

Snape Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124607
Local Authority	SUFFOLK LA
Inspection number	314980
Inspection date	22 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	21
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Barker
Headteacher	Mrs A Skinner
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2004
School address	Snape Saxmundham Suffolk IP17 1QG
Telephone number	01728 688373
Fax number	01728 688373

Age group	4–9
Inspection date	22 April 2008
Inspection number	314980

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. This inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The action being taken to improve progress in writing in Years 3 to 4 and its impact.
- The school's evidence for judging pupils' personal development and well-being as outstanding.
- The extent to which the school has developed its academic guidance and support to pupils and the impact this is having on pupils' learning.
- The systems and processes that are in place to manage the school and evaluate its effectiveness, and the impact these are having on standards and progress.

Evidence was gathered from observing lessons and children during lunch, talking to pupils and staff, checking the school's record of lesson observations as well as assessment and pupil-progress records and analysing the results of questionnaires returned by parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail and 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

The school is a very small village school serving a largely rural community in an area of rich natural beauty and historical and artistic tradition. All pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion eligible for free school meals is in line with national averages. Attainment on entry varies due to the small size of year groups but is usually close to that expected nationally, although literacy skills are sometimes lower. Unusually, there are no children in Reception this academic year. A few pupils have specific learning needs, such as dyslexia. Occasionally, the school has a pupil with a disability. The school has achieved the Activemark award for its sporting and physical education (PE) provision.

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, which provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Consequently, they make good progress. A strong family atmosphere creates a very safe and secure environment where pupils' personal development and well-being are successfully nurtured. As a result, pupils grow in confidence and self-assurance. Good leadership and management are responsible for promoting this positive ethos and for continually striving to improve the quality of provision. Overall, pupils' good progress in literacy and numeracy, and their development of skills such as teamwork, prepare them well for the next step in their education and future life.

Although there is a wide range of attainment and some variation between year groups, standards are typically a little above average by the end of Reception and above average by the end of Years 2 and 4. Writing is an area of particular strength in Years 1 and 2; standards are often well above average by the end of Year 2. Standards in mathematics, which lagged behind those in reading and writing, have improved and are now consistently above average by the end of Year 2. This is due to new and improved ways of teaching calculation and problem-solving skills. Such developments in mathematics are a good example of how the school makes effective use of its largely accurate self-evaluation to identify and address areas for improvement.

Progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2 is consistently good. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make enough progress to sustain above-average standards. However, fewer make the more rapid gains in learning made in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Progress in writing has been slower than in other subjects, but is improving due to recent effective action taken by the school such as improving the teaching of spelling and giving pupils clear individual writing targets. The school sets challenging National Curriculum levels for pupils to achieve at the end of Year 2. These are met and, occasionally, exceeded. The process is not as precise for older pupils where the levels to be achieved in English and mathematics for the end of Year 4 are not as challenging as they could be.

Good teaching contributes to the good progress pupils make. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure a high level of cooperation in lessons. Questioning by teachers is precise and probing and makes pupils think for themselves. Pupils readily ask questions, although, during discussions, they do not always listen to one another. Work provided for pupils is well planned and structured. However, some overuse of worksheets, especially in science, limits the opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills further, especially in Years 3 to 4.

A good curriculum provides well for pupils' personal as well as academic development. As a result, pupils enjoy school and are usually away only when ill. A very wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities enables them to make an outstanding contribution to the school and local communities and to enhance their social skills. Pupils develop a very secure understanding of right and wrong. Their knowledge of cultural diversity is not as good due to limited opportunities for first-hand experiences. However, they are interested in learning more about cultures different from their own. The school ensures that pupils benefit from the rich cultural heritage of the local area and regularly participate in music and arts festivals. A strong PE curriculum contributes to pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils with a physical disability are included exceptionally well in sporting activities.

Pupils are very well looked after. As a result, they feel safe and know who to go to if they are worried or concerned. The school makes excellent use of external agencies to meet pupils' individual needs. All national requirements for safeguarding children are met. Strong links with

local pre-schools and middle schools ensure smooth transition from one phase to another. Teaching assistants are used well to deliver additional programmes, such as gym trail or speech and language support to help promote learning for pupils with additional needs, including the more able. Whilst the school provides pupils with clear targets for literacy and numeracy, pupils themselves are not always sure what these are. This is because targets are not regularly referred to in written comments when work is marked. Although marking is regular, written comments do not consistently provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve. There are some opportunities for pupils to assess their own work but these are not yet as extensive as they could be. Nonetheless, there are good systems for assessing pupils' work in all subjects and in the Foundation Stage. Systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school are sound and improving.

The school has good capacity to improve further. It has a good track record of securing improvements since the last inspection and more recent improvements, such as raising standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2. The headteacher's good leadership ensures that staff work well as a team and receive high quality training to help them carry out their roles effectively. Governors provide good oversight of the school's work and are improving their monitoring role. They set a clear strategic direction for the school's future development.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. A well-planned curriculum ensures that children have a balanced range of practical activities that meet their needs. School records show that, by the end of Reception, the large majority of children meet age-related expectations and some exceed these. This signals good progress, given that a high proportion are born in summer months and have only one term in Reception. Children do particularly well in personal development but attainment in literacy is often a little lower than other areas. Accommodation has improved since the last inspection with the development of an accessible and well-resourced outdoor area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Set more challenging National Curriculum levels for pupils to achieve by the end of Year 4 to ensure consistently good progress in English and mathematics.
- Reduce the use of worksheets particularly in Years 3 to 4 to help improve the opportunities for pupils' writing.
- Ensure that pupils know what their targets are and what they need to do to improve their work.

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
---	----------------

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	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 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well 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	1
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 the 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

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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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

23 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Snape Community Primary School, Snape, IP17 1QG

I enjoyed visiting your school, and talking to you as well as watching you work. I would like to thank you for making me feel welcome. The school gives you a good education and prepares you well for your next school.

These are some of the best things about your school.

- You enjoy school and participate very actively in all it has to offer. You make an exceptionally good contribution to the school and local communities.
- Children in Reception get a good start to their education.
- During your time at school, you make good progress especially in Years 1 and 2.
- There are many interesting things for you to do, both during and after school time, and these enable you to develop good personal qualities.
- Teaching is good and promotes your learning well.
- The school makes excellent use of people from outside the school to support individual pupils.
- Your headteacher makes sure staff work well together to keep on improving the school and making it better.

There are a few things that need to be improved.

- More challenging levels should be set in English and mathematics for older pupils to achieve.
- Older pupils require more opportunity, especially in science, to write freely rather than to use worksheets.
- Ensure that you know what your targets are in literacy and numeracy and what you need to do to achieve them.

You can certainly help by asking staff about what you can do to make your work better. It was very nice to meet you and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead inspector