

Britannia Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124653
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	328184
Inspection date	24 September 2008
Reporting inspector	John Francis

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)	589
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 Kevin Bryan
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Heath
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Britannia Road Ipswich Suffolk IP4 5HE

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	24 September 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. The following issues were inspected: the development of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum, the use of marking and target setting and its impact on pupils' progress and the implementation of the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. Evidence was gathered from observing work in classrooms, scrutinising school documentation and records of pupils' achievement and progress, discussions with senior leaders in the school and with pupils, and the views of parents through the questionnaire returns.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the 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 the report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary and nursery school. Most pupils come from the immediate area but a sizeable minority choose to come to the school from outside the catchment area. Most are from White British backgrounds but a small but steadily increasing minority come from a range of different ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, but the proportion who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. Children start school with the skills and knowledge broadly expected for their age.

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 providing a well-rounded education for its children; a view shared by parents, and reflected in the school's own evaluation. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school: their many positive comments on the questionnaire returns reflect the strength of this view. They are particularly pleased with the outstanding quality of the care and support their children receive.

Good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching across the school builds on the effective start children get in the Early Years. As they progress through the school, pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Year 2 have been above average for many years. Changes resulting from detailed evaluations of the school's work and good analysis of data, have led to further improvements in a number of areas. For example, providing more relevant material and approaches for boys has improved their reading skills significantly. The strong culture of success throughout the school enables children to achieve well, reaching above and sometimes well above, average standards by the end of Year 6. This again has been a consistent picture in the school over many years. Careful planning and good support systems for those pupils who find learning more difficult, particularly the skilful work of the teaching assistants, ensure that most make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils respond exceptionally well to the good teaching, the broad and engaging curriculum and the good relationships at all levels. Planning the curriculum around agreed themes is developing well and becoming more secure across the school. Well-planned lessons for each year group benefit from the good knowledge of subject leaders and contribute to the consistency of approach seen across the school. However, there is still work to do to ensure all of the necessary skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) are fully integrated. Nevertheless, pupils have a wonderful attitude to their learning, seen in their above average levels of attendance. Much of this commitment comes through the way their views are sought by the school's leadership, for example, on curriculum content and their favoured approaches to learning. Pupils have a real voice in the school and are true partners in the process. As a result, their behaviour is good; they show outstanding enjoyment in what they do and have a great commitment to their own learning. Teachers plan many cooperative activities that help to strengthen this.

Regular use of ICT by teachers and pupils develops computer skills to a good level. Teachers make skilful use of the interactive boards in their classrooms to make lessons lively and engage pupils' interest. Pupils have many opportunities to integrate ICT skills into their daily work in a range of subjects, for example, where they draft and edit their writing directly on to the computer, supporting their literacy skills. Pupils' social and moral development is good and good provision for art and music adds well to their cultural development.

The school makes outstanding provision for the safeguarding and care of its pupils. Excellent systems in place monitor their progress in reading, writing and mathematics accurately. These allow school leaders to analyse the data in many ways and provide the high quality information used to refine curricular planning. Pupils' performance is tracked and evaluated well to set challenging targets at individual pupil and whole-school level. Pupils have a good understanding of their targets and, through these, the next steps in their learning. This is less effective where teachers do not clearly identify for pupils what they expect them to learn by the end of the

lesson and share with them how they will measure their success. Teachers encourage pupils through praise in marking their work and through their personal comments.

Pupils readily take part in a wide range of sporting activities during and after school and enjoy the healthy and tasty lunches on offer. Along with the good health education programme, this gives pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do to stay fit and healthy. Their sense of responsibility means they make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. The school operates as a very effective community but also looks beyond the school gates into the wider world, engaging with parents and others. These good social skills, along with their achievements in literacy, numeracy and ICT, prepare pupils well for the next stages of their education and their longer-term future.

All of these successes are the result of the exceptional leadership, drive and commitment of the headteacher, well supported by all staff and an active and knowledgeable governing body. These elements have produced a school with a clearly defined culture and a staff committed to developing the whole child. The effective management structures in place involve the senior staff in careful analysis and review of the school's work. All of those with leadership responsibilities have clear roles and a high degree of autonomy to manage their areas. This also comes with a high level of accountability, another factor in the school's success. However, more recent leadership appointments are still establishing themselves and developing their roles. The school has made good progress since its last inspection, particularly in its development of the curriculum and in ICT, and with consistently good achievement over time, has a good capacity for continued improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

A significant strength of the EYFS is the way staff analyse their practice. Evaluating what is working well and taking action to remedy weaker areas is very much part of the school's culture. The focus on boys' writing, identified as a weaker area through the school's review process, is evident in day-to-day routines. For example, offering engaging outdoor activities such as building a house for one of the three little pigs, and encouraging boys to write by signing in and completing the health and safety book before they start work. This careful reflection and evaluation is one of the key factors that makes the leadership and management so good. Teaching is good with some examples of outstanding practice. Staff in both the Nursery and Reception work together well and there is very good support from skilled teaching assistants. Characteristic of the attention given is the way staff focus on listening to children, noting their interests and incorporating these into the planned activities. Teaching of initial letter sounds and the way they blend together into words (phonics) is a real strength. Setting targets for children is just starting but already children are confident in saying whether they have been successful in what they have been doing. Children make generally good progress, with the vast majority reaching just above average levels in most areas, especially in aspects of their personal and social development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the themed approach to the curriculum, ensuring the key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are integrated fully into teachers' planning.
- Ensure teachers tell pupils clearly, what they are aiming to achieve by the end of a lesson and how they will judge their success.

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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	1
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?	1

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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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

25 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Britannia Primary and Nursery School, Ipswich, IP4 5HE

Many of you will remember that Mrs Taylor and I visited your school a little while ago. Thank you for making us so welcome. All of you that we talked with were very keen to share your work and ideas. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

You tell us that yours is a good school and we certainly agree with you. Mrs Heath and all of the staff take excellent care of you and work very hard to make your school an exciting and interesting place to come to. You said how much you enjoy your lessons, how interesting they are and how you work hard and try your best. We know you have a big say in some of the themes you study and we really liked the wide range of activities you do. I was very impressed with the older children's work on traffic problems on Britannia Road and Mrs Taylor enjoyed visiting the building site in the Early Years classes. You all work very hard to help others and improve your school, and carry out any jobs you are given very well. You also told us that everyone in school gets on well and we can see this in your very good behaviour.

To help you do even better we have asked the teachers to make sure that you have the chance to use all of your literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in the themes that are planned for you. We have also asked Mrs Heath and the teachers to make sure you know exactly what it is you are learning about in all lessons so you know when you have been successful.

We wish you well for the future and hope you continue to enjoy your lessons as much as you do now and get even better.

John Francis

Lead inspector