

Northrepps Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120836
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	327375
Inspection date	5 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Godfrey Bancroft

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	32
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 Peter Gibson
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Travis
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Street Northrepps Cromer Norfolk NR27 0LG
Telephone number	01263 579396
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Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than the majority of primary schools. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is considerably higher than usually found. Children's attainment when they begin school is significantly lower than that expected for their age. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a class alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. The percentage of pupils who come from minority ethnic groups is below average and there are none who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils who experience some form of learning difficulty is well above average, whilst the proportion that has a statement of special educational need is very high. These are made up mainly of pupils who have moderate learning difficulties or face challenges with speech, language and communication. The school has the Eco School Silver Award and the Healthy School Award.

A privately managed pre-school group is housed on site. This was inspected separately.

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 that is very much at the heart of the community it serves and is greatly valued by pupils. Parents and carers are delighted with the quality of education provided for their children and this is reflected in the universally positive response to the inspection questionnaire. Parental comments summed up the views of many, 'The school's great strength is that it caters for its pupils as individuals and their needs are met, but above all they are nurtured and celebrated.' This comment recognises the significant emphasis the school places on building the foundation for pupils' academic progress by taking good care of their personal and social development. Pupils achieve well, making good progress and, by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average. Over the last three years standards have improved steadily and the rate of pupils' progress has quickened, often from relatively low starting points.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, being underpinned by effective care, guidance and support. As pupils correctly commented, 'The grown ups take good care of us. The school is like a happy family'. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe and recognise the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. Pupils' learning is enhanced well by opportunities to participate in music and the arts and they clearly enjoy their time in school. Learning the guitar and making Salsa music are very popular amongst the pupils. Teaching and learning are good. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are a strength, resulting in pupils who become hardworking and are always willing to try their best. Teachers also plan activities that make lessons enjoyable and interesting. When they mark pupils' work they often provide encouraging and helpful comments. However, marking is not linked closely enough to pupils' targets for improvement and does not give them enough information about how to meet their targets.

The curriculum is good. It is planned flexibly, allowing pupils of similar ability but differing ages to be taught together to great advantage, especially in English and mathematics. However, even when pupils are grouped in this way there is often a wide range of ability with not enough consideration given to the stage they have reached. Whilst progress is often good, pupils sometimes find themselves starting at the same point regardless of ability. Pupils' learning is enhanced well by a good range of additional activities and educational visits, including overseas.

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. The headteacher leads by example and provides excellent support for everyone. All staff work well as a team, placing a clear and consistent emphasis on meeting the learning needs of each and every pupil. Improvement since the last inspection is good and the issues identified at that time have been addressed successfully. The pattern of steadily rising standards and the improving rate of pupils' progress strongly indicate that the school's capacity to improve in the future is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with abilities and skills that are often lower than expected for their age. The management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory and children settle in well because the school caters for individual levels of maturity and takes parents' wishes into account. Children are well-cared for and happy in school. They cope well in the mixed Reception and Key Stage 1 class because adults are deployed effectively to allow

for whole class lessons and separate activities for the younger children. The curriculum is planned so that the areas of learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage meld with the Key Stage 1 curriculum, allowing more able children to learn with older pupils. Adults explain things clearly, make lessons fun and give wise advice. The early morning action sessions in Italian are impressive and children's concentration and expression shows how much they enjoy them.

Children's time is spent on either adult led activities or tasks of their own choice. However, although there is a suitable range of enjoyable activities these are not sufficiently geared toward extending their learning and helping them achieve their next steps. Adults make detailed assessments of what children are doing so that they can evaluate their learning, but these assessments are not used sufficiently to adapt the available tasks to accelerate learning. Adult led activities are appropriate for children's needs although, because they are mostly based on completing set tasks, opportunities to generate children's own enquiry and curiosity so that they extend their learning are missed. This sometimes results in a lack of commitment to the task and a desire to 'play'. As a result, although children make satisfactory progress towards their learning targets, most have lower than expected skills for their age by the time they join Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Plan activities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage that focus more closely on meeting the next steps for their learning and provide them with more opportunities to learn through questioning and investigation.
- Link the marking of pupils' work to their progress towards their individual targets for learning.
- Refine lesson planning so that it takes full account of pupils' prior learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and make good progress, often from starting points below those expected for their age. The small number of pupils in each year means that sometimes there are significant variations in standards from year to year. However, over the last three years a clear pattern has emerged of improving standards and good progress. This is particularly true of English where the school's concerted focus on improving pupils writing has resulted in higher standards.

Teacher assessments show that standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. Similarly, teacher assessments and the work in pupils' books show that standards in the current Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are also broadly average. There is a substantial number of pupils who have additional learning needs. These pupils also achieve well and make good progress. Governors and the headteacher set suitably challenging targets for attainment which are usually met successfully.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils clearly enjoy their time at school. They behave well in lessons and at break times. However, there are occasions when younger pupils lose concentration and their pace of progress flags. Teachers are good at recognising this and over time pupils acquire the skills they need to become good learners.

Attendance is broadly average. In recent years staff have worked to good effect to improve attendance.

Pupils care for others and know how to keep themselves safe. They are fully aware of the importance of eating healthily and of the value of taking regular exercise. They make a good contribution to the school and to the wider community. They welcome members of the community into school and benefit greatly from a wide range of contributions. Typical of this is the development of the award winning school allotment. The pupils' work in this respect greatly enhances their knowledge and understanding of the need to care for the environment. Pupils' good social abilities and the standards they attain in basic skills show they are prepared well for the next stages of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan interesting lessons that capture pupils' enthusiasm and motivate them to work hard. That said, there are times, even when pupils are grouped by ability, when planning does not give enough consideration to their prior learning and to the stage they have reached. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. This means pupils are confident to answer questions and to ask for help if they need it. Teachers also use questions well to extend pupils' understanding and to challenge their thinking. Consequently, pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well. Drama also plays a prominent part in English and other lessons and is greatly enjoyed by pupils. Teaching assistants play an important part and work effectively in giving help to pupils, especially to those who sometimes struggle with aspects of their learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress accurately. Marking is helpful in providing pupils with advice about the progress they are making and about how to make their work even better. However, marking does not give enough attention to what each pupil needs to do to reach their individual targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is organised effectively to meet pupils' learning needs. For example; English and mathematics are taught in groups based on prior attainment, rather than age. This arrangement helps to meet pupils' different needs effectively. The school provides an interesting and stimulating range of additional activities to enhance learning well. For example; all pupils are taught to play the guitar, an activity they love. There are good opportunities to learn a range of European languages, including French, Italian and Spanish. The curriculum places special emphasis on pupils' personal development. Because of this they develop caring attitudes towards each other and a good knowledge of other cultures and beliefs. Residential educational visits, including going to a nearby outdoor and adventurous activity centre and a visit to France contribute well in this respect.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements to safeguard pupils and to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children meet requirements. Pupils feel safe at school and have confidence that adults will address any difficulties they face, whether academic or social, promptly and effectively. Arrangements to

support pupils with additional or specific learning needs are good. Teachers and support staff are skilful in identifying at an early stage any pupil who is at risk of falling behind and are prompt to provide any help that might be needed. Pupils know their personal targets for improvement, but do not always receive sufficiently specific guidance about how to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, staff and governors have a clear view of how the school might be improved and they work together closely to bring this about. They evaluate the performance of the school accurately and strategies for improvement are set out clearly in the school development plan. This shows how the areas for improvement have been selected and will be evaluated through careful procedures to monitor their progress, involving staff and governors. Staff are not complacent about the successes of the school and are always seeking further improvement. To this end arrangements for professional development are linked closely to the initiatives for improvement included in the school's development plan. Staff work outstandingly well to include all pupils in every aspect of the school's work and to make sure they can do their best, no matter what their ability or background.

The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It provides a wide range of activities that enable pupils to participate in local events and to gain an understanding of the wider world. Governance is good. Governors are great advocates for the work of the school and are fully involved in evaluating the quality of its performance. Resources are used wisely to ensure that good value is gained. For example; the recent investment to improve the provision for information and communication technology is helping to improve pupils' knowledge and skills. The smooth day-to-day operation of the school is supported well by the efficient and effective office and support staff.

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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?	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?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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 eliminated	1
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**

8 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northrepps Primary School, Cromer NR27 0LG

You may recall we visited your school recently to carry out its inspection. We concluded that yours is a good school. We also discovered that you and many of your parents and carers think so too. As you mentioned, your school is 'Like one big happy family'. Certainly all the adults work very hard to ensure you are happy at school and this helps you to make good progress. The staff are good at giving help to those of you who sometimes find learning difficult. They also provide you with a very interesting range of activities, such as drama, learning to play the guitar and making Salsa music, that all help to make learning fun. We are also very impressed by the range of modern foreign languages you are able to learn. We got the impression that your teachers enjoy the foreign languages just as much as you do!

The school governors as well as the headteacher and the staff are always looking for ways of making your school even better. With this in mind we are recommending that they:

- Plan even more activities for those of you in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ask questions and find things out for yourself.
- Provide those of you who are a little older with more information when they mark your work, about what you need to do to achieve your individual learning targets.
- Make sure that, even when you are taught in ability groups, they take full account of the work you have done in the past and that your starting points are based on this.

We would like to conclude by wishing you well in the future. We hope that if you keep working as you do now that you will achieve your potential.

Yours faithfully

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead inspector