

# Blenheim Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120907
<b>Local Authority</b>	NORFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	313786
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Declan McCarthy

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	89
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Norman Cooker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Carol Ransome
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Lancaster Road Sculthorpe Fakenham NR21 7PX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01485 528368
<b>Fax number</b>	01485 528368

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector

## Description of the school

Blenheim Park Primary School is smaller than average. It is situated in an isolated rural area on the edge of a disused airfield near Fakenham. The school serves three very distinct and separate communities: Syderstone Village, Blenheim Park Estate and Wicken Green Village as well as three small hamlets. A high proportion (45%) of pupils have moderate or specific learning difficulties. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Attainment of pupils on entry is below the expectations for their ages. There are significant factors of socio-economic disadvantage and high levels of pupil mobility. The school has achieved the Investors in People Award, the School Achievement Award, the Artsmark and the Football Association Charter Standard Award.

## 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. Good leadership and management have ensured that the provision is effective and as a consequence pupils make good progress in their learning. Parents praise the work of the school. They value its high quality of care and find the staff very approachable. The school's warm and friendly atmosphere contributes greatly to strong parental support and very good relationships throughout the school. This, together with the range of interesting activities teachers provide in lessons and the wide range of lunchtime and after school clubs ensures that pupils' enjoyment of learning is outstanding and they are very happy in school. There are good partnerships with other schools and outside agencies which have a positive impact on the school's provision and pupils' achievement.

Good teaching and a good curriculum have led the good achievement of pupils throughout the school. Caution must be taken when comparing the national test result of this school with others as the number of pupils taking the tests is small. Nevertheless, standards have risen steadily over the past three years and are now broadly average. Given the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, this represents good achievement overall. However, pupils' progress in writing is not as good as in reading, mathematics or science. Nevertheless it is satisfactory overall given the high proportion with writing difficulties. Teachers good use of assessment in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and their very good use of resources to promote learning have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. However, assessment in other subjects is underdeveloped so that work is not always sufficiently matched to individual learning needs.

Pupils respond and behave well throughout the school as a result of good care, support and guidance for their personal development. Pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development is also good. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through fund raising and taking responsibilities in school. They make healthy choices and exercise regularly. The school's very good procedures for safeguarding pupils ensure they stay safe and feel secure. The headteacher and senior managers provide good leadership and management and the governing body is effective in supporting the school's work. The headteacher has effectively established very good team work and a strong commitment by staff and governors for school improvement. This has led to good improvement since the last inspection. The school has a good capacity to improve and provides good value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children benefit from a good start during their time in Reception. They settle into their routines quickly and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because of the high quality of care, support and guidance provided for them. The arrangements for gradually introducing children from the on-site nursery are particularly good. Children also make good progress in gaining skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning because teaching and the curriculum are good. Strong teamwork between the teacher and support assistant ensures that routines are secure, lessons are always lively and very good use is made of resources including the large toys and equipment in the newly developed outdoor play area. Good assessment systems are in place to track children's progress and to identify the next steps in their learning. The co-ordinator's effective analysis of assessment information has identified the need for a sharper focus on the development of children's language and

literacy skills. There are strong links with parents who are supportive and well informed about their children's progress. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has established an effective partnership with the Early Years Cluster of local schools. This has led to improvements in the curriculum and an accurate assessment system. There is a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Improve pupils' achievements in writing by further developing their speaking skills and increasing opportunities for creativity.
- Ensure that the good assessment systems and their effective use by teachers for planning and tracking progress in English, mathematics and ICT are extended to other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Because of the small numbers of pupils who take the tests and the high proportion with specific or moderate learning difficulties standards vary from year to year. Nevertheless, there has been a slight rise in standards over the past three years and pupils in Year 6 who were not identified with learning difficulties reached standards in 2006 well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are broadly average overall and pupils throughout the school make good progress in reading, mathematics and science. However, although progress in writing is satisfactory overall, given the low starting points of many pupils, some do not make sufficient progress in this area. The school recognises the need to develop pupils' writing by providing more opportunities for creativity and speaking. The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in lessons and towards their targets due to the good support arrangements and early identification and assessment of their needs.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school promotes this effectively through assemblies, local visits to a church and mosque, and visitors to the school. Circle time and the personal, social, and health education curriculum make a good contribution to moral and social development. Pupils behave well throughout the school. They stay healthy and exercise well. Pupils take responsibility and show good initiative by acting as prefects, and working with younger pupils. They make decisions, through an active school and class council and their views are taken into consideration by staff and governors. As a result pupils make a good contribution to the community through raising funds for school playground equipment. Pupils' thorough enjoyment of learning is seen in the high take-up of extra curricular activities, lunchtime clubs and very good punctuality. Attendance is satisfactory.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and consequently pupils make good progress. This was evident in lessons seen where teaching was consistently good across the school and confirmed the school's self-evaluation. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and as a result, pupils focus on their learning, show respect and behave well in lessons. Teachers make very good use of resources to make learning interesting and fun. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Both parents and pupils confirm that pupils greatly enjoy their lessons. Teachers are making satisfactory use of ICT to support pupils' learning in different subjects. Good use of the new interactive white boards was seen in some lessons. Teachers make good use of marking and assessment for planning in English, mathematics and ICT to ensure work is always matched to the individual needs of pupils. However, they do not make enough use of assessment in other subjects to extend learning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. A wide range of subjects is taught, including French and Spanish. Good planning ensures pupils in different years within the same class, build on their skills, knowledge and understanding from one year to the next. There is a good emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills to enhance pupils' economic well being. A good variety of lunchtime and after school clubs facilitates pupils' excellent enjoyment and enthusiasm for school. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good with very good additional support provided in lessons. There is an effective range of booster classes and additional support, including a catch up programme and one-to-one reading support, which has a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Learning opportunities for personal, social and health education are good and permeate the school. The school acknowledges that there is a need to make more use of ICT in other subjects.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. There are very good systems in place for safeguarding the interests and welfare of pupils. These include thorough vetting procedures, assessments of potential risks and effective Child Protection procedures. The arrangements for supporting pupils with learning difficulties are effective and ensure they make at least good progress. Staff provide good role models for pupils so that relationships throughout the school are very good. There are effective systems in place to monitor and promote attendance. Although there are good systems to track pupils progress in English, mathematics, ICT and in the Foundation Stage, these are not yet developed sufficiently in other subjects.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership to ensure a clear direction for the work of the school and builds effective partnerships with other schools and the community. She receives good support from her senior management

team. All staff and governors have a strong commitment to school improvement. This is seen in the good progress made since the last inspection and good recent improvements in the quality of provision. The subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science systematically check the quality of teaching and learning within their subjects. This has led to good improvements and raised pupils' achievement. Governors provide effective support. They have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development through regular monitoring and support visits to the school. They are involved well in school self-evaluation and improvement. Although the school has a good capacity to improve, leadership has not yet fully assured the consistent use of assessment by teachers across all subjects and the planned initiatives for improving pupils' writing have yet to be fully implemented.

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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 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?	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	1
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?	2
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	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**

20 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blenheim Park Primary School, Fakenham, NR21 7PX

Thank you all for the way you made me so welcome when I visited you recently. It was a pleasure talking to so many of you and finding out how well you are doing. You greatly enjoy being in school and I agree with you that it is a good school. I enjoyed talking to the school council and you are really helping to make improvements to your school.

You are well behaved in school and have very good relationships with each other and all the staff. This helps your learning so you make good progress. The adults take good care of you so you always feel safe. You told me that you would always go to the staff if ever you had a problem or needed help.

Mrs Ransome and the staff work hard to make your school successful. You are making good progress especially in your reading, mathematics and science because you are given lots of different activities which make learning fun. I think the teachers can help you to make even better progress in your writing. I also think that some of you find your work in other subjects is sometimes too easy or too hard so I would like your teachers to make sure you can all do the work that they give to you. Your teachers find out how well you are doing in the most important subjects and I think they could do this with all subjects.

Thank you again for talking to me and helping me during the inspection. Enjoy your time at Blenheim and keep doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Declan McCarthy

Lead inspector