

Homefield VC CofE First and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121097
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313874
Inspection date	18 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Heather Weston 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	3-8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	264
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Iain Collingwood
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Davis
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2002
School address	Homefield Avenue Bradwell Great Yarmouth Norfolk NR31 8NS
Telephone number	01493 661691
Fax number	01493 444686

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and of the Foundation Stage and investigated the following issues: the standards being reached by all groups of current pupils; the quality of teaching and the curriculum; and equality of opportunity and inclusion, with particular regard to behaviour and attendance. Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents, parent questionnaires, and discussions with staff, pupils and parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Homefield School is slightly larger than most similar schools, and has a 52 place nursery. Pupils come from a broad range of backgrounds, although the proportion eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is low, and few have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly lower than average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school has an after-school club, and holds the Sports Active Mark.

In September 2008, the school will begin the first phase of its re-organisation to become an all age primary, to be completed by July 2010.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Homefield School is a good school with outstanding features. It promotes real equality of opportunity. Developing the well-being of all pupils in every way is the core purpose of the school. This clear vision and commitment, driven by the headteacher and deputy head, and shared by all staff, means that all pupils do better than similar pupils nationally. Staff truly reflect on the social, emotional, behavioural, and above all, learning needs of every pupil. All groups of pupils reach higher standards and make better progress than similar pupils make nationally.

Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly in line with national expectations. Due to good provision, they make good progress in the Foundation Stage, to enter Key Stage 1 with above average standards. Apart from a slight dip in 2006, standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 have been above average in reading and writing and broadly average in mathematics. In 2007, standards were above average in all subjects. Current pupils are making good progress towards their targets, although pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2008 are not expected to reach such high standards as in previous years due to the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties and a smaller proportion of more able pupils.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. There are some outstanding features. Pupils say they enjoy school, feel safe and know that any problems they have will be dealt with. Because of falling attendance, the school is rightly having a concerted drive to reduce absence. As a result, pupils miss fewer days learning, and attendance is satisfactory. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' development are outstanding overall. The school can rightly claim that 'mutual respect, care and valuing of others' are shown by both staff and pupils. Pupils are very welcoming, and demonstrate thought, care and understanding to others. Behaviour in lessons and around the school, including on the playground, is good. A number of parents expressed real concern about the impact of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and the effectiveness of school leaders in relation to the management of behaviour. Some also felt that the headteacher did not listen to their views. However, pastoral support is outstanding and the school is addressing issues of behaviour very well. The appointment of a lead behaviour professional and a pastoral mentor has strengthened the school's behaviour management structure. They work closely with pupils, parents, teachers, support assistants and outside agencies, including the local Pupil Referral Unit, and the management of behaviour is now very effective. Pupils, who expressed a balanced view, recognised that some pupils have difficulty in controlling their behaviour, but said that they are learning to behave well, and do not interfere with the learning of others. Pupils' understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles is outstanding, and they have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They make an outstanding contribution to both the school and wider communities. Because of their very good basic skills, and the opportunities provided by the school to develop economic understanding, their economic well-being is also outstanding.

Teaching and learning are good overall and some is outstanding. Senior leaders are aware of variation in the quality of teaching, and are working with staff to improve practice. The school carefully tracks pupil progress to identify any who fall behind. Action is taken promptly to prevent underachievement and make sure that pupils catch up. Staff know pupils very well, and use data well to ensure that activities in lessons are planned at just the right level for all groups of pupils. A key feature of teaching is that teachers ensure pupils have good learning

skills. In each lesson, for example, pupils know what they are expected to learn and they assess their own learning. They regularly use 'traffic light' cards to show teachers how much of a challenge their work is giving them. Close attention is paid to the development of pupils' thinking skills, and to collaboration and teamwork. However, the quality of marking and feedback, and the use of targets, are inconsistent and are not sufficiently effective in letting pupils know how to improve their work and make the next steps in their learning. In addition, whilst the presentation of pupils' work in some classes is outstanding, in others it is only satisfactory. Teaching assistants, who are deployed well by teachers, give quality support.

Teaching is underpinned by an outstanding, rich and varied curriculum, designed to match the full range of pupils' abilities and to support their personal development and well-being. Activities are planned across the curriculum to promote interest and develop key skills. Wherever possible, these suit pupils' styles of learning and are interesting, stimulating and practical. As a result, pupils are highly engaged and have a positive attitude to their work. A strong focus is given to the development of the social and emotional aspects of learning. The range of enrichment opportunities such as theme weeks, sports coaching, visits and visitors provide the icing on the cake! The quality of care, guidance and support is good and pastoral support is outstanding. Effective partnerships with other agencies provide outstanding support for pupils with particular learning difficulties and/or disabilities all of whom are given very good support. Safeguarding procedures meet government requirements. Attention paid to child protection, risk assessments, and the health and safety of pupils is robust.

Good leadership and management has created this good quality provision. Key areas of responsibility are distributed between staff, and all are aware that they are accountable for pupils' progress and welfare. Governors provide a good level of challenge and support. Self-evaluation processes are outstanding, and the impact of action to improve provision demonstrates that the school has outstanding capacity to improve. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Owing to the effective induction programme, which includes home visits, children make a secure start to their learning. They make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception years because the careful assessment of pupils' learning means that the broad range of stimulating and interesting activities is well matched to their needs. The Foundation Stage leader has an accurate understanding of the quality of provision, and consistency of approach is ensured through joint planning. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe. During their time in the Foundation Stage, they quickly develop

positive attitudes to learning, a sense of self-worth, independence and the ability to cooperate very well with each other. Staff promote close liaison with parents through for example, notices and newsletters, and through the 'classbook' which helps parents to develop a greater understanding of their child's learning. Good arrangements are in place to ensure that children make a smooth transition into Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Establish consistency in the quality of presentation of pupils' work.
- Ensure target setting, marking and feedback inform pupils how to improve their work and make the next steps in their learning.

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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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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?	2
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	2
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	1
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?	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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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

19 March 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Homefield First School and Nursery, Bradwell, Norfolk NR31 8NS

I thoroughly enjoyed visiting your school and meeting you all. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for talking to me. I know that you really enjoy being at your school and that you enjoy your work. I think you go to a good school. I was very impressed by the way you all work together and the respect you all show each other. I was also very impressed by your understanding of how to be healthy and the work you do in your village and local area. Raising 700 pounds for Comic Relief by singing to people is remarkable!

The adults at your school are a very good team. They look after you extremely well, and importantly, want you to do as well as you can in your learning in every way possible. Because of this, you all make good progress in your work. There are some things which I have asked Mrs Davis and the other teachers to do to help you make even better progress. These are:

- Make sure that all of you always work as neatly as possible.
- Make sure that you know how to improve your work and how to make the next steps in your learning.

I hope you all had a good Easter holiday and are looking forward to the exciting things you are going to do this term.

With best wishes

Heather Weston HMI