

Redgate Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121190
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	313912
Inspection dates	6–7 October 2008
Reporting inspector	John Francis

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Julia Shepherd
Headteacher	Mr Brian Lucey
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2004
School address	Collingwood Road Hunstanton Norfolk PE36 5DY
Telephone number	01485 533373
Fax number	01485 533126

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average junior school serving the local community of Hunstanton. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Although there are pockets of social and economic need, the proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is similar to that found nationally.

Attainment on entry to the school is below average and the proportion of pupils who have additional learning needs is above that normally seen. After a period of turbulence, following reorganisation, the school staffing and pupil numbers are now stable.

The school has an Active Mark for sports, Healthy Schools award and local authority recognition for its work in promoting staff well being.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Following a long period of instability before and after reorganisation, good leadership by the headteacher has created a stable and secure environment for pupils and staff. This is something recognised and welcomed by parents, who are very positive about the improvements. As a result, the school is now providing its pupils with a good education. Pupils are achieving well and have developed good personal skills, particularly their good behaviour and attitude to learning. Standards are broadly average, but pupils make good progress from their starting points. Through a strong school-wide focus, there have been good gains in pupils' reading and writing skills. Mathematics and science also show improvements, although these are less striking. Pupils still have gaps in some basic number skills. While leadership and management overall are good, more recently appointed subject leaders have yet to develop the skills they need to monitor their subjects and identify and address the gaps in provision. Nevertheless, with sound support from the governing body, the leadership has successfully addressed long-standing weaknesses. The progress made across the school over the past two years shows good capacity for further improvement.

As a result of regular monitoring, and well-targeted advice and training, teaching has improved and is generally good. The most effective teaching and learning, seen in Years 5 and 6, enables pupils to make rapid progress. Throughout the school, relationships are strong, lessons move at a brisk pace and teachers' planning is detailed. The focus on more rigorous data analysis enables accurate target setting. This is helping teachers' planning but the expectations for the most able pupils are not always high enough.

A good curriculum, enhanced by a good range of enrichment and extracurricular activities, adds to the fun of learning for pupils. The provision for those who find learning more difficult, particularly in developing their language skills, is good and enhanced by the skilful contribution of the teaching assistants. The move towards working through themes, which cross subjects, broadens the curriculum and adds further interest. However, the links between subjects and the skills learned in English and mathematics are not yet securely made.

Much has been done over the last two years to meet the social and emotional needs of the pupils. Secure systems ensure that they are safe and cared for. Good support systems for mentoring pupils who have social and emotional needs have reduced instances of poor attitude and behaviour and helped those who find learning difficult to achieve more. The whole culture of the school has benefitted from these changes. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are beginning to see themselves much more as learners. Their good understanding of how to stay healthy is reflected in the take-up of healthy school meals and 'tuck', and their keenness to involve themselves in the many extracurricular sporting activities available. Along with the work of the school council, the roles of play leaders help pupils to feel part of a strong school community. Links with the community beyond the school gate are developing and the school is beginning to give pupils experiences outside of their immediate surroundings into the wider world. There are good links with other local schools and agencies, which benefit the pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics and science through improving achievement in Years 3 and 4, with particular emphasis on the needs of the most able pupils.
- Improve the skills of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating their subjects across the school.

- Improve the links between the skills taught in literacy and numeracy and other subjects to further enhance the curriculum and raise standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The key elements in the improvements to pupils' progress are the better teaching and improved behaviour. As a result, pupils enjoy what is on offer and apply themselves well to their learning. They are now making better progress and achieving more than in recent years. The school's tracking records and the most recent assessments show good improvement across all subjects, with notable gains in reading and writing, particularly for those pupils currently in Year 6. While standards remain a little below average in mathematics and science, across the school pupils make good progress. This is particularly noticeable in Years 5 and 6, even though the teachers have to address long-standing gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, while progress through Years 3 and 4 has been slower, this too is gaining pace with the revised systems for assessment and target setting. For those pupils who find learning more difficult, particularly reading and writing, good support systems have helped boost their achievement and they are now making similar progress to others in school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The greatest improvement seen is in pupils' behaviour and, in consequence, their greater engagement with learning. The teachers are now more confident to plan learning through more practical approaches, and pupils welcome the opportunities these provide. The great improvements to attitudes are reflected in the improvement to attendance. From below average attendance two years ago, it is now above average. Given that many families are employed in seasonal work, the school has worked well with parents to reduce the amount of holiday taken during school term time. The pupils show a good commitment to the school through their roles as school councillors and, for the older pupils, in their work as playground leaders. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, supported by a good personal, social and health education curriculum. They have a clear view of right and wrong and now take greater responsibility for their own actions. This is reflected in the good, and sometimes excellent behaviour in and around school. This social responsibility is now broadened to extend into the wider community. For example, good links are being forged with an inner city school with a broader ethnic mix. Pupils' good social skills and improving literacy and numeracy skills, along with the 'enterprise' work in conjunction with the local secondary school, are providing a sound basis for their future development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Through effective monitoring by the headteacher and the staff's commitment to developing their skills through training and sharing ideas, teaching is improving steadily. The work on developing consistent approaches to classroom management has given teachers the confidence to plan additional practical and investigative activities. Linked with more detailed lesson planning, this has led to more consistently good teaching across the school. Lessons have a brisk pace, and good question and answer sessions enable pupils to play an active part in the learning

process. This is supplemented by the good use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a regular learning tool. A positive feature is that all teachers share the intended outcomes of the lesson with the pupils. Good support from teaching assistants helps those who find learning more difficult to succeed in their work. A move to sharper target setting has helped pupils understand what they need to do to improve. However, not all teachers use this information as well as they need to in all subjects when planning for the full ranges of ability in their classes. This is most noticeable in mathematics and science for some of the highest achieving pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The provision for teaching English and mathematics is good and, for English in particular, the impact is seen in the good progress pupils have made in reading and writing. Closer links between subjects and literacy and numeracy skills is still embedding into classroom practice across the school. The school has been successful in developing pupils' skills in ICT. Additionally, the interactive whiteboards, regularly used by teachers and pupils, enhance learning and pupils' interest. The enrichment and extracurricular opportunities broaden the curriculum well. Instrumental tuition, games and sport skill training through a range of providers, all contribute to developing pupils' skills. The many visitors, such as artists working with pupils on pictures of coastal erosion and well-organised visits provide a breadth of interest for pupils that goes beyond their normal experiences. The teaching of a modern foreign language across the school and the study of wider cultural aspects of learning is broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world beyond their immediate area. The curriculum for those pupils who need extra support is well adapted to their needs. For those with particular talents and skills there are opportunities for further enrichment through links with other schools, particularly the local secondary school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a high level of staff commitment to all aspects of pupils' health, safety and welfare. Secure systems to safeguard and care for them work well and are regularly reviewed. The school's work on developing the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme contribute well to pupils' personal development. The staff work well with the pupils and their families, supporting and counselling where needed. Academic guidance is good. More recently introduced tracking systems record pupils' progress well and the analysis of this data is used well to set suitably challenging targets. Pupils have a good understanding of these targets and the next steps in their learning. However, the time scale for reviewing these and setting new targets is sometimes too long. Teachers' marking is helpful in telling them how they can improve their work but occasionally fails to address some of the regular or recurring errors pupils make.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Since his relatively recent appointment, the headteacher has set a clear direction for the school and shown a strong commitment to improving the lives of the pupils. The stability this appointment has brought is clearly seen in the many positive changes in school. His drive and enthusiasm have taken pupils, parents and staff along with him. Parents recognise the strengths

in the leadership and, through identifying needs, the school is beginning to reach out much more into the community. This is increasing the involvement of parents and other organisations. The progress seen reflects an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and a good understanding of the key improvements needed. Staff and pupils have higher expectations and, as improvements are embedded, targets are raised to provide greater challenge. Those with subject responsibilities are still developing the skills and knowledge they need to push even more rapid progress in their areas of responsibility. The support of the governing body, through their understanding and involvement, has been an additional factor in improving the school. However, they do not yet have a sufficiently rigorous system for gathering information for themselves about the school. This is also limited by the school's development plan. While it identifies and covers all of the key areas for improvement, a lack of measurable outcomes in some areas makes it harder for school leaders to be clear as to when they have achieved their goals.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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/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	3
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 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	3
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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

8 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Redgate Junior School, Hunstanton, PE36 5DY

Many of you may remember my visit to your school a little while ago. Thank you for the welcome you gave me. It was lovely talking to many of you and hearing your views of the school. This letter is to tell you what I found out during my visit.

I agree with you that your school has improved and can see how you are all working hard to continue the improvements. You have made some really impressive gains in your writing. All of the adults take good care of you and work hard to make your school an interesting place to come to. All of you make a good contribution to your school through your good behaviour and willingness to work. Many of you work hard to help others and improve your school. Those who are in the school council or are play leaders carry out your tasks well. You told me how much you enjoy school, and the opportunities you have now for practical work, such as investigations in science. I agree with you that your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting. Like you, I also thought that there were many other opportunities for you to have different experiences such as learning a musical instruments or taking part in after-school clubs and sports. I could also see what you meant when you told me how well everyone in school gets on now.

To help you do even better, I have asked Mr Lucey and the teachers to do a number of things. I have asked them to help you improve your work in mathematics and science, particularly those of you in Years 3 and 4. To help with this, we have asked teachers who look after these subjects to find out about what is happening right through the school so they can help other teachers more. Finally, I have asked Mr Lucey and the governors to make it very clear in their plans how they will know if the school is getting better.

I hope you continue to enjoy school, work hard and get even better.

John Francis

Lead inspector