

Hindringham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 121086 |
| Local Authority | Norfolk |
| Inspection number | 313869 |
| Inspection dates | 18–19 June 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Richard Cheetham |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 49 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr John Burrows |
| Headteacher | Mrs Sue du bois |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 December 2003 |
| School address | Wells Road Hindringham Fakenham Norfolk NR21 0PL |
| Telephone number | 01328878323 |
| Fax number | |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school serving a rural community of average socio-economic circumstances. Nearly all its pupils are from White British backgrounds and they start school with broadly average levels of attainment. This does vary year-on-year due to the small numbers in each year group. Greater numbers of pupils than usual move in and out of the school; this feature also affects the attainment in each year group. The number on roll has declined since the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average as is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school gained the Activemark in 2007. Since the previous inspection, the school has a new headteacher and now works in a partnership federation with Blakeney CE Primary School. The headteacher leads both schools, which have separate governing bodies.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It gives good value for money and has improved well since the previous inspection. This is largely due to the good leadership of the headteacher who has worked hard to bring the two schools together in a working partnership. She is very well supported by an involved governing body and the strong teamwork of the staff. Through their strategic planning and commitment, they ensure that the school has a good capacity to continue its improvement. Parents strongly support the school and one commented, 'I am very happy with the school and am glad my kids go there.' This echoes the pupils' views. They greatly enjoy the school's rich curriculum and school life in general. Year 6 pupils can vividly recall work they completed up to two years ago, so deeply were they engrossed.

Pupils' personal development is good and their behaviour and enjoyment of school life are outstanding. The school's promotion of healthy lifestyles leads to pupils' high uptake of sporting opportunities and their enjoyment of healthy school meals. Their personal development helps pupils to achieve well, although standards vary each year because of the small numbers in each year group. Last year for instance, Year 6 standards were above average and this year they are average. However, this current picture still represents good achievement from pupils' starting points because a number of pupils have left or arrived at the school before the end of Year 6. Due to accurate assessment of pupils' progress introduced by the headteacher, the school has pinpointed some potential underachievement and through focused teaching enabled pupils to progress well. While some pupils achieve higher than expected standards in English and mathematics, none do so in investigative science or information and communication technology (ICT) because not enough is expected of them. Pupils reach high standards in art and design due to expert teaching. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and has some good features. In some classes, this is consistently strong, although this consistency is not evident across the school. Occasionally, the monitoring of teaching is not rigorous enough. Elements have improved recently which account for pupils' good progress in English and mathematics. Sometimes teachers' marking does not routinely lead to improvement in pupils' work.

Pupils' good progress also stems from the way they feel secure in school, their receptiveness to learning and their confidence in what they can attempt. Younger pupils learn positive attitudes from the fine example older ones set. They all get many opportunities to succeed. For instance, this year over half of the pupils have represented the school in local sporting events. The school has a strong presence in local music and drama festivals. These experiences widen pupils' horizons and the school's expectations foster excellent social and moral development and behaviour. The school cares well for its pupils and has good systems for their welfare.

Leadership and management are good and continue to result in improvements. For example, the innovatively designed school extension to provide better Foundation and Years 1 and 2 accommodation. Teaching staff are now leading developments in English and mathematics well and taking a lead in other subjects such as physical education and art and design. The school is starting to make good use of its partnership school links to lead staff development in science. Interim leadership, when the headteacher is working in the partnership school, is satisfactory. However, it is not maintaining the same drive for improvement because roles, responsibilities and expectations are not well defined. Leadership of provision for pupils with learning difficulties helps them make good progress because of the effective support pupils receive. However, the administration and documentation relating to the pupils' targets and plans are not organised efficiently.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and make good progress from their varied starting points. They reach at least the level expected of them by the start of Year 1 and a good proportion achieve beyond this. Learning is skilfully organised by the class teacher whose productive partnership with the learning support assistant enables her to lead and manage the Foundation Stage provision well. The youngest pupils benefit from working alongside Years 1 and 2 pupils for part of each day because they learn from them and it raises their expectations of themselves. At other times, they work separately with the assistant following effective plans made with the class teacher. Accommodation is satisfactory. Staff overcome the lack of direct access to outdoor learning through careful timetabling and seizing the right moment in tune with children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enable pupils to reach the higher level of attainment in ICT and investigative science.
- Ensure that all teaching and learning are consistently good by providing greater rigour when evaluating teaching and learning.
- Provide good quality interim leadership through clearly defined roles and expectations and efficient leadership of provision for pupils who find learning difficult through improvements in its administration.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards vary year-on-year due to small year groups and pupils transferring to and from other schools. Current standards are average in Year 6 but these still represent good achievement. Standards are below average in Year 2. In this group only one pupil has been at the school continuously since Reception. However, school records show that all the pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and most aspects of science and there are examples of above expected attainment in Year 6 in all three subjects. The school has used its accurate information on pupils' attainment to target specific learning weaknesses and bring about improvement. Speaking and listening skills are generally above average because pupils have ample opportunities to develop these. This cannot be said for higher level learning skills in investigative science and ICT, which pupils consequently do not attain.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils develop very positive attitudes to school and learning because their engagement in its rich curriculum builds their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with particular strengths in moral and social development. Pupils carry out responsibilities such as house captains, school councillors or dining table leaders very well. This underpins very good relationships and the school's ethos of caring for one another. Pupils behave excellently. They are very well-mannered and unfailingly polite. They are attentive and confident in class, which supports their good progress. Attendance is usually good but recent term time holidays have reduced this to average. Pupils make a strong contribution to the school community, to the local cluster of schools and local events. They make good progress in developing their economic understanding through their involvement in enterprises such as growing and selling rhubarb.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Improvements in teaching and learning this year have had a clear impact on pupils' progress in English and mathematics, especially in Years 3 to 5. Good quality teaching is becoming the norm across the school but it is not yet fully consistent. However, the teaching, strengthened by pupils' positive attitudes to their work and the strong curriculum, enable pupils to make good progress. Relationships are very good and give pupils the confidence to develop their ideas. Teachers' planning is thorough and expectations of what pupils can achieve are generally high, for instance in art and design or in writing. However, they are not high enough to provide challenging investigative work in science or wider application of ICT skills. Sport and physical activities are well promoted, build pupils' confidence and support their good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned in themes and enables pupils in mixed age classes to make good progress. Although literacy and numeracy skills are taught separately and are included more regularly in this thematic approach than previously, this is not systematic. At the centre of the school's imaginative curriculum are topics such as 'Take One Picture'. This starts with a detailed study of a painting, from which pupils branch out and develop their skills in subjects such as design and technology, history and geography. Pupils enjoy recalling experiences such as a Roman Feast as part of a topic from which they learned a lot. They also like their regular success in inter-school competitions both sporting and literary. Pupils who find learning difficult, such as in reading and writing, benefit from good support.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The assessment and tracking of pupils' progress has improved so that teaching is better focused on specific areas pupils find difficult in reading, writing and mathematics. The system also enables staff to set challenging pupil targets but teachers' marking of pupils' work does not make best use of these to lead regularly to improvement. Procedures to keep pupils' safe and secure are firmly in place and there are good child protection arrangements. Pastoral support is good, staff know pupils very well who feel secure in confiding in adult staff members. This caring approach is augmented by the pupil-initiated system of 'buddying' which is working well and providing younger ones with reassurance and friendship.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has taken a strong lead in addressing the previous issues for improvement and in successfully engaging staff in their work as leaders across the school. Curriculum leadership in English and mathematics is good. The development of the partnership arrangement is beginning to bear fruit to provide improved curriculum leadership in both schools, especially in science. Interim leadership, whilst the headteacher is elsewhere, and for provision for pupils who find learning difficult, is not fully effective. The rigorous focus on improving pupils' progress

has yielded good results but the same rigour is not used when evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, teaching and learning quality is not yet consistently good. Wider aspects of school's self-evaluation are good. They involve staff and governors in identifying the right development priorities and implementing a good improvement plan to address them. Excellent long-term vision and careful financial management have resulted in the imminent improvement of the accommodation. The governors have supported the school very well through periods of previous leadership difficulty. They now stand four square with the headteacher in providing good strategic support and challenge.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

| | |
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| 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

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 1 |
| 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? | 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? | 2 |

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

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 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 |

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Hindringham CE Primary School, Hindringham, NR21 0PL

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I came away with a lasting impression of how outstandingly well you enjoy school and how excellently behaved and polite you are. You especially enjoy your sport and get a lot from competing with other schools. I really enjoyed discussing your work with you. I was particularly interested when you told me about how much you had enjoyed learning about Holland, painting, windmills and bread baking when Year 3 and 4 took part in the 'Take One Picture' project. You have very good memories!

This letter tells you what other things I found out about your school. It is a good school and helps you make good progress because it gives you many chances to do well at different things. It helps you develop confidence in yourselves and care about others. You feel safe in school, you trust the adults and follow the good example set by the older pupils. You make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and most parts of science. However, you can do even better in science investigations and in ICT so I have asked the teachers to help you do this. I have also asked everyone to make sure that all your lessons are good so that you can get the most out of them.

The headteacher, teachers and governors help one another to lead and manage your school well. When the headteacher is working at Blakeney School, I have asked her to make sure that your school carries on improving just as fast as when she is with you. I would also like the work for those of you who find learning quite difficult at times to be better organised.

With best wishes for the future

Richard Cheetham

Lead inspector