

Cantley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120797
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313740
Inspection date	9 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Tricia Pritchard HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sara Edwards
Headteacher	Mrs Hayley Smith
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2003
School address	School Lane Cantley Norwich NR13 3SA
Telephone number	01493700308
Fax number	01493700308

Age group	4–9
Inspection date	9 October 2007
Inspection number	313740

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

Description of the school

Cantley Primary School is a small village school that draws pupils from Cantley and the surrounding villages. Until September 2007, it was a first school, but in line with Norfolk local authority's re-organisation plan, it is now a primary school. Presently, it caters for pupils aged 4 to 9; by 2009, it will have a full complement of primary age pupils. The move to primary status has resulted in the formation of a new class so that there are now three classes. The headteacher teaches four days a week. There is a nursery school on site.

The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with additional learning needs was below the national average in 2006 but has risen since then. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Cantley Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education with pockets of good practice. It offers satisfactory value for money.

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and reading in Key Stage 1. Standards in both subjects are consistently above the national average and because of a concerted strategy to improve pupils' writing, standards in writing at the end of Year 2 were above the national average in 2007. This rate of progress, however, is not maintained consistently in Year 3 because pupils are sometimes set work which is too easy. In contrast, the Year 4 pupils thrive in a small class of eight pupils. This variation in the quality of provision for pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 is partly attributable to the organisation of a cross-key-stage class of Year 2 and 3 pupils, which presents challenges for lesson planning and delivery, and to the lack of robust criteria for allocating pupils to classes.

The school is effective in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy school and want to learn. They engage readily in class discussion because they know that their teachers and their peers will value their contributions. Behaviour is very good. There is a good ethos of care and respect. Parents are very supportive of the pastoral support their children receive. Their views are summed up by a parent who wrote: 'I feel that the school is helping my children to be caring, respectful and considerate towards others. The staff really care about the children and their families'. Community links are strong.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils with additional learning needs are well guided and supported. However, there is an over-reliance on worksheets in Key Stage 1 and Year 3 which lack challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils, and this restricts their progress. The proliferation of worksheets is also a key factor behind the poor presentation of pupils' work. The pupils have access to an extensive range of extra-curricular activities which they enjoy immensely.

The day-to-day running of the school is good. The headteacher works well with staff to ensure that pupils learn in a calm and orderly environment. The leadership of the school is satisfactory. This is because subject leaders have yet to give a firm lead on promoting good practice in their subjects throughout the school.

The school is in transition. With the appointment of an extra teacher this year, a headteacher who knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school and a strong governing body, the leadership and management of the school provide good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children receive a good grounding in the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception year, they often exceed national expectations in all areas of learning. Although they are taught in a mixed age class of Reception and Year 1 pupils, they have full access to an activity-based curriculum, which is well matched to their needs. Consequently, they make good progress and are well prepared to access the Year 1 curriculum by the end of the year.

The pupils are well guided and supported by their teacher and teaching assistants. They learn and play happily together. Their speaking and listening skills develop well because of the extensive opportunities they have to communicate with adults on a one-to-one basis and in

small groups. The learning environment is well suited to their needs. Good use is made of the outdoor learning areas. Parents support their children's learning and are kept well informed of their progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils in Year 3 consistently make at least good progress.
- Provide more challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' work and reduce the number of worksheets.
- Develop the role of subject leader further.
- Devise robust criteria for allocating pupils to classes.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills at least comparable to those of pupils in other schools nationally, and often above. Throughout Key Stage 1, they make good progress in reading and mathematics so that their performance at the end of Year 2 in these subjects is consistently above the national average. They make satisfactory progress in writing. In 2007, there was a marked improvement in Year 2 pupils' performance in writing when their scores rose to above the national average following a prolonged period when they were below. More pupils attained higher levels for writing in 2007 than in the previous two years. Girls usually do better than boys in all subjects. Pupils with additional learning needs make satisfactory progress.

In Year 3, pupils' progress is uneven. In 2007, several pupils did not make the expected progress in mathematics and writing between Year 2 and Year 3 although they made good progress in reading. Currently, these pupils are making good progress in Year 4, especially with their writing.

Target setting is at present underdeveloped and inconsistent between year groups. Where targets are set, they are often predictors of future performance instead of being challenging and aspirational.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils are well motivated and keen to learn. Attendance is above the national average. Pupils settle in well. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and their moral and social development is good. In lessons, they listen carefully and are keen to enter into discussion. Behaviour is very good.

The pupils enjoy participating in the many activities which are provided to extend their knowledge of different cultures. They put their mathematical skills to good use when raising money for charity. Those on the school council take their roles and responsibilities seriously. They have been instrumental in providing ideas to improve the outdoor environment, including the introduction of wall games and the development of a wild area. The pupils are very aware of the safety issues posed by the nearby river and railway, and the sugar beet lorries. They are developing an awareness of the importance of taking physical exercise and eating healthily. They enjoy eating fruit at breaktime and talk confidently about healthy living.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan lessons which interest pupils and place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Their subject knowledge is good and they encourage pupils to use the correct vocabulary in English and mathematics lessons. In Key Stage 1 and in Year 3, teachers seek to meet the needs of a wide age and ability range within their classes by planning different tasks for different groups of pupils. However, the tasks do not always provide sufficient opportunities for higher attaining pupils to extend their thinking. There is an over-reliance on worksheets which lack challenge, especially in mathematics, in these classes. Worksheets are not well organised in folders and this leads to poor presentation of work.

Teachers know their pupils well and assess pupils' progress in writing regularly. However, they rarely assign levels to pupils' work in order to inform the setting and reviewing of targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is underpinned by a firm focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The school has recognised that writing is an area for development and, increasingly, teachers are planning opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other curriculum subjects, such as religious education and history. However, this practice is inconsistent between year groups. Where worksheets are used extensively, pupils have limited opportunities to write independently.

The curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of lower attaining pupils and those with additional learning needs. Booster classes are timetabled for pupils who need specific help in developing their literacy and mathematical skills. A strong emphasis is placed on personal, health and social education (PSHE). Pupils have good opportunities to develop their computing skills in small groups in the information and communication technology (ICT) suite but, in the classroom, teachers do not routinely use ICT to support their teaching. They are hindered by the lack of interactive whiteboards in classrooms and broadband access in the school.

The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of activities, including extra-curricular clubs and educational visits. The outside play areas, including the millennium garden, provide good facilities for learning and for play.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The pupils are well cared for. They say they feel safe and secure. The school is very well staffed with teaching assistants who provide high-level pastoral support for all pupils. The academic support for those pupils who find aspects of learning difficult is also good. Individual education plans are in place and monitored regularly. However, higher attaining pupils do not get the same level of academic support. The quality of marking, too, is variable between classes. It is consistently good in Year 4 but in other year groups pupils are not always given sufficient guidance on how to improve the quality of their work.

The school achieves considerable success in supporting looked-after children. Health and safety is managed effectively and safeguarding procedures are in place. The school works closely with outside agencies to support children with specific needs and with the parents of all pupils. Most parents hear their children read daily and they are well informed of their children's progress. Parents speak highly of the pastoral care their children receive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The management of the school is good and the leadership is satisfactory. The school runs smoothly and relationships are good. The role of subject leader is developing satisfactorily but there is still some way to go to ensure that subject leaders give a firm lead on the features of good practice in teaching and learning within their curriculum areas. They carry out regular lesson observations and they update their professional knowledge regularly. However, there is insufficient monitoring of pupils' work and curriculum coverage in order to ensure that all pupils have access to good teaching and to a curriculum which is well matched to their needs. The school has made a satisfactory start on analysing data and measuring pupils' progress but there is inconsistency in the way teachers use the information to set targets. Special needs provision is well coordinated.

The headteacher and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have drawn up a list of appropriate priorities for the next three years and supported them by detailed action plans. Governors and staff have ensured that pupils have experienced a smooth transition from a first school to a primary school. However, the criteria for allocating pupils to classes are not sufficiently robust. The present arrangement of a mixed Year 2 and Year 3 class presents challenges in planning and delivering the curriculum across two key stages.

Links with neighbouring schools are good. There is a good team spirit and a positive approach to ongoing development.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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

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?	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	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

10 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cantley Primary School, Cantley, Norwich, NR13 3SA

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school when I visited recently. I enjoyed meeting you all and talking to you about your work. I also had meetings with your teachers, other adults working in the school and the governors.

It was good to see you enjoying school and wanting to learn. You care for one another well both in lessons and in the playground. Your behaviour is very good. Cantley Primary School is set in lovely surroundings and your teachers create a calm atmosphere to help you to learn. Your parents agree that you are well cared for and that you feel safe and secure. You have good opportunities to join clubs after school and I know you enjoy these immensely.

Most of you make good progress in reading and mathematics and you are getting better at writing. Well done! Those of you who find aspects of learning difficult are particularly well supported. However, in order to ensure that you all do as well as you are able, I have suggested that your teachers consider how many worksheets they give you. Some of your work was untidy and I think that fewer worksheets will both help you present your work better and give you more opportunities to write on your own.

Your school is getting bigger now that it is a primary school. Mrs Smith and the governors have been busy planning for an extra class during the last few months. Those of you in Year 4 are doing particularly well in your new small class. Those of you in Reception also have a good time as your teachers and the teaching assistants plan exciting activities to help you read and write. It was good to see you enjoying your cafe project.

The headteacher and governors have further plans to develop your school. I have suggested that they think about how best to group you now that there are three classes instead of two. There are lots of possibilities to consider.

Good luck for the rest of the term!

Best wishes

Tricia Pritchard

HMI