

Ludham Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120830
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	313757
Inspection dates	8–9 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Jill Bavin

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Carol Willoughby
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Wright
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2004
School address	School Road Ludham Great Yarmouth Norfolk NR29 5QN
Telephone number	01692678293
Fax number	01692678153

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Until recently, this smaller than average primary school was a first school. The headteacher has always taught for between two and three days each week. Currently, the reception group and Year 1 children are taught in the same class, as are Years 2 and 3, and Years 4 and 5. The school has a group of five Year 5 pupils for the first time this year and next year will provide for pupils in Year 6 for the first time. Pupil mobility rates are higher than usual. These characteristics mean that the school is accustomed to a flexible approach to deploying resources. Such small numbers in year groups mean that gathering information about patterns of pupils' achievement over time is a longer process than usual.

The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is much higher than average. Although overall the proportion of pupils who find learning difficult is broadly average, in some year groups the percentage is well above average. There are far fewer children from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those learning English as an additional language than nationally. The separate nursery class has been provided for just over two years. Children are admitted each term from the age of three and attend for between one and five mornings each week as their family wishes. Extensive building work has recently enlarged the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, well placed for further development. Some elements of its work are outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, saying that they are 'extremely pleased' with their child's progress and 'the school should be congratulated'. The school has experienced considerable change over recent years. Good leadership and management have ensured continuing good teaching and a well planned variety of interesting activities, all of which have a significant impact on children's immense enjoyment of school. These strengths have been maintained while improving provision, for example for information and communication technology (ICT), during this period of transition. This is the result of effective team work between the headteacher, governors and staff. Consequently, children achieve well, while the school continues to plan to meet the needs of increasingly older children. Standards vary significantly year on year but children consistently make good progress whatever their starting points. Most commonly, children join the school with fewer skills than expected for their age but are closer to expected levels by the beginning of Year 1. They catch up further to reach broadly average standards in all areas by the end of Year 2 and this pattern continues in Years 3 and 4. Very strong relationships between adults and children contribute to outstanding care, support and guidance. Children trust adults in school to respect their ideas and this means that they are exceptionally willing to share their views. In this extremely supportive ethos they develop into very thoughtful and considerate young people. Consequently, children's personal development is outstanding. They relish opportunities to take responsibility and respond with impressive maturity when assessing their own learning.

This is a school which is accustomed to constantly reviewing what it is doing and identifying ways to improve. Staff and governors share a strong commitment to children's learning and well-being. Staff hold a vast amount of information about each child's progress, which they use effectively to set challenging targets for each child. However, they do not collate existing information into an accessible format to make analysing patterns and trends easier. There is much reflection and discussion which informs whole school development. However, this is not a school that has historically felt the need to document the extent of this work. Consequently, identifying how the school knows how well it is doing is more cumbersome than it need be. One result of this is that although the school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses overall, it is a little over-cautious in some elements of its self-evaluation.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Teachers and teaching assistants working with nursery and reception children have a good understanding of their needs. This means that they plan a stimulating variety of enjoyable activities. These successfully promote children's learning through hands-on experience both in the classroom and outside. Detailed observations of children's learning ensure that sessions are planned with the necessary next steps in mind. Because of good teaching and well-placed priorities, children get off to a strong start in the nursery where they rapidly increase in social confidence and become more willing to try and express themselves. Good teaching continues in the reception class with a gradually increasing focus on helping children to acquire key literacy, mathematical and scientific skills. The provision is well led and managed. Much has been achieved in developing the outside learning area in a short space of time. The school is

currently further developing opportunities for reception age children to learn through practical experience and to learn outside.

What the school should do to improve further

- Collate and further analyse existing information about how well pupils are doing, to more readily determine any patterns in the standards children reach and their rate of progress.
- Improve records that demonstrate how the school knows how well it is doing, so that it is easier for all staff to measure the school's successes and identify how they know.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well in lessons and make good progress over time. There is no significant difference in the rates of progress of different groups of children, although there are examples of individual children making very good progress. Those who need extra help, including those with a statement of special educational need, also make good progress. In 2007, while results were broadly average overall in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, the proportion of children achieving the higher Level 3 was higher than nationally in all three areas. Children continue to make good progress in English, mathematics and science after Year 2. By the end of Year 4 this year children are reaching above expected levels in science and just above expected levels in English and mathematics. This indicates very good achievement over the previous two years. The school gradually increases the proportion of children reaching higher standards as they move through the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children participate enthusiastically in lessons, embrace responsibilities impressively and enjoy school enormously. They recognise that theirs is a friendly school where children behave very well. Disagreements are rare and quickly sorted. Attendance rates are above average. They are justifiably proud of their contribution to their school community. Children explain the positive impact of the school council's ideas, and the daily monitoring of energy saving activity that they undertake. They volunteer their ideas and experiences with staff and visitors, such as explaining how they tie-dyed T-shirts with natural materials as part of an African project. Children make outstanding progress in their willingness to reflect on and discuss serious issues, such as discrimination. They wholeheartedly embrace learning about other cultures, places and times. Several demonstrate impressive levels of maturity and empathy, for example in writing about the Blitz. They recognise that they make choices about what they do and what they eat. They have a commendably strong, active and very well-informed sense of moral responsibility, whether to combat discrimination or help preserve the planet through saving energy and recycling.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Very strong relationships mean that behaviour is managed inconspicuously and lessons proceed at a good pace. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to children's learning, especially those experiencing difficulties. There is a very

good dialogue between adults and children and marking is consistently good. Consequently, children have a clear understanding of what they need to address in key areas. Teachers plan thoroughly to meet the differing needs of children, but occasionally the class is taught together for too long. Staff have responded to relatively weaker progress in writing by providing very clear individual writing targets. Each child is involved in periodically checking how well they are doing. This is effective because strategies have been very thoughtfully devised to suit different age groups. However, it is too soon for this approach to have had a full impact.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good range of activities in lessons and after school to help children learn. Plans ensure progress from year to year, make use of community resources to add relevance, ensure useful links between subjects and reflect cultural diversity. Planning for next year's Year 6 children has begun, to include lesson content and enrichment activities. A key strength lies in the extent to which the school uses art and drama to add an extra dimension to learning and enhance enjoyment. Previous weaknesses in ICT resources have been addressed and children now benefit from a well planned programme of activities, to include, for example, 'stop go' animation in Year 5. The school recognises the desirability of increasing specialised resources for children who find learning particularly easy as its numbers increase.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff share an extremely strong commitment to doing their best for all children. Consequently, opportunities to reinforce children's understanding of important issues, such as valuing ideas, mutual respect and concern for the environment are seldom missed. Assemblies are used very effectively to reinforce children's understanding of such serious matters as courage and discrimination. Highly effective support for children, taking account of their age and stage of development, ensures guidance on matters such as health, safety, relationships and judging their own learning. This exemplary practice is a major contributory factor in children's outstanding personal development. Comprehensive systems are in place to encourage good behaviour, but are not used on a daily basis because they are not needed. The school manages potential risks well and systems for safeguarding children are robust. Extremely positive relationships between adults and children ensure that children thrive in this exceptionally nurturing environment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

This is a school characterised by effective teamwork. Adults pull together to successfully meet the school's aims to be a community working together in a 'stimulating, challenging, secure and welcoming environment'. The headteacher has steered the school through a period of considerable change and development while preserving this positive ethos. Effective systems for checking how well each child is doing are used to set realistic but challenging targets, with a view to each child doing as well as possible. Because the staff team is small, information is shared very effectively and there is much discussion about what works well and how to move the school forward. However, the school is not accustomed to reflecting this work fully on paper. Information about children's progress is not presented in a readily accessible format to

aid detecting patterns and trends. Governance is good because governors keep a close eye on what the school is doing and hold it to account, but the full extent of their activity is shared more verbally than documented.

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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	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?	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 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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

12 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Ludham First School Ludham NR29 5QN

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently. A special thank you to those children who met with me in the music room and to everyone who showed me their work and helped me to understand what you do. I agree with you and your families that you go to a good school. Here are some of the good things I found.

- Everyone makes good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- You enjoy school a lot and feel very safe there, because you trust that all the adults want the best for you.
- You behave extremely well in lessons and around the school: you are very considerate with each other.
- You are remarkably sensible and grown up when you share ideas in class and when you think about how well you are learning.
- You are extremely thoughtful about serious things and very good at imagining someone else's experience.
- Your teachers plan a good variety of activities for you all. They are especially good at giving you plenty of art and drama to do.
- Mrs Wright, the teachers, teaching assistants and governors all work well together as a team with your best interests at heart.

I have asked Mrs Wright, the teachers and governors to make your school even better by:

- organising the information they hold about how well you are doing so they can use it more easily to see what works best for you
- keeping clearer records about what they are doing to check that the school is working well.

I hope you continue to enjoy learning so much and wish you well in the future.

Jill Bavin Lead inspector