

# Colman Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120938
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	327395
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Dawson

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	165
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Steven Betts
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Nicholas Southgate
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 June 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Colman Road Norwich Norfolk NR4 7AW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603491010
<b>Fax number</b>	01603491011

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- children's standards and achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of links between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1
- pupils' personal development and well-being, including their attendance, and the care, guidance and support they receive.

Inspectors gathered evidence from: the school's environment, documents and records of progress, lesson observations, discussions with pupils and adults, and curriculum planning. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors 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

Colman Infant School serves a mixed community that is mainly White British and includes an average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, mainly from families working at the University of East Anglia or at the hospital. The school provides a specialist unit for deaf children, resulting in a higher than average percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs, which also includes those with physical or learning difficulties. The overall percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to other schools. The school was reorganised two years ago, when Year 3 pupils moved to the junior school. There is independent childcare provision on the site, providing care before and after school and in the holidays. This is inspected and reported on separately.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Colman Infant School is a good school where all pupils are valued and well cared for. One of the strengths of the school is its inclusiveness. To quote the headteacher, 'Understanding and tolerance are key values in the school.' The deaf unit is outstanding provision that is appreciated by the whole community. One parent wrote, 'I am very happy that my child is exposed to deaf culture...', and all parents who commented on the support and inclusion of pupils with special educational needs or from minority ethnic backgrounds were impressed by the school's practices. The inspectors agree that all pupils are served well, enabling them to learn effectively and make good progress, both academically and in their personal development. The inspection team and the vast majority of parents agree that the school is well led. Leaders, managers and governors know the school well and are constantly seeking improvement and setting challenging targets. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and the outcomes of any new initiatives ensure that the school evaluates and amends its practice to generate improvement, and all issues from the last inspection have been addressed. This, and the commitment to inclusion, ensures that it is in a good position to improve further. New systems for tracking pupils' progress, although not yet providing a complete picture throughout the school, are already identifying those who need additional support. There is a range of expertise in the governing body, and leaders make good use of governors' talents, ensuring the school makes the best possible use of its resources. Good liaison with the junior school eases transition for pupils in Year 2, who enjoy the lunchtime clubs in their future school. Community cohesion is promoted well. Pupils support local residents through Age Concern, national and international charities and have links with a school in Shanghai. They also support the Tibetan Children's Village. International students from the University of East Anglia add an extra dimension to pupils' understanding of other cultures and faiths. The school choir is active in the community and pupils visit the synagogue and Centre for Islamic Studies to support their learning. These initiatives contribute to their good personal development and well-being.

Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school because of the attention given to the needs of each child. All systems for safeguarding pupils' safety and welfare are in place. Pupils are responsible, polite and very tolerant of each other's needs and views. All pupils learn simple signing to ensure deaf children are fully included in school life. Pupils in wheelchairs are accepted naturally into class and friendship groups. Behaviour is good. Parents and pupils indicated that there are incidents of boisterous play or disputes, but these are rare and the school's consistent systems for promoting good behaviour are effective. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Cultural development is particularly strong because of the emphasis on cultural diversity, art and music. Throughout the school, pupils' knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyles is excellent. They know what constitutes a balanced diet, make healthy choices and enjoy the many opportunities for sport and exercise. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe. A lively display by pupils in Year 1 shows, for example, how to be safe on the road.

Although pupils enjoy school, attendance is just satisfactory. There have been several bouts of sickness which have resulted in increased absence. A very small minority of pupils have medical conditions that result in time off school. However, there are families who take their children out of school in term time to visit their families abroad and several pupils who are often late for school. This has an adverse impact on their learning and that of their classmates.

The school has clear systems for promoting good attendance but more needs to be done to make sure parents understand the implications of regular absence or lateness.

All aspects of the school's provision are good. Because of this and pupils' good attitudes to work, although several children start school with knowledge and skills below those of their age group, at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage most achieve the expected levels for their age. By the time they leave at the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average overall and have been consistently above average in the national assessments for seven-year-olds in recent years. This equates to good achievement throughout the school and is a tribute to the good teaching, effective academic support and interesting curriculum.

Basic skills are taught methodically and rigorously and teachers plan opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across the curriculum. This good practice, combined with opportunities for them to take responsibility, ensures that they develop good skills to prepare them for their future lives. Teachers set work that matches the diverse needs of the pupils in their classes so that, whatever their abilities, they progress well. However, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not have sufficient involvement in selecting work to show their achievements or planning their next steps. Pupils with physical, academic or social difficulties make excellent progress from their starting points because of the skills and dedication of the teachers and support staff. Pupils learn to work independently and responsibly and teachers encourage good collaboration between pairs and groups within lessons. Sometimes pupils spend too long sitting listening to the teacher, however, and their concentration slips. Adults give good advice in lessons and when marking pupils' work. Pupils are set targets in discussion with their teachers and know when they have successfully achieved them. However, although academic guidance is good overall, opportunities are rare for pupils themselves, to evaluate their own work in order to decide what they need to do to improve. This does not make the most of their mature attitudes to learning.

The curriculum is interesting and relevant to pupils' needs. Effective planning ensures that topics are not repeated from year to year and that pupils develop their skills effectively. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to contribute to or amend curriculum planning. This means, for example, that they rarely learn geographical or historical skills through a specific interest rather than through the set topic. Additional activities, including a good range of clubs, such as French club and Indian dance, add zest to pupils' learning. There is good provision for physical education and music. Additional support for individual pupils or small groups helps to accelerate their progress. One parent said, 'My child has been attending the early literacy support programme for three months and his progress has been outstanding.' Specialist paediatric language staff support pupils in the early stages of learning English so that they make good progress. The good personal, social and health education curriculum is the foundation for pupils' good personal development and well-being. The school is aware that there are differences in the style of teaching and curriculum planning between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1, and are making changes for September.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children receive a good start to their education. They are well cared for and settle into school life with ease. Good arrangements for induction, including liaison with local playgroups, visits and staggered entry to school, help parents and children to swiftly assimilate school routines. Very effective systems for the beginning of each day, where children register themselves when

they arrive with their parents, promote responsibility. Parents appreciate the easy access to the teachers and the way staff respond to any requests or problems. Children's welfare is at the heart of the provision. Individual needs are identified and responded to swiftly.

The curriculum is well planned, providing a good balance of direct adult teaching and opportunities for children to learn independently through play. The stimulating outside area, recently improved, provides good opportunities for children to learn about the way things grow, to experiment with materials, and to develop their skills on tricycles. Attractive classrooms, with areas that promote all areas of learning, provide a good environment for extending children's skills. Teaching is good and the basic skills of reading, including linking sounds and letters, writing and mathematical development are taught rigorously. This means that children are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Children make good progress in relation to their starting points. Their knowledge and skills on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are below those expected of their age, mainly because there are some children in the early stages of learning English. When they enter Year 1, many have achieved the learning goals expected of them and develop good personal and social skills.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed. Adults record children's progress conscientiously in order to plan activities to enable them to achieve their next steps. However, the records are solely for adults, and children are not involved in either the selection of material for their records of achievement, or in deciding for themselves what they need, or would like, to learn next. This limits opportunities for them to take a pride in their achievements or contribute to a personal record of their progress as they move through the school.

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

- Enable children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to contribute to their records of achievement that continue into Year 1, so that they can celebrate their successes and help plan their next steps.
- Seek every opportunity to promote good attendance and punctuality.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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	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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<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 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 May 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Colman Infant School, Norwich, NR4 7AW

Thank you all for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed seeing how much you enjoy school and how well you take care of each other. You and your parents told us that your teachers take good care of you. We agree. Your school is very good at caring for you all and making sure you make good progress. We were pleased to see how well you all behaved. Keep up the good work. But a few of you are away from school for holidays in term time and some of you are often late for school. We have asked the school to continue to make sure that your parents know how important it is that you do not miss out on the good things happening in school.

You belong to a good school where the teaching is good and you learn interesting things. This means that you make good progress and, by the time you go to the junior school, many of you are working at levels above those of most other seven-year-olds. Well done to your teachers and to you all. Almost all of you make good progress, and those of you in the deaf unit or who have difficulties with learning or with your health make especially good progress. This is because of the excellent care and support you receive. Everybody matters in your school and you all respect and enjoy the differences between you and others in the world.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a good start to their school life and their teachers are good at caring for them and helping them to learn. They know exactly how well the children are doing and we have asked them to let children help collect some of things they are proud of that show how well they are learning. We know children would like to help decide which things are special and sometimes decide for themselves what they need to learn next. They can take these books with them when they move into Year 1 and add new achievements to them.

The grown-ups in charge of the school do a good job in making sure you are safe and do well. They have good plans to make your school even better and I am sure you will all help them. We wish you all the best for your futures. I know Year 2 already know their new school well because of your lunchtime clubs there.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Dawson

Lead inspector