

# Pot Kiln Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124536
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	314953
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Richardson

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	178
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Kevin O'Connell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Wilma Hyde
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Butt Road Great Cornard Sudbury Suffolk CO10 0DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01787372107
<b>Fax number</b>	01787376474

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<b>Age group</b>	3–9
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 December 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school draws its pupils mainly from the local housing estate. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision includes the Nursery and Reception classes. Forty children attend the nursery part-time, from the term of their fourth birthday and children start in Reception in the term they become five. On entry to the school, the percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. A large majority of pupils are White British and very few are learning English as an additional language. The school provides a daily breakfast club. An independently managed pre-school group occupies a separate building on the school site. Pupils move on at the age of nine, usually to the local middle school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school gives pupils a satisfactory education and is working hard to help them do even better. This judgement confirms the school's own view. Pupils are happy at school and enjoy their learning. The school takes good care of them and helps them to develop well as people, whatever their individual needs.

Pupils make broadly the progress expected over their time in school. Standards are around the national average at the end of Year 2, and slightly below the level expected nationally at the end of Year 4. Progress is uneven through the school, and has tended to slow up in the older years. The school is very aware of this and is working for improvement, with signs of success. It is beginning to assess each term how much progress each child is making, and to highlight where action is needed. However, staff do not yet have a clear overview of the progress expected through the school and in each year, and pupils are not consistently guided about how to improve.

The school is speeding up the pace of progress in reading. Pupils learn well from the start about how sounds and letters make up words. Older pupils tackle books with enthusiasm, motivated by quizzes on the computer that test their understanding. Pupils do not do as well as they should in mathematics, particularly in the older years, and the school has identified this as a priority for improvement.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although the teaching is often good, thorough and interesting, the quality is variable and some classes have been affected by a lack of continuity. The school has introduced a number of new initiatives to enliven the curriculum and to help pupils learn more effectively. These are contributing to children's enjoyment of learning, but have yet to be evaluated in terms of their impact on standards.

The staff work well together in caring for pupils and helping them to succeed. Pupils are well supported in overcoming barriers to their learning. Teaching assistants work with small groups on programmes designed to reinforce specific learning. Individual plans are drawn up for pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties, with clear goals to work towards. 'Nurture groups' help pupils to grow socially and emotionally.

Pupils behave well because the school teaches them clearly what is expected, and they are friendly and sociable. Attendance is good, reflecting successful efforts by the school and by parents to reduce absence that disrupts pupils' learning. The school helps pupils to live healthily, to keep safe and to make a contribution, for example in recycling and looking after the school's gardens.

The school's leadership and management, and capacity to improve further, are satisfactory. The headteacher draws the school community together, making it a place where everyone is valued. She has a clear vision of how the school can improve and she is well supported by the Chair of Governors in working to achieve this. Systems for monitoring progress and securing consistency in teaching and learning are taking shape, though not yet fully developed.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The EYFS gives children a satisfactory start to their schooling. There are many developing strengths in the school's provision, and the Nursery is much improved since the last inspection.

Children start with skills that are less well developed than usual at this age in their use of language and awareness of reading and writing. They make satisfactory progress. By the end of the EYFS, most are approaching and some are reaching the early learning goals for this age. Children's progress, for example in counting and learning sounds and letters, is carefully recorded. However, the system of assessment is not giving a reliable and accurate overview of how well children are achieving year on year, and where more work is needed. Children learn to share and cooperate, to listen and take part, to tidy up and to be independent, for example in putting on coats. They become fully absorbed in their chosen activities and take pride in what they can do. The staff foster children's learning and development well, building their skills and firing their imagination. Learning is woven through a range of exciting activities, as when children in the Nursery wrote their own Christmas cards, wrapped up parcels and made homes for Santa's reindeer. Attractive areas have been developed for outdoor learning and these are used, come rain or shine, with great enjoyment. Leadership and management are satisfactory, though not focused enough on securing continuity throughout the EYFS and in the transition to Year 1.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Use assessment information consistently to raise expectations through the whole school and to set targets for individuals and classes.
- Monitor the impact of new initiatives on raising standards and accelerating progress.
- Improve attainment in mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 2, by pinpointing strengths and weaknesses in learning and setting a faster pace.

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**

Pupils reach standards that are broadly average to below average, and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' progress is satisfactory over the course of Years 1 and 2, and often good in Year 1. They reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are broadly in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 4, standards are below those expected at this age, particularly in mathematics. A lack of continuity in teaching in some years has contributed to this, and assessment has not been used to identify shortcomings in pupils' learning. The school is taking action to improve the pace of progress in Key Stage 2. This is bringing results, so that achievement is now satisfactory. Although progress in mathematics is still not as good as it should be, reading and writing have improved. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have appropriate individual education plans and are supported so that they make satisfactory progress. The school does not consistently identify gifted and talented pupils and recognises that this is an area for development. The school sets challenging targets and has been successful, for example, in increasing the percentage of pupils who make the expected progress in Key Stage 2. It has yet to develop the use of individual targets to set sights high for each pupil, but it is making a start in this.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They understand the school's rules and why they are needed. They know how to recognise bullying and what to do if they have concerns, and are confident that any incidents will be dealt with quickly and effectively. Behaviour is good, in lessons and in the playground. Pupils play together harmoniously, enjoying a wide range of playground games. Older pupils take pleasure in helping younger ones as playground 'pals'. Pupils are keen to eat healthily, and they enjoy the fruit and vegetables that are provided as snacks. They have many opportunities for exercise, including the 'wake and shake' that starts each day. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep safe. Attendance has risen since the last inspection, to just above the national average, and persistent absence has been much reduced. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and contributing to the community, for example, as members of the school council. They recycle with enthusiasm, and make compost from fruit and vegetable peelings. They make satisfactory progress in gaining skills that prepare them for later life. Pupils' enjoyment of school is high because it is an orderly, welcoming and increasingly stimulating place to learn.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, though the quality varies, as the school recognises. Much of the teaching has good features. Lessons are well planned, activities engage pupils' interest and skills are taught carefully and thoroughly. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well in lessons, to help them keep up. However, teaching is less consistent in ensuring that the most able are fully challenged. There is also variation in the quality of marking, and in the use of assessment to guide teaching and learning. Some teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboard to extend learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. However, the teaching of groups of pupils for whole mornings in a separate 'nurture group' of different ages and abilities, does not always serve to maximise progress. The school is developing imaginative ways, such as role play, of helping pupils to become better learners. These strategies are increasing enthusiasm for learning, though their impact has yet to be fully evaluated.

## Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum and is working to develop and enrich it in order to raise standards and make learning more exciting. A number of initiatives are under way. Topics are being designed to link up learning across subjects in practical ways, as when a 'dig' in the school grounds, and the creation of a museum, also led to pupils thinking about how compost decays. Pupils' interest is sparked by special events such as the visit of a hot air balloon team that introduced work on travel. However, these new approaches to the organisation of the curriculum are still at an early stage, and the school has yet to take stock of whether they are helping to raise standards. The school offers a range of clubs, including art and gardening, and visits that broaden pupils' horizons. Older pupils learn French and this adds to their awareness of the wider world. The school has good resources for information and communication technology (ICT). Their use to support learning is satisfactory and improving. The programme

of personal, social and health education (PSHE) is highly successful in promoting pupils' personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school does much to support and care for pupils, including those who are vulnerable. Teaching assistants play a full part in this, for example in helping those with emotional and behavioural problems to gain confidence and self-control. In working with nurture groups, and 'Lunch Bunch' which offers supervised indoor play at lunchtime, they help pupils to feel secure and valued, and to gain skills in relating to others. The whole staff team works together effectively, understanding pupils' individual needs and calmly and consistently reinforcing the school's expectations of behaviour. The headteacher greets pupils and parents in the morning and the staff are readily accessible. The school has a good partnership with parents, for example in securing regular attendance, and offers many activities that help them to support their children's learning. The school works well with others beyond the school in promoting pupils' learning and well-being. It provides a breakfast club, helping to ensure that pupils do not start the day hungry. It has robust arrangements for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety. Guidance for pupils about their progress is satisfactory, although pupils are not consistently given targets to work towards or helped to understand how to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, reflected in self-evaluation that is honest and accurate in identifying strengths and areas for development. She is now working to ensure that responsibility for planning, implementing and monitoring action for improvement is more widely shared within and beyond the senior leadership team. Subject leadership is recognised as requiring further development in some subjects. The use of assessment and target-setting is being developed, and senior management has begun to meet regularly with each teacher to interpret the data and evaluate the progress being made by individuals and classes. Although many initiatives have been introduced with the aim of raising standards, the impact of these has yet to be fully evaluated. Pupils and families are well known and the school's leadership ensures a high quality of care, harnessing the efforts of the whole staff team in this. The school contributes much to the well-being of the local community in working with families. It is making a start in broadening understanding of other communities, cultures and countries but this is not yet well developed. The school is well run and parents are confident in the education it provides. Governors, with effective leadership from the Chair of Governors, are increasing their monitoring of the school's work and provide satisfactory support and challenge. The school has improved since the last inspection, as shown in better attendance and better quality provision in the Nursery. It has satisfactory capacity to continue to improve and a strong ambition to do so.

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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?	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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	3

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

12 December 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Pot Kiln Primary School, Great Cornard, CO10 0DS

We enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for being friendly and telling us about what you do. Now it is our turn to let you know what we found out.

Everybody at the school works hard to look after you and help you to learn. You do some very interesting work. I wonder what will have happened to all the things that Class 1 were about to bury, when they are dug up again after Christmas.

We were pleased to see that you behave well, and earn a lot of 'purple slips'. We are glad that you think about eating healthily, and like the fruit and vegetables you have as snacks. It was good to see you recycling all the leftovers.

You are doing well with your reading. We were impressed that even the Nursery children can sound out some words, and that the older children are enjoying so many books. We think that some of you could make more progress in maths as you get older.

Mrs Hyde and all the staff want you to learn as well as possible, and we have been talking about ways of making sure you do this. We agree that it would be good to look more closely at how much progress you make each term. The staff will be talking with you more about how to improve your work. You can help by thinking about this too. The staff have lots of ideas about making learning more exciting for you. They will be checking that these really work to help you learn more.

We are pleased that you enjoy school so much and thank you again for welcoming us.

Joy Richardson

Lead inspector