

Salhouse Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121053
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313854
Inspection dates	5–6 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Julie Winyard HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ann Shorten
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Dukes
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Cheyney Avenue Salhouse Norwich Norfolk NR13 6RJ
Telephone number	01603720402
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Salhouse is a smaller than average primary school. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average, there are more pupils with a statement of special educational need than is found in most other schools nationally. There are very few pupils from other than White British backgrounds or with English as an additional language. Well below average numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has achieved Eco Schools bronze and silver awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Salhouse Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and its capacity for further improvement is satisfactory. The staff work well together and the good teamwork creates a learning environment which one parent describes as, 'warm, friendly and very approachable.' The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire endorse this view. Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well because of the good relationships between staff and pupils.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points and attain above average standards. However, the standards they reach vary between subjects. In English there have been marked improvements over the last two years resulting in the standards pupils' reach and the progress they make being better than that seen in most other schools nationally. This is not the case in mathematics and science where currently some pupils do not make the progress they are capable of. This is because the good systems and processes put in place for English, which have brought about the significant improvement in writing since the last inspection have not been applied in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates that, whilst results in mathematics and science in 2007 were lower than those in English, progress is improving this year in Key Stage 2. However, provision is still not good enough for higher achieving pupils who do not make sufficient progress.

Care, guidance and support are generally satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because they are well supported. However, teaching assistants are not always well deployed during lessons. The curriculum is good and there are a wide range of clubs. These contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The day to day management is effective and self-evaluation is mainly accurate. However, leaders and managers do not translate the areas identified for improvement into a sufficiently coherent and clearly prioritised action plan, which will raise standards and progress in mathematics and science quickly enough. For example there is no consistent whole school tracking of pupil progress, staff are not held to account for pupils' progress and successful practice in assessment and marking is not shared or used by all staff.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection and gives satisfactory value for money. However, toilet facilities for the majority of pupils are inadequate. This was raised during the last inspection and, despite the efforts of staff and governors to improve the situation, it remains an issue.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with abilities similar to children nationally except for boys, in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress in all areas of learning and enter Year 1 having achieved the standards expected of them, and many have surpassed them. Teaching and the curriculum meet the children's needs well with work being carefully planned to provide the right level of challenge. Children settle very quickly into school because of the very good liaison with local pre-school providers. Pupils enjoy learning and talk enthusiastically about the activities they are engaged in. Behaviour is good and they work well when not directly supervised by an adult. One child said, 'Let's build this together. When we are building together,

we are working together aren't we?... and I like working with you.' Provision is also made for outside learning. Teaching assistants are carefully briefed and give effective support. Their interventions move learning forward and have a good impact on children's speaking and listening skills.

The Foundation Stage is ably led by a very effective team. They have a good knowledge of what is required and know the children well. They plan the curriculum together and carefully track children's progress. They have an accurate view of the impact of their work on the learning. There are good relationships with parents who are kept well informed about their children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and progress in mathematics and science across the school particularly through increasing the challenge given to higher achieving pupils.
- Fully implement a tracking system for pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science, ensuring that all staff are held accountable through regular pupil progress meetings.
- Improve the quality of teaching by the more effective deployment of teaching assistants and implementing a whole school approach to assessment and marking.
- Improve the pace of school improvement by ensuring that the key priorities identified through self-evaluation are implemented through a coherent whole school action plan which is rigorously monitored.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and standards are above average. Pupils continue to achieve above expected levels from their above average starting points in English, mathematics and science. Progress in Key Stage 2 in English has been consistently good. However, in mathematics and science, progress has slowed and standards have declined over the last two years. Whilst standards at the end of Key Stage 2 remain above those of other schools nationally in English, mathematics and science, progress compared to similar schools is well below expectations in mathematics and science. This is because higher achieving pupils are not doing as well as they should. During the inspection, scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that progress has improved this term in science. Lesson observations show some improvement in mathematics. However, this is not yet reflected in pupils' written work. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress throughout the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their time in school and speak with enthusiasm of the many interesting experiences with which they are provided. In spite of this attendance is only satisfactory due to the high number of holidays taken during term time, which the school is working hard to reduce. Behaviour is good in class and in the playground. Pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is good. They are considerate of the needs of others, learning to think about others less fortunate than themselves and are quick to contribute to charities such as Children in Need. The school and class councils enable the pupils to make a good contribution to the community of the school and the local community, for example to the parish plan's development of the village.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and this is reflected in their sensible food choices. Sports clubs are oversubscribed and pupils talk keenly about their daily exercise sessions. Due to a school travel plan, more children now walk or cycle to school. Pupils' display an outstanding regard for the safety and well-being of others as shown in their excellent behaviour and attitudes inside and outside the school. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and their future lives. Whilst they develop good personal and literacy skills, there is still work to be done in helping pupils gain the required progress in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT).

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, the quality of teaching between classes is inconsistent. In the good lessons, a range of assessment strategies and tasks are provided which are well matched to pupils' needs. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, the focus of the learning is not always made clear enough and some pupils are not always well supported by teaching assistants, particularly during the whole class teaching session. Lesson planning is not consistent between classes or year groups. Activities for higher achieving pupils often do not provide an appropriate level of challenge and worksheets restrict opportunities for effective learning. The use of targets to help pupils improve is just beginning and this is not consistently applied across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and covers the full range of subjects, with many additional features to make learning exciting and enjoyable. As one parent said, 'this school offers my child a good curriculum, additional clubs and has a fantastic Eco council.' The good range of extra-curricular clubs, such as dancing, sports and nature, are enthusiastically received by the pupils. Specialist teaching in physical education and the use of the local community as a learning environment greatly enhances pupils' enjoyment and progress in learning. The school is developing the curriculum to make it more interesting and relevant with stronger links between the subjects. A good example was seen where one class studying Ancient Greeks had made imaginative and creative links between Literacy, Art and information and communication technology (ICT). Support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well planned, ensuring that they make good progress. There has been insufficient investment in updating computer equipment, which is restricting pupils' progress in ICT.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is a friendly environment, where pupils are happy and their pastoral needs are well met. Child protection procedures are fully in place as are all required systems for those pupils who need additional care. There is very good oversight of health and safety procedures by teachers. Staff enhance the children's personal development well because they want what is best for them. The school works well with external agencies, which supports the good achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Though satisfactory, pupils' academic development is not as rigorous or as strong as pastoral care and the tracking of all

pupils' progress on a termly basis is still to be embedded. The effectiveness of teaching assistants is inconsistent across the school. Where it is good they provide a balance of support and challenge, knowing when it is appropriate to intervene and when it is better to focus their support on other pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Suitable systems and processes are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's work and the achievement of pupils. The school's self-evaluation recognises appropriate areas for improvement but it is not sufficiently focused. This means the key priorities that will have a real impact on learning are not always reflected in the range of action plans produced by the very enthusiastic and committed subject leaders. In addition, the outcomes of the evaluations are not clearly prioritised or followed up consistently, slowing the rate of school improvement. Over the last two years, leadership and management of English has had a good impact on raising standards and progress through effective monitoring, assessment and target setting. However, this is not the case in mathematics and science, where these effective systems are not being applied consistently and good practice is not being shared or implemented across the school. The leadership for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good and makes a strong contribution to pupils' good achievement.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are linked successfully to subject areas and work with subject leaders in developing and monitoring their action plans. However, Governors do not yet provide sufficient challenge to school leaders. For example, with regard to their success in addressing identified weaknesses in mathematics and science.

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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	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?	2
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

7 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Salhouse Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Salhouse, NR13 6RJ

We would like to thank you very much for making us feel so welcome in your school. We really enjoyed the two days we were with you. We saw you working hard in your lessons. You work and play together very well. We were particularly impressed with how well you look after each other and all the clubs that the teachers arrange for you. The school council and Eco council are doing a very good job to make sure your views are listened to and we wish you every success with your Gold Eco Schools Award.

While we were at your school, we visited lessons, looked at your work and talked with your teachers. You behave well in lessons and listen well to your teachers. Most of the work you are given is at about the right level of challenge but for some of you it can be too easy especially in mathematics and science. We have asked your school to make the following improvements to help you learn even better.

- Improve the progress you make in mathematics and science in every class, making sure work is not too easy for you.
- Check that you are all making good progress at least once a term.
- Make sure the teaching assistants are using all their time in the lesson to help you and that, when teachers mark your work, you know exactly what you need to do to improve.
- Write a clear action plan for how the school is going to improve its work, that everyone understands, uses and which helps the school to give you an even better quality education.

I am sure you will continue to work hard and help your school to be a place where everyone can do their best in every subject all the time.

With very best wishes for every success in your future learning,

Julie Winyard HMI