

# Saxlingham Nethergate CofE VC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121054
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	313855
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Jones

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	65
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr William Goff
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Christine Gibson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 July 2003
<b>School address</b>	Church Hill Saxlingham Nethergate Saxlingham Norwich Norfolk NR15 1TD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01508 499271
<b>Fax number</b>	01508 499271

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Saxlingham Nethergate is a small school of 65 pupils organised into three classes. Most pupils are of White British origin and all pupils speak English as their first language. Very few pupils are eligible for a free school meal. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools Status and the Activemark for sport. The school is currently undertaking an extensive rebuilding programme, scheduled to be finished by the summer of 2008. Children's attainment on entry to Reception is broadly in line with national expectations, although it varies from year to year because of the small numbers involved.

## 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. The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school in establishing a caring community. The school uses its small size to advantage by promoting a strong family ethos and consequently, pupils are extremely happy within it. A clear set of values underpins the school's work and leads to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. They have very positive attitudes to their learning and report that they enjoy lessons, particularly when they are 'fun' and 'interesting'. They respond well to the high expectations of teachers and their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils' good attendance reflects their considerable enjoyment of school life.

The school has maintained good progress since the last inspection. Central to improvement is the extensive rebuilding programme, which is planned to provide opportunities to develop learning in a much improved environment. The school is led well by the headteacher. She receives the enthusiastic support of the governing body, although their involvement in self-evaluation is too limited to hold the headteacher effectively to account for her work.

Teaching has been strengthened, particularly at Key Stage 2, and is now consistently good and occasionally better. Therefore, pupils' achievement has continued to improve and the standards reached are above, and sometimes well above, average. Teaching usually reflects a careful match of tasks to pupils' needs although there are occasions when pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to think for themselves and develop independent learning skills. The school has established good systems to set targets and track progress. These have been a significant factor in raising standards and pupils have responded well to the challenge presented by their targets. Their work is marked consistently, and they regularly receive good quality feedback on the progress made towards their targets or the purposes of the lesson.

The curriculum is interesting and relevant, and pupils say they particularly enjoy the many additional musical activities and extra opportunities offered by the school. Classrooms display a good array of pupils' work in a wide range of subjects. The school has established good links with other external partners to enhance the opportunities that this small school is able to offer. The school works very well with a range of support agencies, and this promotes learning effectively. Most parents like the school and speak highly of its work, although some are not totally satisfied with their relationship with the headteacher.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is led and managed effectively. Children feel safe and happy, because the staff are caring and provide a warm and friendly environment. The varied and well-planned activities ensure that children make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff provide a good blend of direct teaching and allow children to explore and work independently. As a result, children make good progress and attain standards that are higher than national expectations by the end of Reception. They enjoy the varied opportunities to extend their learning through the well planned curriculum. Due to the current building works, opportunities for outdoor learning are more limited than usual. However, good use is made of the available space.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Foster pupils' independent learning skills so that they are more active in developing their own learning.
- Develop the role of governors to monitor the school's work better and more accurately assess the school's performance.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Almost all children attain the expected goals at the end of the Foundation Stage and a significant minority exceed them. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and achieve standards well above their peers nationally. Progress has been slower at Key Stage 2 because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Recent improvements have resulted in increases to the standards achieved, particularly in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels. Achievement in Key Stage 2 is improving and by the time pupils leave school at Year 6 they have made good progress from their starting points. Pupils who need extra support with their learning receive prompt and effective support and, as a result, achieve well throughout the school.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding; pupils respond very positively to the many opportunities provided to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their behaviour is excellent. Pupils enjoy school, as reflected in their good levels of attendance. They show outstanding social development, for example, in the caring way that pupils share and organise activities in the playground and the way that they collaborate in the classroom. They act responsibly without supervision when carrying out a range of duties independently, and they follow the school motto well in recognising others' rights, respecting rules and to rising to their responsibilities. Pupils make a valuable contribution to the school community, for example by taking responsibility for running the healthy tuck shop, which helps prepare them well for the next stage of their education and their future lives. Pupils are confident and articulate and respond well to opportunities to implement their own ideas. The active and enthusiastic school council has taken action to make playtimes more enjoyable by making improvements to the school grounds and by purchasing playground resources. Pupils have an excellent understanding about healthy eating and lifestyles. They feel safe at school and are confident that adults will help them with any problems that arise.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of work. Lesson planning is thoughtful and often includes a wide range of activities that sustain interest. Strong partnerships between teachers and learning assistants lead to effective support for pupils, particularly those who need additional support or find learning more difficult. Teachers set clear expectations of what pupils are to learn so that they are aware of what they are doing and why it is important. In the best lessons, these aims are reinforced well throughout the lesson. Teachers assess pupils' progress well and use their findings to plan lessons to suit the varying needs of groups and

individuals within the class. They often match their questions to the different ages and abilities in their classes and use these techniques effectively to promote thinking and reinforce learning. However, activities are sometimes too directed by the teacher, and in these lessons opportunities to develop pupils' independent learning and thinking skills are missed. Most pupils have a clear understanding of their personal learning targets. Marking gives pupils a clear view of what they need to do to improve, and there is an effective dialogue between teachers and pupils that helps support future progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum provides a rich and well-balanced experience within the mixed-age classes without repeating themes. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well planned across all years and contributes directly to the very positive outcomes in personal development. Although coverage of subjects is appropriate, opportunities to promote independent learning by the pupils are not planned in as frequently as they could be. Take-up for the many and varied extracurricular activities is high, and the curriculum is supported by a wide range of educational visits. Pupils enjoy participating in themed events such as anti-bullying week, and the school has plans to develop these. Music is a particular strength of provision, and all pupils take part enthusiastically in the wide range of activities provided.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The excellent care and support provided for pupils are rooted in the strong relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers check pupils' well-being carefully to identify problems early and deal with them sensitively. They monitor academic progress with impressive effect so that they know who needs further challenge or support. Pupils who need additional support or those who find learning more difficult are supported well, and specialists from outside agencies work successfully to help pupils with specific difficulties. There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress. The school uses data to identify pupils with particular needs so that work can be provided to support them. Effective additional support is given when pupils are not reaching the expected levels. The use of personal targets has had a beneficial effect on the improvements to pupils' progress, especially at Key Stage 2 where there were previous weaknesses. There are good links to help transition to secondary school. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils are implemented appropriately.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher leads very well, with a clear focus on raising standards and improving achievement within a caring environment. She has made improvements to good effect. For example, she has recognised the shortcomings in teaching in Key Stage 2 and introduced successful improvements. The increase in the number of teaching assistants has improved the quality of teaching and learning by providing appropriate additional support for those who need it. The headteacher monitors the school's work, including the quality of teaching and learning regularly, and the evaluation of lesson planning, to ensure that pupils are doing as well as they can. The school's improvement planning is well-focused and built on accurate evaluation of strengths and areas for development. However, much of the monitoring is carried

out by the headteacher and sometimes by the staff, but the governors' self-evaluation procedures are not as well developed as they could be. Nevertheless, the effective work of the headteacher and the improvement since the last inspection indicate that the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

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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	2
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	1
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

<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	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**

11 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Saxlingham Nethergate CE Primary School, Saxlingham Nethergate, Norwich, NR14 1TD

you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I would like to tell you what I think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn. I like many things about your school.

Some of them are:

- you behave very well and get on well with each other
- you achieve high standards
- you make good progress because the teachers are good at helping you to learn
- the school is good at organising lots of interesting things for you to do
- all of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after
- your headteacher, and all of the other people who help run your school, make sure that you get a good education.

I agree with you that you go to a good school. All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. I think that the most important thing for them to do is to help you become more involved in learning by giving you lots of opportunities to be more independent in your work. I am also asking the governors to keep a more careful eye on the progress of the school. You can play your part by continuing to work hard, doing your very best and enjoying your time at school.

I enjoyed talking with you and finding out all about your good school.

Ian Jones

Lead inspector