

# Stalham Community Infant School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 120854            |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | NORFOLK LA        |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 313766            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 6–7 February 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Roger Sadler      |

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>                     | Infant   |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–7  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |  |
| School                                    | 65   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                               |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mrs Tracey Bales                                 |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs Joan Edwards                                 |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 3 March 2003                                     |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Brumstead Road<br>Stalham<br>Norfolk<br>NR12 9DG |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01692 580557                                     |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01692 580557                                     |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The vast majority of pupils in this village school are from a White British background. The proportion eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. Many children enter Reception with levels of knowledge and skill that are below those expected.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Due to good leadership and management, the quality of education provided to pupils is good. The school has worked hard on improving pupils' written and spoken English and their reading to good effect. National assessments in 2007 indicate that standards rose well last year. School records and pupils' work indicate that standards are continuing to rise. Parents are unanimously positive about the school. They see it as a happy school where their children make good progress, especially in their reading. One parent captured the views of many when she wrote, 'I have found this school a safe, fun and very friendly place'. Good liaison with parents begins when children are sensitively introduced into Reception, and continues throughout the school. As a result, many parents make a good contribution to their children's learning and achievement, for example in reading. The school has formed strong partnerships with local schools, and staff cooperate with the staff from these schools to develop their own teaching skills.

Good teaching and learning helps most pupils achieve well and an above average proportion of pupils attain expected standards by Year 2. The school teaches reading particularly well. Pupils are often required to discuss their answers to teachers' questions in pairs. This helps them develop their speaking and listening skills. Care, guidance and support and the curriculum are satisfactory. The school accurately assesses and carefully analyses each pupil's progress and directs extra help to the few pupils who are not reaching standards expected for their age. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because they receive frequent, carefully tailored additional support from teachers and teaching assistants. However, teachers' marking and feedback to pupils does not always provide pupils with clear enough guidance on where and how to improve their work. Consequently, staff sometimes miss chances to enable pupils to be independent in their learning or to provide more able pupils with the extra support or challenge that they need. This means that, occasionally, the curriculum is not sufficiently modified to meet the needs of these pupils. The result is that slightly smaller than average proportions of pupils attain the higher levels, especially in mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Relationships are good and pupils behave well. They enjoy school and appreciate the staff's efforts to make the school such an interesting and happy place. They work and play safely, show a satisfactory understanding of the need to live healthily and make a sound contribution to the school community. However, pupils show little understanding of the cultures and traditions of people from minority ethnic backgrounds who live in Britain. Good standards of literacy and numeracy, along with positive attitudes, prepare pupils well for later life.

The headteacher provides clear direction and has ensured that staff strive to achieve ambitious targets for future standards. The school has a very clear understanding of where improvements are needed, but an over-modest view of its overall effectiveness. The school's success in improving provision and standards indicate that it has good capacity to continue to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Parents are right to be enthusiastic in their praise of the quality of care and provision children receive in the Foundation Stage. They recognise their children are happy in Reception and that

they make good progress. Effective links with home and the pre-school help children to settle quickly. Teaching by all staff is good and children are engaged well in a wide range of purposeful and interesting activities. Planning and the use of assessment are effective. Good quality provision enables them to progress well in all areas of learning. By the end of Reception, most meet expectations for their age and they are well prepared for more formal learning in Year 1. They enjoy and benefit from small group work, high quality teaching of letter sounds each day and enjoy reading unfamiliar words.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Enable more pupils to attain standards above those expected for their ages, especially in mathematics and science.
- Ensure teachers' marking and other feedback consistently enables pupils to be independent in improving particular aspects of their work.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the traditions of people from minority ethnic backgrounds who live in Britain.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children quickly settle into Reception and make good progress in all areas of learning. This enables many children to attain the nationally expected 'Early Learning Goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 and 2, they build on their good start and continue to make good progress. Standards have risen so that almost all pupils attain standards expected of their ages and achieve well. Progress is best in reading and in speaking and listening due to good teaching. This provides pupils with a strong foundation and leaves them well prepared for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond. More able pupils make satisfactory progress but too few attain above standards expected for their ages in mathematics and science.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Although cultural development is satisfactory, it is limited by a lack of knowledge of the ways of life of those from minority ethnic groups who live in Britain. Their spiritual development is satisfactory and they show good levels of sensitivity and care for the feelings of other pupils in the school. They behave well, know right from wrong and are able to relate to one another and to adults well. Pupils enjoy school and are happy and confident. Most attend regularly resulting in average attendance levels. Pupils show good understanding of how to act safely and with regard for the safety of others. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of regular exercise and a healthy diet. Older pupils sometimes take responsibility or help others in school and support community events and charities, but opportunities to contribute to the school and wider community are limited.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is effective in promoting good progress for the vast majority of pupils. Most lessons are interesting and engage pupils in a variety of purposeful activities. Teachers instil positive attitudes and good classroom behaviour because their expectations are suitably high. Reading

is very well taught and standards of reading are rising. In all year groups, daily lessons on using letter sounds help pupils read and spell new words. Frequent reading practice and good guided-reading lessons also help pupils develop these skills, as does the active support of many parents. All staff provide frequent opportunities for pupils to talk in small groups or in pairs. Consequently, pupils make good progress and gain in confidence in their speaking and listening skills. In some lessons, pupils are given useful checklists of a few key features of a good piece of work and this helps them see which aspects they need to improve. In other lessons they are sometimes asked to remember too many things and this slows their progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum places a suitably strong emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Learning activities are modified effectively to meet the needs of those pupils with learning difficulties. However, in mathematics and science, an over-reliance on published worksheets sometimes limits opportunities for more able pupils to work independently and to use their own ideas. Appropriately, the school is recently placing greater emphasis on developing pupils' problem solving skills in mathematics and their investigative skills in science. Pupils are given a broad range of interesting learning activities. They particularly enjoy making clay models and designing and making things. A satisfactory range of visits, visitors and out of school clubs suitably enriches the curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Child protection procedures and other procedures for pastoral care are good. The school meets current government requirements for safeguarding pupils in school. Pupils' attainment and progress are assessed and monitored effectively as they move through the school. Assessment information is used well to direct additional support to pupils who are at risk of falling behind. However, too little additional guidance is provided for the more able and consequently too few pupils, especially in mathematics and science, attain above levels expected of their ages. Marking of work varies in quality and so does not always provide clear enough guidance to pupils. Consequently, some pupils show too little understanding of which particular aspects of their work are most in need of improvement and this limits their ability to be independent in their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are effective. The headteacher, since the previous inspection, has ensured that pupils learn at a faster rate and attain higher standards. The school has a clear and accurate view of where further improvements are needed. Subject leaders play an important part in raising standards in their subject. The governing body provides good challenge and support for the work of the school and governors know which aspects of the school are most in need of improvement. Provision in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with learning difficulties is well led and managed and results in these pupils making good progress. The weekly newsletter keeps parents very well informed and helps keep them up to date with how they can support their children's learning at home. The school's improvement plan concentrates on the correct priorities. However, because the criteria for judging the effect of actions are

sometimes vague, governors and other leaders are not easily able to evaluate the impact of the plan on pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, rising standards, high expectations and effective monitoring and evaluation indicate that the school has good capacity for continued improvement.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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 <sup>1</sup> 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?                                  | 3 |
| 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  | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 3 |
| 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? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 3 |

<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 | 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  |

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 February 2008

Dear pupils

Inspection of Stalham Community Infant School, Stalham, NR12 9DG

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school. I am pleased that you enjoy school so much and attend regularly. I thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. I think your school is a good school. It is well run and is giving you a good education. Reception children settle in quickly and soon start to learn to read, write and behave well. Adults in all classes provide good teaching so that you make good progress and achieve well. You read well and many of your parents help you learn to read. You are being prepared well for life at your next school. I am pleased yours is such a happy school and that you and your parents are so pleased with it.

Many of you know how to act safely. You clearly know right from wrong, show consideration for others and are friendly to each other. You should be proud of your good behaviour. This helps you concentrate well and make good progress in lessons. Those of you who need extra help make good progress because the school gives good attention to helping you learn. It was good to see your clay work and models in assembly.

There are many things that Mrs Edwards, the staff and the governors want to improve because they want your school to get even better! I have asked them to do three important things first.

- Try to help more of you reach higher levels, especially in mathematics and science.
- Try to make sure that teachers show you, in their marking and in other ways, where you need to improve your work.
- Help you improve your understanding of other ways of life in our country.

With very best wishes for the future

Mr Sadler

Lead inspector