

Hockering CE VC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121094
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313873
Inspection date	15 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Fry

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	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr D Brown
Headteacher	Mr M Long
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002
School address	The Street Hockering NR20 3HN
Telephone number	01603 880310
Fax number	01603 880418

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	15 January 2008
Inspection number	313873

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hockering Primary is much smaller than average and serves the village and the surrounding area. Children enter Reception with knowledge and skills that vary greatly from year to year, but are broadly typical of young children nationally. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and an average proportion have a statement of educational need. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than in most schools nationally. All pupils are White British and their first language is English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hockering CE VC Primary provides a satisfactory education for pupils. They achieve satisfactorily and are on course to reach the nationally expected standards in Years 2 and 6 this year. Standards vary greatly from year to year, because numbers of pupils in each year group are very low. Nevertheless, from their starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress. Over the last five years, standards have gradually improved in English and mathematics from very low to broadly average. This is because, for example, the teaching has increasingly provided pupils with work that challenges them at the right level. The school also has a stable staff that is tackling the issues that face the school, such as lower standards in science. The school is aware that pupils' investigative skills are a key area for improvement. Pupils who find learning difficult make steady progress because of the well chosen programmes provided to boost their progress in English and mathematics.

Pupils' personal development is good because everyone is so well known and all have a very important part to play in school life. Parents confirm this and one said, 'We really like the way children of different ages get on well together.' All pupils have opportunities to make suggestions about how the school could be improved, which they take very seriously. Hence, pupils enjoy their education very much and their behaviour is excellent. These two key qualities are also the result of the positive attitudes that pupils bring to school and the way that teachers make lessons interesting. Younger pupils' powers of concentration are exceptional.

The teaching is satisfactory. Teachers and the teaching assistants help pupils learn by introducing new ideas, reinforcing their knowledge and encouraging them to take part confidently in everything. However, there are occasions when children in the Foundation Stage do not have sufficient opportunities to choose appropriate learning activities. Teaching emphasises the use of practical skills in all subjects, such as making cubes in different ways in mathematics, which pupils enjoy and, as a result, quickens their rate of progress. However, teachers do not give enough attention to the quality of presentation of work and some pupils' work is untidy. The good curriculum interests pupils with projects, such as energy conservation, which really grips their imaginations.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Pupils' steadily improving standards of work are evidence of good teamwork amongst staff. Since the last inspection, there has also been improvement in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Governors have a good understanding of what the school has achieved to date. The school knows itself well and governors' checks on its work have helped the school move forward. The school gives sound value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make a satisfactory start in the mixed Reception and Key Stage 1 class. They typically reach the goals expected nationally by the end of the year. Children make satisfactory progress and they enjoy learning. The teaching is satisfactory and has good elements. Children feel safe and secure and they learn the important skills that they need to be able to read, write and use numbers soundly because adults reinforce these skills regularly. Each child receives much personal attention, because the pupil to adult ratio is so good. There are occasions when children do not have enough opportunities to choose appropriate indoor and outdoor activities, as

recommended in the Foundation Stage Curriculum. However, children have exciting experiences, such as when they learned about Florence Nightingale. Children treat their classroom and each other with respect and interest, which reflects the personal and social programme the school offers. They respond well to what they are offered and quickly adapt into new routines, such as working on their own during some activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress and standards of work in science by developing their investigative skills.
- Improve the provision in the Foundation Stage by extending the range of activities and opportunities for children to make choices.
- Improve the quality of pupils' work by placing greater emphasis on teaching good presentation skills.

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

Records of progress confirm that the more able pupils make the progress they should. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics. Pupils typically reach their targets, which are often challenging for them. Standards in science have been lower than in other subjects and in the past they have been unsatisfactory. This is because the school has not focused enough on pupils' understanding of investigative and experimental work. Swimming standards are higher than expected and every pupil learns to swim.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils, irrespective of age, have an exceptional sense of responsibility. The size of the school means that all pupils act as school council members and care greatly about what is going on; they make sensible suggestions about how the school might be improved. Attendance is satisfactory. All pupils express their great enjoyment and show their commitment to the school during lessons and at other times. Even the youngest children have great powers of concentration to the very end of the day. Behaviour is excellent, which was particularly noticeable on a wet day.

Pupils make good contributions to the community and parish, joining in activities and providing concerts for parents and the village, twice a year. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of looking after their bodies through eating healthily, exercising frequently and staying safe. They know that members of staff are ready to listen to any concerns they have. Pupils join their secondary schools having been prepared soundly academically and equipped very well personally for the challenges ahead.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers meet pupils' needs in mixed age classes effectively by matching the work to the abilities of small groups, and occasionally individuals. However, staff at Key Stage 1 do not always supervise the groups to ensure that they are on task. The teaching consolidates pupils' knowledge by revising key points at the end of lessons and at different points during lessons. Teachers encourage pupils' enthusiasm for subjects by asking questions and developing their answers, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress, and are fully involved in the work of each class. They keep accurate records of pupils' progress and responses as they work. Teachers also keep accurate records of pupils' progress and standards of work over time. This information is in various forms, and the school is consolidating it using ICT, so that trends are clearer to see. Not enough emphasis is given to the quality of presentation of pupils' work, such as letter and number formation and the layout of work on a page.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers plan the provision for English and mathematics thoroughly, and pupils make steady progress. They plan effectively for the more able, so that they have challenging work. The school has up-to-date ICT equipment, which supports pupils' learning in a wide variety of subjects. Pupils have completed a very interesting unit of work about energy, where they worked with the National Trust. Initiatives such as this make pupils very enthusiastic about school and develop their self-confidence. They have learned, for example, that the school can save electricity by turning lights off when they are not needed and that this is good for the environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Typical of parents' comments is, 'My child has thrived from the individual attention she has received.' The staff provide pupils with a nurturing environment where everyone knows each other very well. Those who find learning difficult receive sound individual support so that they are able to make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils grow in self-esteem because of the strong relationships between everyone. They enjoy the many rewards that the school offers, in particular seeing their photos on the wall commending their good work and deeds. The school has benefited from the expertise of a visiting teacher. She has provided examples of very detailed marking of pupils' books, so that pupils know exactly what is good and what they need to do next. This is an area for the school to develop. Arrangements for ensuring the safety of pupils are adequate.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Staff have a clear, accurate and realistic understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher provides stability and a good lead. Although progress has not

always been as quick as staff would like, the school is improving because there is a good team spirit. The school has begun work on improving standards in science and the new system for recording pupils' assessments. The headteacher and governors have made considerable efforts to link up with other small schools, so that expertise can be shared, but with limited success. The governors make a good contribution to the school's work. They keep a close watch on the budget and have a planned programme of visits to ensure that pupils make the progress that they should. The local authority has provided good support for the school. Overall, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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	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	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?	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

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	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

16 January 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Hockering CE VC Primary School, Hockering, NR20 3HN

It was good to meet you all and to listen to your views. This letter is to give you a flavour of what is in my full report.

Here are some of the good features of your school.

- You make steady progress from Reception to Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You enjoy school very much because teachers and other adults care for you and help you to learn.
- You settled well to your work about Florence Nightingale in Class 1 and your science experiments in Class 2.
- You get on well with one another. Younger children are particularly good at concentrating on what they do.
- Your headteacher, the staff and governors work well as a team to improve your school.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You all help the school by making good suggestions for improvement.

Your headteacher and I have noticed that there are some things that the school can do to improve. I have asked your headteacher to:

- help you make better progress in science by developing your investigative skills
- improve the range of choices and activities you have in Reception
- help you improve the way you present your work.

I hope that you will all keep on working hard, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

Roger Fry

Lead Inspector