

# Costessey Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120801
<b>Local Authority</b>	NORFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	313742
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	299
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mike McCormack
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Tony Hull
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 February 2005
<b>School address</b>	Three Mile Lane Costessey Norwich Norfolk NR5 0RR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 742203
<b>Fax number</b>	01603 746980

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This above average sized school serves a suburb to the north-west of Norwich. The circumstances of the pupils are wide ranging, although few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the number learning English as an additional language is very low. A small number of children from the Traveller community attend the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is close to the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The inspection agrees with the school's view that it provides a good and improving education for its pupils. It has some outstanding features, particularly in the creative curriculum that adds much interest and enjoyment to the pupils' experiences. Parents who have expressed their views are behind all that the headteacher and staff are doing for their children. This is a calm and happy school, made so by the pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour. The pupils enjoy learning and are proud of their school. They respect their teachers and try hard to emulate the care and respect they are shown. Careful attention to the pastoral needs of the pupils means their individual circumstances are well known. This helps them to feel safe and secure in school.

A major factor in the school's success is that pupils are set challenging targets and then given individual support to achieve them. Where they fall behind, every attempt is made to identify why, and steps taken to help them to catch up again. Rigorous assessment is helping teachers identify 'target' groups for extra attention and adjust teaching programmes. In most classes, pupils are clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to get better. There is some outstanding teaching, particularly in the upper part of the school, which motivates and engages the pupils. This is not universal as shortcomings in the way pupils are engaged in their learning and the usefulness of marking are slowing progress in some classes.

The school is constantly striving to improve its curriculum. The many innovative features inspire the pupils and support teachers in planning interesting lessons that are leading to rising standards and increasing enjoyment. From average attainment on entry, pupils make good progress, particularly in the upper years. Standards are above average and rising by Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and those from the Traveller community also achieve well. More pupils reach above average levels in English, which is why standards are higher than in mathematics and science. The school has started to tackle this by bringing greater rigour and challenge to the teaching of more able pupils in both subjects.

The school's improvement in recent years is down to the astute and determined leadership of the headteacher. Along with governors and senior staff, he provides a strong steer based on a relentless drive to raise achievement. He is supported well by an increasingly close and effective staff team who are receptive to advice from others. Staff and governors make excellent use of the money available to support the push for higher standards. This school knows very clearly, where it is going and how to get there because staff and governors base their evaluation on their rigorous monitoring of teachers' performance and a thorough analysis of test data. This leads to sharply defined priorities for action based on high expectations of the pupils and their achievement. These factors mean the school is poised to become even better.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of more able pupils in mathematics and science.
- Ensure greater consistency in marking and the way pupils are engaged in learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

The progress pupils make during their time at the school has improved because of the concerted action by the headteacher and staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Although

a small number of pupils do not make the progress expected of them, many do well meeting, and often exceeding, their teachers' high expectations. Test results rose in all subjects in 2007. They were well above average in English and above average in mathematics. Even though science results were only average, this represented a considerable improvement in standards from the previous inspection. The school is successful in getting all but a few pupils to the nationally expected level in each subject. The main reason for improved progress and higher standards in English is that more pupils are working above this level than in mathematics or science. The school's action to improve teaching of more able pupils in these subjects is showing some benefits, although this has not yet fed through to sustained improvements in test results.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

There is excellence in the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. This is particularly so through opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the customs and cultures of others, which means they have a comprehensive knowledge of other countries and different languages. Links with schools abroad such as in Peru, are helping pupils realise they are more fortunate than many others. Pupils' community involvement is strong for this very reason and they are active and passionate fundraisers. Their behaviour is good, especially older pupils whose behaviour is often exemplary. Health-wise, they understand what they should be eating and there is a good uptake at the healthy tuck shop, originally a school council idea. However, there is still a way to go before everyone eats a healthy snack at break. Pupils have a well-developed conscience about the importance of environmental matters; for example, they are working hard to eliminate excess snack wrappers, another useful school council idea. They feel safe here because they are very well cared for and there is very little bullying or aggressive behaviour. Pupils leave as well-rounded young people, with good basic skills and are well prepared for secondary education. The attendance rate has recently improved to average. Significantly, a quarter of absences are due to term-time holidays, despite the school actively deterring this practice.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is improving and having an increasing impact on pupils' learning and progress. There are several outstanding features, but some inconsistencies that the headteacher is striving to eliminate. Through rigorous and accurate assessment, teachers are able to plan lessons and deploy support staff to focus sharply on the needs of individual pupils, particularly those who find learning difficult. There is some inspiring teaching and teachers' enthusiasm for the subjects they teach keeps the pupils on their toes and interested in lessons. Pupils participate confidently here because teachers encourage, praise and show the value they place on each individual's contribution, however small. The methods used such as drama activities, 'talk partners' and the creative use of interactive whiteboards make learning enjoyable for the pupils. The most skilled teachers ensure that pupils know exactly why they are doing something and what they are likely to learn from it. This helps pupils to assess how well they have done and identify what is needed for them to improve, although this feature is missing in some classrooms.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

Strong and creative links between subjects are building well on the programmes in English and mathematics, which adds much interest and enjoyment to the pupils' experiences. This is particularly effective through drama and information and communication technology (ICT), where links with outside providers are very productive. Pupils sample a wide range of modern languages that dovetail well with their future study in secondary school. This very effectively promotes wider linguistic skills, cultural awareness and international understanding. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a wide range of much valued extra activities, which contribute significantly to their enjoyment and personal development. The strong emphasis on personal, social and health education contributes considerably to the pupils' well-being and growing self-confidence. Provision for the most able pupils is improving with greater focus on individual programmes to extend those identified as gifted and talented.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care and support is very strong, because the school firmly believes that pupils need someone to help them overcome their worries, so they can learn more effectively. This works very well, and pupils speak appreciatively of times when they have been supported. All child protection procedures and systems to keep pupils safe and secure are in place. The quality of academic guidance is good overall and exemplary for the older pupils. Here, encouragement for pupils to reach their targets in mathematics and English is incorporated into lessons. Marking of work helps them improve and they have a clear understanding of what they are learning, how well they are doing and what they need to do in order to be successful. This high quality is not evident in all year groups, when guidance is not always provided in sufficient depth to make a real difference to the quality of pupils' work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Under the skilled leadership of the headteacher, strong staff teamwork is playing a major role in the good improvements over the last few years. There is a continual dialogue between staff about how they can improve what they are doing. Procedures helping teachers do their jobs better focus sharply on their individual needs, and firm action is taken where performance is not good enough. Stronger subject leadership has been instrumental in improved achievement in core subjects. There are still areas for development for some of those who are slightly less experienced and the school's priority now is to develop the skills of other subject leaders. Governors fulfil their roles effectively. They play a significant part in school improvement. They question staff over the school's performance and have a good understanding of its qualities and what needs doing to provide something even better for the pupils. Two examples of the excellent use of funding are the decision to maintain the staffing for extra teaching sets in core subjects, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and the investment in interactive whiteboards in all classrooms.

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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
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	1
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

3 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Costessey Junior School, Costessey, NR5 0RR

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school. You were very kind and helpful and showed how proud you are of your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. You, your parents and teachers are right in thinking that you go to a good school.

You make good progress during your time at Costessey Junior School. Most of you reach the standards expected by the time you move on to secondary school. Many of you do better than this, particularly in English. You thoroughly enjoy school, work hard and behave sensibly. Your teachers set very interesting tasks to help you learn and you clearly enjoy the clubs and extra activities they provide for you. The languages you study help you to appreciate the customs of people in other countries. All members of staff help to make sure you are safe and cared for well. You take your responsibilities seriously and contribute much to the life of the school. You have a good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. We think there are two areas where improvements can be made so we have asked your teachers to do the following.

- Help able pupils to reach higher standards in mathematics and science.
- Have a more consistent approach to how they make marking helpful and involve you in learning.

We are sure that you and your teachers will work hard to make these improvements. You can play your part by continuing to behave well and showing determination to do your very best.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector