned to match pupils' age rather than ability and some pupils, particular those capable of doing harder work, find tasks too easy. As a result of teachers' effective management of behaviour, the vast majority of pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Teaching assistants contribute well to the achievement of pupils and support their groups effectively. Where full-time staff do not have the expertise in a particular subject, such as physical education, specialist teachers are brought in and make an effective contribution to pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and whole-school curriculum planning generally succeeds in meeting the needs of all pupils in the mixed-age classes. The transition between the Foundation Stage curriculum and Key Stage 1 is seamless and pupils move on to Key Stage 1 activities when they are judged to be ready. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good and supports pupils' personal development well. The school is currently introducing a programme of activities to promote social and emotional aspects of learning. This is designed to help all pupils, but particularly those in difficult circumstances. Curriculum enrichment is good. A good range of visits, visitors and links with the wider community are effective in making learning activities interesting and enjoyable.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The standard of both personal and academic care, support and guidance is good. All staff know their pupils well and are able to provide good pastoral support for each individual. The school is careful to ensure that all requirements regarding the health and safety of pupils and child protection procedures are fully in place. Good transition arrangements ensure a smooth move between the nursery and main school and to the next stages of education. The school monitors carefully each individual pupil's academic progress and Key Stage 1 assessments are becoming more accurate. Pupils say that targets in their books and the marks awarded for each one help them know what they do well and what they need to improve. Monitoring of pupils' achievement is used well to provide effective support, including that for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, the staff and the governors work together effectively to make sure that the school is led and managed well. The headteacher has a significant teaching role in Years 3 and 4 and uses this opportunity well to monitor academic outcomes and pupils' personal development. The work of the governing body is effective. They are supportive and are now more challenging in holding the school to account for its performance. Governors and staff work well together to set the clear agenda for school improvement. Pupils' views through the school council are taken into account. Priorities are detailed in a good quality school improvement plan, which gives secure guidance for the work of school managers. Progress in meeting the targets is carefully monitored by the headteacher and governors at regular times throughout the year. The monitoring process, although generally informal, is becoming more structured and the school has been successful in identifying areas for improvement, such as assessment at the end of Year 2 and achievement in mathematics in Years 3 and 4.

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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?	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

7 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Ringsfield CE Primary School, School Road, Ringsfield, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 8NZ

Thank you very much for making me welcome when I visited your school recently. I had an enjoyable and interesting day and found out a lot about you and your school. You go to a good school and there is a nice family atmosphere. Most of you behave and learn well. You told me that you enjoy school and get on well together. Older pupils who are playground leaders and the school council really help to make life in school better for you all. You make good progress in your lessons and by the time you reach Year 4, your work is generally of a good standard.

Your teachers and the headteacher work well with the governors to make sure that the quality of education is good and that you have comfortable and interesting surroundings in which to learn and play. There are, however, a few things that need to be done to make the school even better. A few of you interrupt learning for others and you can help by behaving better. Those who help a lot by behaving so well should keep up the good work. I have also asked your headteacher, staff and governors to:

- help pupils in Years 3 and 4 to make better progress in mathematics so that it is as good as that made in reading and writing
- make sure they have more accurate information about how well pupils are doing at the end of Year 2
- make sure that the right level of work is planned for all pupils in classes where there is a wide age and ability range.

I wish you all well in the future.

David Speakman (Lead inspector)