

Hemblington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120814
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	327370
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Ruth Frith

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	135
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Darren Doggett
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Ansett
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Mill Road Blofield Heath Hemblington Norwich Norfolk NR13 4QJ
Telephone number	01603 713243

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2008
Inspection number	327370

Fax number

01603 716994

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hemblington Primary is smaller than most primary schools. It serves an area of mixed housing and the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Over the last year or two, pupil numbers have increased by a fifth due, in part, to a new housing development in the next village. When children are admitted to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Reception class, not all are able to do the things that are expected of a typical four-year-old. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. At the time of the inspection one class was being taught by a long-term supply teacher.

The school has achieved the sports Activemark and the School Travel Plan Silver Award in recognition of its work.

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 where pupils thoroughly enjoy their education and do well. Staff welcome all pupils kindly, and skilfully include them. This results in a friendly ethos and harmonious community. Parents generally are pleased with what the school offers, as the following comment conveys: 'The school always seems to be full of happy children and colourful displays, and the pastoral care appears to match the excellent academic teaching.' Pupils say they would recommend the school to others because, 'The good teachers are kind and help you, pupils are friendly and teachers present the work in an interesting way.'

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's first-rate leadership has been key to the school's good improvement since the last inspection, particularly during a period of staff changes; the reduction of management positions due to budgetary constraints; and an influx of new pupils. Good organisation means the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and effective procedures are in place to identify what the school does well and how it could improve. Subject leaders are beginning to have a greater impact on what is happening in school, for example, by working with local authority specialists to improve pupils' writing. They are currently attending leadership and management courses to develop their skills further. Governors also recognise the need to develop their skills and have identified ways in which to reduce the headteacher's workload. Good improvements since the last inspection, together with very effective leadership from the headteacher and the commitment of staff and governors indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Staff form an effective team with a strong commitment to improving provision and raising standards. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well, including those who arrive part-way through their primary education. By Year 6, pupils typically reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science, from broadly average standards in Year 1. Teaching is good because work builds on pupils' understanding systematically over time. Pupils gain confidence and feel able to succeed. Teachers regularly assess how well pupils are doing but do not always use this information as effectively as they might to track pupils' progress and identify the next small steps in learning. Also, the marking of pupils' work does not always clearly indicate what pupils need to do to improve.

The curriculum is stimulating, particularly when effective links are made between subjects. The successful personal, social and health education programme ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the school community and beyond. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The good relationships between staff and pupils create an enjoyable atmosphere for learning. Pupils respect others and respond well to staff expectations. They behave well. Attendance is improving and above average. Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils feel well looked-after and have the confidence to ask for help if they need it. Pupils who find learning difficult receive good support and do well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's learning and development are good so that by the time they enter Year 1 most reach the levels expected for their age. Effective links with parents and the local pre-school help children to settle well. Welfare provision is good and, together with helpful routines and clear

expectations, ensures that children feel safe and quickly develop confidence. Staff place a high priority on developing children's personal, social and emotional skills and this successful work helps to support children's learning across all areas. Behaviour and attitudes are good because stimulating activities maintain children's interests both in class and outside. Planning is good and activities link well together as seen, for example, when children acted out roles in a 'police station' and learned about people who help in the community. Children work and play well with others and enjoy school. Teaching is good and work is generally matched well to the children's range of abilities and interests. Through regular observations and assessments, staff gain a good understanding of children's needs, and give effective support. However, current ways of assessing children's attainment on entry make it difficult to see clearly and easily the rate of progress they make. Leadership and management are good and reflected in the high aspirations of staff who form a strong team with a shared good understanding of how young children learn. Good liaison between Reception and Year 1 ensures a smooth transition and a continuation of effective learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the recent good start made in assessing pupils' work, setting targets and monitoring their progress from entry to Year 6.
- Extend the role of subject leaders so they have a deeper understanding of pupils' standards and progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress. This is due, in part, to the renewed focus on improving teaching, learning and the curriculum. Standards of pupils in Years 1 and 2 have improved, as reflected in the 2008 national assessments for seven-year-olds, in which they attained results significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. These represent good progress from their starting points. In Key Stage 2, progress is good but standards have been variable. In the two years prior to 2008, results of the national tests were significantly above average overall. In 2008, standards were broadly average and staff have responded by focusing, in particular, on pupils' writing. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are working above the levels expected for their age in English, mathematics and science and are in line to meet the targets set. The school met its realistic targets last year. Focused support for pupils who require additional help is effective in enabling them to meet their targets and increase their rate of progress. Evidence in lessons during the inspection, and in pupils' work, indicates good progress throughout, including for those pupils who joined the school part-way through their primary education and those who find learning easier than others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They thoroughly enjoy school, attend regularly and behave well. These features support their learning well. Older pupils, in particular, care for the younger ones by taking responsibility and acting as 'buddies'. Frequently, pupils from different age groups play with each other and most make friends readily. Pupils are developing as responsible and confident learners, with concern for each other's feelings. Good relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves, ensure a calm and harmonious climate throughout the school which helps learning. Pupils make a positive

contribution to the school community and beyond through their work on the school council where they help to improve the school, by raising funds for charities, and becoming involved in local community events. Pupils are provided with meaningful opportunities to explore the values and beliefs in different cultures, for example, through the established link with a school in Ghana. They have a good understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices and stay safe. Due to the good progress pupils make in their academic and social skills, they are well prepared for the next stage of education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan their lessons with care to ensure that all children are included and helped to progress whatever their ability or need. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to the progress of all pupils and particularly to those who find learning difficult. A good range of interesting teaching methods is used which matches the variety of learning styles within each class. Effective working with partners and group work result in pupils becoming confident learners, fully involved in their lessons. In an outstanding lesson, learning was very active, when pupils developed their literacy and numeracy skills and historical understanding, as they took on the role of archaeologists undertaking a 'dig' in the school grounds. Teachers successfully use information and communication technology, such as the interactive white boards, to motivate and capture children's interest and promote good learning. Practice is variable in the way teachers assess pupils' learning and use this information to identify the next small steps in learning. However, all teachers have a clear long-term view of what they want pupils to achieve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities which make school life exciting and interesting. Staff review the curriculum regularly to ensure that pupils cover all the required areas within the mixed-aged classes. Teachers are committed to making good use of links between subjects to enhance understanding and learning. Pupils say they find this makes learning easier because it is more relevant. This approach also helps teachers to make the best possible use of the teaching time. Staff are aware of the need to provide plenty of opportunities to encourage pupils to write and are monitoring and evaluating their current practice. The school offers French and German in Key Stage 2 which helps to prepare pupils for secondary school as well as introducing them to different cultures. The school, for its size, provides a wide range of popular extra-curricular activities. Those at lunchtime ensure all pupils, including those who live further away from the school, are able to participate. These opportunities further develop pupils' existing skills and offer opportunities to develop new interests such as chess and bird-watching. Staff modify the curriculum effectively for pupils who need extra help with their learning so these pupils make good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff take good care of their pupils who do well in the school's safe and supportive environment. Effective pastoral care ensures that pupils are able to benefit greatly from all the learning

opportunities the school offers. Staff take pupils' safety and well-being seriously and all appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place. Routines are clear and established well so children feel secure and know who to go to if they are worried or have a problem. Although a few parents raised concerns about pupils' behaviour and bullying, pupils are confident that any concerns are dealt with by the staff effectively. Staff and pupils report that incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour are rare. Teachers successfully work with a range of agencies to ensure pupils' needs are well met. Although pupils' academic guidance is good in the way staff interact with them in lessons, marking does not always show children clearly how to improve their work or relate to their learning targets. New procedures used by staff and governors to monitor attendance are helping to reduce the number of occasions pupils are absent from school, although a small minority of parents continue to take their children on holiday during term-time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is very effective and works purposefully to bring about necessary changes. She has been successful in developing a team with a shared sense of vision and a clear programme for improvement. Priorities for improvement are appropriate and the result of honest self-evaluation. Several important changes have been made over the last two years that have resulted in improved teaching, learning and pupils' progress. Successful strategies are in place to ensure that all pupils are included and staff and leaders promote community cohesion well. Governors are currently finding it difficult to recruit new members to the governing body but existing governors are working closely with the headteacher to improve their roles and responsibilities. The chair of governors has a good understanding of the school's effectiveness by keeping a check on how pupils are doing through asking questions about standards and achievement.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	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 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

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	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	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

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

12 November 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Hemblington Primary School, Norwich, Norfolk, NR13 4QJ.

You may remember that I recently visited your school to talk to you about what you do and what you learn. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit. Thank you for making me feel so welcome. I agree with both you and your parents and think that Hemblington is a good school. If you read on, you will see some of the things I found out.

- You work hard and make good progress. Your work is frequently at a level above that I usually see in other schools.
- Those of you who sometimes find it difficult to learn are helped a lot, and do well.
- You thoroughly enjoy school and behave well because you are interested in the work.
- You get on well with each other and make good friends. The older pupils look after others very well.
- You come to school regularly and on time. Well done! Please keep it up so that you do not miss any valuable lessons.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy.
- All staff work well as a team and teaching is good.
- You feel safe in school. I was pleased to hear that you clearly understand that bullying is wrong and talk to a friend or member of staff if you have problems.

Mrs Ansett leads and manages the school very well. She has agreed with staff and governors to focus on two things to make your school even better. They will continue to improve how they assess your work, set targets and monitor your learning so that you can make the best possible progress. Teachers who have responsibility for subjects are going to help Mrs Ansett to find ways of making sure that the school continues to be as good as it can be. I know you will respond well to their efforts and try as hard as you can.

Thank you once again for your friendly welcome. I wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Frith

Lead inspector