

# Ickworth Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124678
<b>Local Authority</b>	SUFFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	315014
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	168
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Anne Lines
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Marion Miles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Meadow Drive Horringer Bury St Edmunds IP29 5SB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01284 735337
<b>Fax number</b>	01284 735997

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small village school draws pupils from a wide area that takes in neighbouring villages and parts of the local town. Half the pupils arrive by bus. Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. It has hardly any pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below other schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is about average. There are many more boys than girls on roll. The school has awards for promoting healthy lifestyles and physical activity. It shares a site with a Children's Centre. Attainment on entry is generally above average.

## 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 with many strengths. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, and make good progress, attaining exceptionally high standards by the end of Year 4. A high proportion of pupils attain the higher levels in Year 2 national tests, and similar numbers are excelling in Years 3 and 4. However, there is still more to be done in raising mainly average standards in information and communication technology (ICT).

The care guidance and support given to pupils is outstanding, which in turn contributes to their excellent personal development and well-being. Pupils say they feel safe in school, and show consideration and respect to one another. They know all about living healthily and take plenty of exercise. They make an outstanding contribution to their own and the wider community, for example through performing their play for the elderly and decorating the windows of local businesses for Christmas. Pupils leave the school as well-rounded, confident individuals who are excited about learning. Teaching is consistently good, with very positive relationships between adults and pupils. There is a strong emphasis on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The good curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. It is constructed carefully to motivate both boys and girls. The focus on active learning such as drama and 'talking partners' successfully adds relevance and interest for all.

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher and senior staff have a well-developed view of the school's strengths and needs. The headteacher gives a strong educational lead to staff through her involvement as special educational needs coordinator and overseeing the provision of mathematics. The deputy head and an experienced staff team, who work together well in providing a caring and stimulating school ethos, in which pupils feel valued, ably support her. Subject leaders know their areas well and take opportunities to monitor what is going on. However, their findings tend to be more descriptive than evaluative and do not pay sufficient attention to the progress pupils are making. The whole school community is involved in the process of contributing to a concise and effective strategic plan. Governors support the school well, and manage a limited budget wisely, providing good value for money.

The school has improved well since its last inspection, particularly in the way it now challenges more able pupils. The provision of ICT has also improved since the last inspection, especially with the addition of interactive whiteboards to each classroom. Nevertheless, pupils only make satisfactory progress in ICT because they do not have sufficient access to computers to practise new skills or to make links to other subjects. The school has maintained high standards over recent years, and is well placed to continue to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children settle quickly because of very strong links with the nearby pre-school and the effective involvement of parents and carers in their child's learning. Teaching is good, with an imaginative mix of activities, some adult-led, others child-initiated. Children achieve well in the Reception class, and enter Year 1 mainly exceeding the expected early learning goals. Direct access to the outside area has improved with the inclusion of a connecting door from the classroom. Staff use this space well for the six areas of learning, although physical activity is restricted by its narrow size. The assessment of children's progress is thorough, and the Foundation Stage is led well by the coordinator.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in ICT, and strengthen links across subjects, by ensuring pupils have enough access to computers.
- Increase the impact of subject leadership by focusing more on evaluating pupils' progress when monitoring.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards are exceptionally high and achievement is good. Children enter the Reception class with abilities that are above those usually expected. They make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, so that in Year 2 national assessments, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been exceptionally high over several years. This trend has been maintained because of consistently good teaching and a curriculum that meets the needs of learners well. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 also make good progress, so that standards are still exceptionally high by the time they leave the school. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they are given specific targets for improvement and receive effective support from teaching assistants. Standards in ICT are not so strong because the school has a limited number of computers available at any given time for pupils to use, and they do not have sufficient time to practise their skills.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They agree a code of conduct and support one another as positive play partners and class buddies. Special projects on Africa and India give pupils a good understanding of life in other cultures. They learn about different religions and traditions through assemblies and religious education. Pupils say there is no bullying and that they have an adult to turn to if they have a concern. They make sensible choices for lunch and know how to live a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy learning and want to be at school. One pupil said that teachers, 'make the lessons fun and explain things to you.' Levels of attendance are above average. The school council plays an influential role in making decisions, and leads the way in fund-raising and organising events such as an art exhibition. Pupils take part in a rich variety of community activities, singing locally and hosting teas. They also participate with success in sporting tournaments such as Saturday football. Pupils develop a high level of basic skills to equip them extremely well for middle school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good teaching makes lessons exciting and fun, engaging pupils and encouraging them to work independently. In one lesson, the teacher used chocolates to make sharing an attractive prospect, so that pupils were soon coming up with lots of different ways of solving the problem of acquiring them in correct quantities. Excellent relationships with staff have a significant impact on pupils' learning, so that they want to do their best and achieve well. Teaching is very effective in ensuring that questions challenge and interest pupils, so that they are keen to answer. Teaching is usually planned for the full range of pupils' abilities, although occasionally work is

not matched precisely to suit them. In some classes, pupils take too long to change activities, which can result in unnecessary noise. Marking is good, and shows pupils how they can improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is tailored well to match the needs of pupils, especially boys who may be more reluctant writers. Pupils are motivated through bringing in reading material that interests them, and writing personal journals that remain confidential to them. The provision of personal, social and health education is good, which makes pupils sensitive to meeting the needs of others. A thematic and creative approach to learning has resulted in good achievement and high standards, with an emphasis on practical investigations in mathematics and science, and some good links across subjects in English. A new library has improved the provision of learning resources since the last inspection. The school is beginning to use ICT across the curriculum, but this is hampered by the limited availability of computers for pupils to use. The curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of clubs and visits to places of interest such as Colchester Castle, and visitors, such as a Roman soldier and Zulu warriors, bring learning to life. These activities contribute significantly to pupils' great enjoyment of school and to their outstanding personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

A parent said that the school, 'always has the child's interest at heart', and this helps to explain the outstanding care pupils receive. Safeguarding procedures are robust and all risk assessments in place. The school provides a wide range of services to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with learning needs and disabilities, some of which are profound. A lunch club encourages pupils to socialise well together whilst eating, and a gym trail gives help to pupils with coordination difficulties. Teachers track pupils' progress very carefully and intervene promptly to offer additional help when necessary. Pupils are given individual curriculum targets for reading, writing and mathematics. Sometimes, these are rather too broad to show clearly what progress has been made. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is outstanding, and parents are fully involved in their children's progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher sets termly objectives for school improvement, with a strong emphasis on maintaining high standards and raising achievement. She leads by example, taking groups for reading and mathematics. There is a strong team spirit, which contributes to the outstanding relationships between pupils and staff. Parents are fully supportive of the school, and welcome its friendly approach. Self-evaluation by senior leaders is good, leading to an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas to develop. Teachers are given helpful feedback about their lessons, which refers to changes since previous observations. Subject leaders gather a wide range of evidence about the areas they cover, but their monitoring does not focus sufficiently on pupils' achievement and tends to describe what they are doing. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well, and ask searching questions of leaders. Visits to the school tend to be on an informal basis.

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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 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 <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	1

### 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?	1

<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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

12 January 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Ickworth Park Primary School, Horringer, IP29 5SB

Thank you very much for making us so welcome at your school. We enjoyed meeting you and hearing your views. We agree that yours is a good school with many strengths. Here are some of the things we like about it.

- You reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You are considerate towards one another and behave well.
- You know all about keeping safe and living healthily.
- You are very involved in helping your school and the local community.
- The teaching is good and lessons are exciting and fun.
- You take part in a wide range of interesting activities, including visits.
- The school cares for you extremely well.
- Mrs Miles leads the school well, making sure everything runs smoothly.

Some of you said you would like to be able to use the laptop computers more, and we agree that there aren't enough of them at the moment for you to practise your ICT skills. We think the teachers know what is going on in different subjects well. Now we have asked them to focus on the progress you are making to make sure you continue to do your very best.

Thank you once again for your help. Our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. N. Butt,

Lead inspector