

Carleton Rode Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121110
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	313879
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	60
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neil Parsons
Headteacher	Mr David Street
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Road Carleton Rode Norwich Norfolk NR16 1RW
Telephone number	01953789384

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school serves the village of Carleton Rode and surrounding area. Although many pupils live locally, over 50% are drawn from further afield. Almost all of them are from White British backgrounds and all have English as their first language. Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is typical for children's age although it varies markedly year-on-year and there is a wide range of ability in each of the three classes. A higher number of pupils than in many schools join and leave during the academic year. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is below average and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

The school shares its site with a playgroup which is privately run.

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 that provides good value for money. It has made good progress since the last inspection and is well placed to maintain this momentum. The school benefits from dedicated leadership from the headteacher who has systematically developed teamwork to help achieve a climate for improvement. One delighted parent, whose views are echoed by many others, commented, 'The headteacher has been a credit to the school and the last few years' development has been due to his leadership and vision.' The school has the respect of the community that it serves and works well with other schools, particularly in developing the curriculum and providing for those pupils with learning difficulties.

Standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are rising again after a period of decline. This is because children are given a secure start to their learning by good provision in the Reception class, and the good teaching in Years 1 and 2 successfully builds on this. Pupils continue to make good gains in their learning in Key Stage 2 because the quality of teaching and learning is good and the curriculum has been carefully structured to motivate the pupils. Teachers maintain good levels of discipline within the classrooms and use new technology well to support learning. Assessment procedures are much improved since the last inspection and this enables staff to track pupils' progress more carefully and intervene quickly when progress falters. Consequently, there has been a steady improvement in test results for pupils in Year 6 in recent years. Attainment in English has risen year-on-year because reading is well taught and pupils have good opportunities to develop their writing. Attainment in mathematics has also improved because pupils are increasingly confident in applying their skills. Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported and enabled to make good progress. However, not enough lessons generate the necessary challenge for the higher attaining pupils to enable them consistently to achieve their best.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They greatly enjoy coming to school and attendance rates are above average. Welfare, care and guidance are good. Staff respect and value the pupils, who, consequently, develop self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline. Pupils' behaviour is good. They know how to keep themselves safe. They respond well to the school's initiatives to encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles, particularly by taking part in sport and by eating nutritious food. They work hard and play well together. Pupils willingly take on extra responsibilities as members of the school council, and make a valuable contribution to village life, particularly through links with the church. The school's involvement in its community helps to bring it together in positive ways. However, not enough is done to promote awareness and understanding of the diversity of modern society. By the time they leave, most pupils have acquired good social and academic skills to assist their future economic well-being.

The headteacher, has fostered a strong climate for learning, and is the catalyst for school improvement. He has forged a strong partnership with his colleagues and has developed their accountability for raising achievement. The priorities detailed in the school improvement plan, are entirely appropriate. The quality of governance is good and the board has both the skills and strategies to gauge the school's effectiveness and to measure its performance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development and in their communication skills. Children achieve well and reach standards that are edging above the expected goals. This is because the work is well led and managed and the school has forged good relationships with parents. The ongoing dialogue between the school and home enables the children to settle quickly into routines and to feel secure. The good ratio of adults to children ensures that they all benefit from timely individual attention. Learning is fun. The school places great emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills and promotes a love of books to encourage reading and writing. For example, children are familiar with the story of 'The Three Bears' and use this as the basis for much of their play. Children learn about number and shape through a range of practical activities. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide a good balance between directed activities and activities chosen by the children. The imaginatively developed accommodation provides for worthwhile experiences both indoors and outdoors. Systems for recording attainment and tracking progress are effective. Information is used accurately to ensure children engage in activities that are well matched to their abilities and needs. Consequently they make good progress towards meeting the age-related expectations for their year group and are well prepared for further learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of the higher attaining pupils.
- Take further steps to promote and strengthen community cohesion.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Standards in Year 2 are now broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics after a period of steady decline. However, recent cohorts have contained a much higher-than-average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and few pupils were achieving the higher Level 3's. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in reading are higher than those in writing in both key stages. Recent initiatives to provide pupils with more opportunities to practise their writing in a range of contexts are beginning to bear fruit although there is still a lack of consistency in their approach to handwriting and presentation. Standards in mathematics have risen because the school has modified its approach and provided good opportunities for pupils to sharpen their mental recall of tables, for example through a series of games, and to apply their skills in different ways. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have risen through improved resources and training for staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They care for each other, mix well and take their responsibilities seriously. They work very well together in groups. Through activities instigated by the school council, pupils successfully raise money for school equipment and several charities. Pupils' academic progress combined with their well-developed social skills provide a secure base for the next stage of their education. They behave well. They report that incidents of poor behaviour are rare and they trust the staff to deal with any problems that

might occur. Attendance rates are good because the school has worked hard with families to stress the importance of regular attendance. Pupils arrive punctually. They are polite and courteous. The uptake on an impressive range of out-of-school activities is high. A strong personal, social and health education programme supports the good relationships that prevail in school and enables pupils to develop a secure understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most lessons are well taught. Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are good and help to promote positive attitudes to learning and effective discipline. Lesson planning is detailed and pupils understand the purpose of their lessons and what is expected of them. In each class, there is a good focus on learning through practical activities and games that motivate the pupils and ensure that much of their learning is exciting and enjoyable. Those pupils who have learning difficulties are well supported and are enabled to make good progress, particularly in reading. However, on occasions, the work given does not offer the right degree of challenge to pupils, particularly the higher attaining ones, and opportunities to learn more are lost. This results in these pupils sometimes making less progress than they should. Pupils receive good feedback on how they can improve their work. New technology is used well by teachers and pupils to support learning across a number of subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is structured effectively to support learning in the mixed-age classes. There is an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy. ICT is used effectively to promote learning across a range of subjects. The teaching of French, music and sport adds richness to the provision. The curriculum strongly encourages the pupils' personal development with many valuable opportunities to promote their well-being. A key strength of the curriculum is the strong roots in the school's rural traditions and the links with the community. However, there is too little emphasis on raising awareness of different types of people, both in Great Britain and in the wider world. A key strength of the curriculum is the programme of well-chosen visits, visiting speakers and the range of activities beyond the school day that are much appreciated and supported by pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for well. Arrangements for safeguarding children meet current requirements. All staff are aware of the child protection procedures and what they should do if they have concerns over any child. Risk assessments are undertaken effectively for all activities. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and they are confident that should they have a problem there is always an adult who will treat their concerns seriously and deal with the issue effectively. Pupils' academic guidance is developing well and is now good. The staff undertake systematic assessments of progress and the results are used to set targets and to plan work for different groups of pupils within each class. However, although this process leads to work that is well matched to those pupils who find learning difficult, it does not always lead to appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

A key element of the school's success is the strength of the teamwork. Supportive relationships have enabled the staff to grow in confidence and to share the responsibility for effective school leadership. This is apparent in the successful work in monitoring school performance, improving the quality of teaching and in strengthening and sharpening assessment arrangements. Standards are improving because the curriculum has been developed to motivate pupils and because the school makes effective use of local partnerships and initiatives to improve the quality of learning. Good links have been forged with other agencies and schools to ensure a smooth transfer for children at the ages of four and eleven. Parental confidence in the school's capacity to continue to improve is strong. The governing body is fully involved in strategic development and has become confident in its ability to hold the school to account.

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
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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	2

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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

15 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Carleton Road CofE Primary School, Norwich, NR16 1RW

I really enjoyed my visit to your school this month because everybody was so helpful and friendly. I particularly enjoyed my discussions with you and hearing your views. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, take part in your assembly, meet members of the school council and see you playing games outside. I can understand why you are proud of your school as there are many things that make it special. Here are some of them:

- The youngest children get a very good start to their education.
- Your work is improving and you reach good standards.
- You have a good attitude towards your work and you behave well.
- The school is very mindful of the need to keep you safe and happy.
- The school provides many different activities to keep you interested.
- Mr Street is determined to make sure the school gets better and better.
- It is delightful to see so many of you enjoying sport and music.

You are fortunate to be able to attend such a friendly school. It is really important that you continue to work hard and make the most of the opportunities the school provides. I have found one or two matters that should help the school to become even better. Firstly, the school should find more ways to challenge you, especially those of you who find the work a little easy at times. Also, it should do more work to help you appreciate the richness of the different cultures in our society and the wider world. This sounds like a lot of work but I know that you can help the school to become even better.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector