

# St Edmund's Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124591
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	314975
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Speakman

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	78
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>	Ms Shona Bendix
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Clive Digby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 July 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>	Heckfield Green Hoxne Eye Suffolk IP21 5AD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01379 668283
<b>Fax number</b>	01379 668814

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small primary school. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the beginning of their Reception Year with attainment on entry that is typical for children of this age. The proportion of pupils identified as needing extra help with their learning is similar to that found in other schools, but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties or behavioural problems. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has the Activemark for its provision in physical activity, the Healthy Schools Award and silver ECO school status.

The current headteacher is in school part-time and on a temporary basis. He is headteacher of another nearby primary school. He took over St Edmund's at Christmas, following an unsuccessful recruitment process to appoint a permanent headteacher.

## 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's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. In response to falling standards and unsuccessful attempts to appoint a permanent headteacher, the governors took decisive action in arranging to share a headteacher with proven leadership skills with a nearby primary school. Many parents expressed the view that they are pleased with this arrangement and the impact he is having on school life. 'The leadership and ethos of the school have been rejuvenated with the current temporary headteacher.' He very quickly made a realistic and honest evaluation of the school's work from which he established a clear plan for improving standards. Because changes in leadership are recent and staff have had limited experience of monitoring, most self-evaluation and monitoring of performance is undertaken by the headteacher. This, the temporary nature of leadership arrangements and improvement being only recent following a downturn in standards, means the leadership and management and the capacity to improve are satisfactory. As the school has struggled to appoint a permanent headteacher, improvement since the last inspection had been limited until the current headteacher took over and is now accelerating.

Assessment records show that progress overall has accelerated and the gap between the school's performance and the national average is closing. Current attainment in Year 6 is broadly average and pupils' achievement satisfactory. Although still average, standards in mathematics and science are lower than in English.

Adults provide an outstanding level of care and pastoral support for all pupils. This results in a calm and secure environment, in which pupils feel cared for and are very happy to come to school. Their personal development is good. They say that there is always someone to turn to if ever they need any help.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but is improving in response to action taken by the headteacher. Some excellent and good teaching was seen during the inspection. This is now helping improve achievement, although it has not yet had time to impact on test results. Newly introduced systems to assess the progress of individual pupils and identify any who need additional support are resulting in teaching having a greater impact on pupils' learning and progress. These systems also give staff a clear picture of standards. However, targets are not used to challenge pupils sufficiently.

The curriculum is planned effectively so that pupils' knowledge and understanding is developed in stages as they move through the mixed-age classes. However, planning does not identify how subjects, such as history and geography, can be used more effectively to support the development of literacy and numeracy and help raise standards in these areas.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress from their starting points. In most years they meet the nationally expected goals for their age. They make satisfactory progress in developing their language and literacy skills through discussion with adults and opportunities for children to talk with each other. The emphasis on promoting their personal skills means they make good strides in their personal development. Provision for the children is managed satisfactorily by ensuring that the curriculum is appropriate to their needs and they are cared for well. At the time of the inspection a new teacher had just started and the quality of teaching seen was

outstanding, but this has yet to impact on the children's long term achievement. The teacher and the teaching assistants work well together to provide opportunities for children to choose their own activities, balanced with whole-class and focused group learning sessions. Children learn through play, with some well-planned links between areas of learning making good use of the outdoor classroom. Planning ensures that both Reception children and Year 1 are provided with learning opportunities appropriate to their age and stage of development. Learning is interesting and enjoyable through class singing sessions and the variety in the range of activities. Assessment is good and information compiled into individual 'Learning Journey' booklets that record achievement and experiences. These give staff an accurate view of an individual's learning needs.

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

- Raise standards, particularly in mathematics and science by ensuring that targets and assessment data are used more effectively to track progress and provide greater challenge for all pupils.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of all teachers so they make an effective contribution to continued school improvement.
- Improve curriculum planning so that all subjects support systematically the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy.

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' progress across the school is satisfactory and improving. Pupils who find learning more difficult make steady progress towards their individual targets, and achieve satisfactorily in their class work. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. Assessment results in reading and writing have remained at about the national average for some years. Results in mathematics have varied recently. They were below average in 2007 and average in 2008. The Year 6 test results in 2008 were broadly average in English, but were below average in mathematics and science. Despite this, achievement for this group was still satisfactory from their lower than usual starting points. Current standards in Year 6 are broadly average, but with mathematics and science still weaker than English. Because of improvements now starting to emerge lower down the school, standards in Year 5 show pupils are on track to meet the school's targets in all three subjects, which are close to the national average. Standards in art are good with some good quality work on display in classrooms and around the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the importance of good relationships and show a great deal of care, consideration and appreciation of the feelings of others. Behaviour and attitudes towards learning are good. Most pupils are able to regulate their own behaviour, but teachers still need to remind a few pupils to stay on task. Pupils gain an awareness of other cultures through lessons, visits to experience other faiths and learning about the lives of children overseas in their 'Red Nose' assembly. Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in their above average attendance, and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils eat

healthy food during the day and grow vegetables for use in the school kitchen. They enjoy exercise and are aware of how to stay physically fit. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local communities, and show their concern for the world community through charitable work. Their good personal qualities and satisfactory academic achievement give them an adequate basis for the next stages in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils say teachers make lessons interesting and enjoyable because there are more opportunities to learn through investigating and doing. Recent improvements in teaching come from a growing understanding of how to use assessment data better to match work to each individual's needs, provide greater challenge and move pupils on at a quicker pace. This recent initiative is not fully embedded in all practice. Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour well so there is a calm and productive working environment in classrooms. Teachers use new technology well to promote learning. Interactive whiteboards make the introductions to lessons clear and interesting and pupils are encouraged to use computers to help them in their learning. Sharing learning objectives with pupils helps them to understand both what is expected and to measure their success in lessons. Opportunities for self-assessment, such as through 'talk partners' are developing and are productive for older pupils.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is broad and balanced and promotes a satisfactory level of achievement. There are support systems to help those at risk of underachieving. There is provision to extend the performance of the more able pupils; those with specific talents and those who find learning more difficult are well supported. Information and communication technology has an important place in the curriculum and supports learning in other subjects. Good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship supports the pupils' personal development well. Curriculum enrichment is good. There are themed weeks and days and a good range of visits and visitors which add interest to learning. There is a good number and range of extra-curricular activities, which pupils enjoy very much.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides excellent care for all pupils, including those with specific needs through good links with outside agencies. Pastoral care is a strength in school. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and consequently pupils are kept safe and very well cared for. Safeguarding and health and safety procedures meet requirements. Parents comment very positively on the caring nature and ethos of the school. Assessment and academic guidance for pupils at an individual level is improving. Teachers are now using tracking data more effectively to identify progress rates for individuals. Pupils are given a satisfactory understanding of how to improve their own work through marking and the use of targets. They can generally identify what they do well but not always how to improve their work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Under the new headteacher, leadership is starting to make an impact on securing improvements in the pupils' achievement. He is enhancing the role of teachers in the leadership and management of the school, and their understanding of how to evaluate school performance is developing. Targets set for pupils' achievement are becoming more demanding and acting as a lever for raising standards. The school is successful in its commitment to all pupils. Governors are organised well and work in close collaboration with the school. This gives them a good knowledge of how well the school is doing from which to provide appropriate levels of support and challenge. They took the initiative thoughtfully when dealing with the current leadership challenges. The school promotes community cohesion well, particularly within the school and local community, and by including parents. The school helps pupils appreciate features of democracy well, through the school council and a range of other similar responsibilities. Understanding of global issues are satisfactorily promoted through charity work and promoting conservation.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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?	3
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**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

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<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?	2

## 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	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

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

12 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Edmund's Primary School, Hoxne, IP21 5AD

Thank you all for making me welcome on my recent visit to your school. I appreciate you helping me find out about your school, especially those of you who gave up some of your time to talk to me. I enjoyed meeting you and your teachers and visiting lessons to watch you work.

At present your school is satisfactory, but I get the strong feeling that it is improving under the guidance of your new headteacher. You are exceptionally well cared for. Most of you make satisfactory progress in lessons and reach about average standards by the end of Year 6.

You help a great deal by behaving well and trying hard to do your best. I was impressed by how well you respond to your teachers. I liked the sensible way in which you make friends and care about each other, making them feel safe in school. Those of you I spoke to said how much you enjoy school and find it interesting.

To make things better, I am asking the headteacher and governors to:

- make sure that teachers use what they know about your progress to make work more challenging and help raise standards, particularly in science and mathematics
- involve all teachers in helping the headteacher to improve the school
- use subjects such as history and geography to help improve your literacy and numeracy.

I hope you will all help make the school become even better by continuing to cooperate with your teachers.

I wish you all the best in the future

David Speakman

Lead inspector