

Walpole Cross Keys Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120886
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	313779
Inspection date	11 June 2008
Reporting inspector	David Wynford-Jones

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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Hackett
Headteacher	Mrs Pamela Elton
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Sutton Road Walpole Cross Keys King's Lynn Norfolk PE34 4HD
Telephone number	01553 828680
Fax number	01553 828216

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is significantly smaller than most primary schools with twice as many girls as boys. The majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. There are no pupils learning to speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times during the school year is greater than in most schools. Attainment on entry varies from year to year because of the small numbers entering the school. Generally, it is in line with national expectations.

The school gained the active sports mark in 2007.

There are two classes, Years R, 1 and 2 and Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Numbers in each year group vary between 5 and 9.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and sound value for money. Parents appreciate the openness of the school. One wrote, 'The staff are lovely, very welcoming and make the school a fun place to be'. Others echoed this sentiment. The school's strengths are in the welcoming approach it has to all and the provision for pupils' personal development. Consequently, pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above average. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Pupils behave well and are keen to take part in lessons. They have a good understanding of the importance of being healthy and make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community. Members of the school council talk well about their responsibilities and their contribution to the development of the school. Overall, pupils' personal development is good.

Teaching and achievement are satisfactory. Most pupils make sound progress and by the end of Years 2 and 6 attain standards broadly similar to the national average in English and mathematics. However, in Year 6 the results in science have been consistently exceptionally low for the last five years. The school has recognised the need to improve standards in science and taken action. Current standards are nearer national expectations but still below average. Pupils who need extra support with their work make sound progress but the progress of the more able pupils is inconsistent because work is not always matched well enough to different abilities in the class.

Lessons provide sound opportunities for pupils to work alongside each other to develop their social skills. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to bring interest and enjoyment. Questioning techniques are used satisfactorily to probe and consolidate pupils' understanding. They know that they have targets in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, they do not associate the targets with their ongoing work. This is because the targets are not referred often enough in lessons or in the marking of the work. There are some good examples of marking that will help pupils to see how well they have succeeded, but these are the exception rather than the rule. As a result, pupils are unclear about what they have to do to improve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and governors work together well to improve the building and manage a tight budget. There are good systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. These are now being used more effectively to identify pupils who are not making enough progress and to target support for them. The links with parents are being strengthened successfully through the 'share project', an initiative set up by the cluster schools that aims to increase parental involvement in their child's education. The leadership of the school has an accurate view of the school's performance and is taking positive action to bring about improvement. The improvement plan identifies appropriate areas for development but the measures by which its success is to be evaluated are not linked closely enough to raising standards.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The children settle quickly because induction procedures are good and staff place significant importance on providing a good level of care. As a result, relationships are good. Children feel safe and develop a positive attitude to learning. Teaching, and therefore their progress, is

satisfactory and the curriculum is organised to incorporate all areas of learning. Assessment procedures are thorough and used appropriately to plan future work. As a result, by the end of the Reception class, most are working at the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. Children achieve particularly well in their personal and social development, because these skills are reinforced throughout the day. Satisfactory use is made of the outdoor area to promote the children's knowledge of being healthy, staying safe, for their physical development, and understanding of the world. However, the outside area requires further development and there is a need for a greater range of outdoor equipment to support learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise expectations of the most able pupils to ensure they attain higher standards by the end of Year 6.
- Improve the consistency and quality of marking so that pupils are fully aware of the next steps to achieve their targets.
- Further develop the use of the outdoor area so that younger pupils can extend their learning in a wider variety of ways.
- Refine the school development plan to include more precise measures by which success can be measured.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged 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

Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2007 were similar to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, as are current standards. In 2007, standards in Year 6 were broadly average in English and mathematics. They were exceptionally low in science because teachers focused on raising standards in English and mathematics. Current standards are in line with expectations in English and mathematics. In science, they are higher than last year but remain below national expectations. Most pupils, including those with who need additional support with their work progress satisfactorily. However, fewer than expected attain the higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are developing a good understanding of other cultures and ways of life through their work in religious education, art and design, music and theme days. Pupils enjoy school and look forward to taking part in residential weekends and sporting activities. They have a good understanding of staying safe and are careful when approaching the building alteration work. Pupils want to take responsibility and contribute to the school community through initiatives such as the school council and acting as 'playground friends'. Their basic skills and ability to work with others are developing satisfactorily. As a result, they are prepared soundly for their next stage in their lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers know their pupils well and have satisfactory skills in teaching the mixed age range classes. Classrooms have interesting displays and materials that promote pupils' enjoyment and positive views of the school. Resources are used effectively to add interest to lessons. The planning of lessons does not always match work to the different needs of pupils. Consequently, some pupils, particularly the more able, receive work that is too easy or difficult. Teaching assistants provide valuable support to individuals and groups of pupils. However, teachers do not make the best use of their skills at the start and end of lessons. As a result, there are times when pupils are waiting for instructions and therefore marking time.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has successfully introduced the new Primary Framework for English and mathematics; in addition a themed approach to planning projects was adopted. There is a suitable four-year rolling programme. Pupils are developing satisfactory skills in English, mathematics and ICT lessons, but, there are too few opportunities for them to use and consolidate these basic skills in other subjects. The curriculum is enriched through the employment of specialist teachers for sport, music and through the teaching of French for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school does not currently offer any after-school clubs. Residential and day visits to places of interest such as the local power station, museums and visitors to the school, together with participation in sporting tournaments, promote pupils' personal development and well-being effectively.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Sound procedures are in place to ensure the safety, security and health of the pupils. The school meets the safeguarding requirements satisfactorily. Child protection procedures are secure. Tracking procedures highlight pupils who are not making expected progress and vulnerable pupils are supported satisfactorily. A sound range of strategies is used to support these pupils, including the use of conscientious teaching assistants. As a result, the pupils progress at a similar rate to their peers. Teachers' marking is generally helpful in identifying what pupils have done well but does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance on how to improve their work to achieve their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

There is a satisfactory and growing capacity for improvement. Following the introduction of more rigorous systems for assessing and recording pupils' standards and progress, teachers are held more accountable for pupils' progress. This is leading to higher standards because the expectations of the teachers and the pupils are rising. The headteacher's outward-looking approach and links with the cluster schools has brought additional resources and support into the school. This has widened links with the community and encouraged the involvement of

parents in their children's learning through the 'share project'. The headteacher's vision is clearly set out in the detailed development plan that reflects the right priorities for the school. Governors are supportive. They give generously of their time by attending fortnightly meetings and contribute much to the development of the school site. However, they do not provide sufficient challenge to the school about the standards achieved.

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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?	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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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	2
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	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	3
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

12 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walpole Cross Keys Primary School, Sutton Road, Walpole Cross Keys, Kings Lynn.
PE34 4HD

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed my visit and I enjoyed talking to you. I was very pleased to find your attendance is above average and to hear that you like school. I thought you were polite, well- behaved and keen to take responsibility.

The school provides you with a satisfactory education. You make steady progress as you move through the school. The standards you reach in English and mathematics are similar to those in most schools, but in science, they are lower than this. Your headteacher and teachers know this and have plans to develop the new building and the school grounds to help you learn more about science. I have asked them to make certain they give priority to making full use of the outdoor areas, especially for the children in Reception, to help you with your learning. There should be more information in the school's plans for the future. This is to help the governors to check how well you are doing in English, mathematics and science.

Your teachers have a difficult task to teach classes with so many year groups but I have asked them to give you more challenging work, particularly those who find learning easier. I have also asked that teachers make sure you know your targets and when they mark your work, as well as praising you, to make certain you are given guidance on how to reach your targets. It is now up to you to take the challenge and really work hard.

Once again, thank you for making my visit so enjoyable.

Good luck for the future.

Best wishes,

David Wynford Jones

Lead inspector.