

# Stradbroke V C Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 124742       |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Suffolk      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 315040       |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 16 June 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Ann Taylor   |

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>                | 4–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |  |
| School                                    | 100  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                       |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr James Hargrave  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs Melanie Barrow                                       |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 29 September 2003  |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Queen Street<br>Stradbroke<br>Eye<br>Suffolk<br>IP21 5HH |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01379 384415   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01379 384415   |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Stradbroke school is smaller than average. It serves the local village and surrounding areas. The majority of pupils are White British and all speak English as a first language. There is a very small number from minority ethnic groups. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The numbers who need extra support with their learning are broadly average, with wide variations in some year groups. Numbers of pupils with a statement of special educational need are extremely low. Attainment on entry varies widely year-on-year, due to the small size of year groups. Overall it is broadly in line with the standard expected for children's ages, although in some years it is below average. The school has attained the Eco School Bronze Award and Activemark. A new headteacher started at Easter and a newly appointed deputy headteacher will begin at the beginning of the autumn term.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Stradbroke is a satisfactory and improving school. The new headteacher has very quickly had a positive impact on the school. She has accurately identified priorities to move the school forward and is taking decisive action to secure improvements, linked to raising standards across the board. The school has been through a difficult time in its recent history but, based on recent developments, it has a satisfactory capacity to carry on improving. The headteacher is providing enthusiastic leadership, giving a clear sense of direction. She has already gained the support of parents, who are appreciative of her style. One wrote 'she has already shown herself to be approachable and pro-active and has already initiated worthwhile changes and improvements'. Nevertheless, the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall because other teachers with leadership responsibilities are just starting to fulfil their roles. Their skills in evaluating provision and in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are not fully developed. The school is at an early stage in implementing the new initiatives and, in terms of raising standards, their impact has yet to be seen. Governors are supportive and have steered the school sensitively through its recent challenges.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in the Reception and Year 1 class. By the time pupils leave school, standards are broadly average. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are good elements to all lessons. Positive relationships and pupils' good behaviour means lessons progress at a fair pace. The use of assessment data is not always used extensively enough to tailor lessons to meet individual requirements, quickly identify pupils who are at risk of underachieving or spot those who have gaps in their learning. The generally sound curriculum offers pupils good chances for sports and activities, through clubs and shared visits with other local schools.

Pupils receive good pastoral care because staff are kind and friendly and take an interest in them. The school has a happy family feel to it. Pupils receive a satisfactory level of academic guidance that encourages them to aim higher. Marking has recently started to become more useful but it does not tell pupils what they are doing well and where they need to improve. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils have a sound understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy, but sweet or salty snacks brought to school for break time indicate that some find it hard to put policy into practice. Pupils are very well behaved, enjoy school, and make a good contribution to village life. Their good social skills, very positive attitudes and basic literacy and numeracy abilities prepare them well for secondary school and their future lives.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get off to a positive start and make good progress. They quickly settle and feel at home. This is because of good teamwork, lively teaching and an exciting curriculum. As a result, activities are hugely enjoyable and children play happily, not realising they are also learning. They do particularly well in their personal and social development and in gaining early reading and writing skills. This is because of the consistent focus on speaking and listening. Outcomes of assessments are used well to analyse weaker areas and take action.

Staff make the most of opportunities to use various outdoor areas to promote learning but these opportunities are currently limited. Nevertheless, well advanced plans mean children will

soon have access to their own outdoor area all year. There are productive relationships with the pre-school and as a result children's progress does not falter when they transfer from one setting to another.

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

- Improve the use of assessment data to sharpen planning and target support better to ensure pupils make faster progress.
- Develop the skills of leaders at all levels so that their expertise can be used robustly to monitor and evaluate procedures aimed at raising standards.
- Improve the quality of marking in order to help pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.

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**

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Standards on entry are broadly average but vary considerably from year to year. Nearly all children reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1, with a good number exceeding them.

Standards in both Key Stages have fallen in the past couple of years. At Key Stage 1 standards are currently below average but given pupils' starting points this represents satisfactory progress. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards have stabilised to broadly average levels demonstrating satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are relatively weaker in their literacy skills at Key Stage 1. In recognition of this, a new literacy specialist has been appointed, to complement the mathematics and science specialism of the new headteacher. Pupils who need extra support with their learning are helped to achieve as well as others.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good, with pupils participating in a wide range of cultural activities. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average levels of attendance and good behaviour. Pupils believe that the school is a friendly place and they feel safe from any forms of oppression. They contribute well to the smooth running of the school through the work of the school council and the range of jobs they carry out. The school's Eco status reflects their growing concerns for the environment.

There are good links with the local community and pupils play an active part in village events. Pupils take regular exercise when in school and recognise the benefits this has on their health.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Whilst satisfactory overall, there are examples of good teaching. Classes are managed well and pupils' good behaviour and willing response enable lessons to flow smoothly. Planning is generally secure but there is scope to use information about how pupils are progressing more

consistently to plan lessons to meet individual needs. Teachers share with pupils what they are to learn but occasionally these learning objectives are not specific enough. This makes it more difficult for teachers and pupils to be clear about what they have achieved. The school is rightly encouraging pupils to be involved in evaluating their own learning but this is at an early stage. Good questioning by teachers is helping pupils to think more about what they are learning. However, more emphasis is needed on encouraging pupils to give extended answers that allow them to demonstrate their understanding. Teaching assistants are used well during group work and activity parts of lessons but their skills are sometimes underused during early parts of lessons. This means opportunities for assessments of pupils' speaking and listening skills, or extra support to reinforce what the teacher is saying, are missed. Marking of pupils' work is regular and supportive and its quality has recently improved. However, it does not focus enough on telling pupils precisely what they do particularly well or indicating what they must do next to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is enriched by a good number of lunchtime clubs which help to broaden pupils' outlooks and interests, as well as adding to their enjoyment of school. Good links with other local schools means pupils enjoy the chance of two residential trips, which build their confidence and enhance their social skills. Numerous special days, visitors and other events also enliven and enrich learning. There are some good opportunities for younger pupils, especially, to develop their speaking, listening and imaginative skills through the use of role-play and acting out stories. The use of information and communication technology is under-developed, though the school has plans for a complete overhaul of provision. Inspection evidence indicates that there is a slight imbalance with regard to the time given to some subjects. Staff are currently working to rectify this. The school has also recognised that pupils need more opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects such as history and geography.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Robust systems are in place to ensure pupils are safe and cared for. The school works well with parents to support their children's learning and has sensible plans to strengthen this partnership even further. Parents are particularly appreciative of the support given to their children and families in times of need. Recent improvements to the support for pupils who have particular learning needs, and greater use of outside agencies, means better targeted and focussed support is being provided to overcome identified weaknesses. Pupils' progress is tracked and recorded through regular tests and assessments. However, this information is not always used to its optimum effect, for example to identify early enough those at risk of underachieving.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The new headteacher has concentrated on laying firm foundations for taking the school forward. She provides good leadership, transmitting energy and infectious enthusiasm to her colleagues as they work together for the school's future success. Confirmation that the school is moving in the right direction is evident in a comprehensive plan for further improvement, which accurately identifies the main areas of need. Teachers with leadership responsibilities are

developing their skills well because they are being encouraged and guided on how to evaluate the schools performance. Underachievement is also starting to be identified earlier in order that intervention programmes can be put in place. However, these initiatives are new and have not yet had time to improve pupils' achievement. Financial procedures are increasingly more robust with money focused wisely on initiatives designed to raise standards. Currently, the school provides satisfactory value for money. Governors, recognising the need to strengthen the leadership team, have appointed a deputy headteacher with areas of expertise that complement those of the headteacher. Governors are providing sound levels of support and beginning to challenge aspects of the school's performance more rigorously.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 2   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 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 disabilities make progress                              | 3 |

### 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   | 3 |
| 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                                    | 2 |
| 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?          | 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 |

<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>                                       | 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  | 3   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 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  |

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

17 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Stradbroke VC Primary School, Stradbroke, Eye, Suffolk.

Thank you for welcoming us when Mr Francis and I visited you recently. I am writing to tell you what we found and how you can help. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing what you do in lessons. We were very pleased with how well you behave and how polite and friendly you were. We also noticed how much you enjoy school and how you all get on well together and look out for each other, so well done! All the adults in school look after you really well, and this is another good thing about Stradbroke.

We think Mrs Barrow is a good headteacher who has made a really impressive start. We know she has many exciting plans ahead and everyone is working hard as a team to improve what is on offer for you. You are lucky to have so many lunchtime clubs, visits and trips to go on: some of these are available because your school works so well with other nearby schools.

At the moment, you reach standards which are average when compared with all other children, but we think your school can help you to do even better. This is why we have asked Mrs Barrow and everyone to work on the following things.

- Make better use of the information they have about how well you are doing in your English, mathematics and science and use this when they plan your lessons.
- Improve the way everyone who is in charge of different areas and subjects checks how well things are going, so that you can do your very best.
- Keep on improving the marking of your work so you know what you have done well and what you need to do to improve.

You can help by carrying on working hard, continuing to take an interest in what you are learning and trying to improve the areas your teachers tell you are not so strong. We hope you have a lovely summer, but please do remember to wear your sunhats when the sun shines. Not many of you did when we visited!

Mrs A Taylor

Lead inspector