

Lakenham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134965
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	329002
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	326
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 Richard Allen
Headteacher	Mrs Oriana Dalton
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	City Road Norwich Norfolk NR1 2HL
Telephone number	01603 877780
Fax number	01603 877781

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This school was opened in September 2007 on a new, purpose-built site after local reorganisation of Norwich schools when younger pupils moved from the local first school and older pupils moved from temporary accommodation. A below average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and an average proportion of pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. Most of these relate to pupils' emotional or social needs or their language development. The proportion of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is well above average.

Early Years Foundation Stage provision is located in a Nursery and two Reception classes. Children enter the Nursery on a part time basis after their third birthday and they move to a Reception class at the beginning of the school year of their fifth birthday. The school has gained the Activemark award for physical education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Due to good leadership and management, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and progress have improved considerably since the school opened and are now satisfactory. Pupils' personal development and well-being are also satisfactory. Although the majority of parents are fully supportive of the school, some are critical of a few aspects, especially pupils' behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour is much improved this year and that they feel safe in school. Inspectors judge that behaviour is satisfactory overall and often good in younger classes although the pace of learning in Year 5 and 6 classes is occasionally slowed by the unsettled behaviour of a few pupils. The school works in close partnership with the local authority and has a clear, accurate and shared understanding of what needs doing to take the school forward. Effective monitoring and evaluation, improving provision and rising standards indicate that the school is in a good position to continue to improve in the future.

Many pupils in all year groups began their time in this new school with low literacy and numeracy skills. The school and local authority quickly identified that too much teaching was not good enough to bring about the necessary improvements in pupils' achievement. The headteacher soon set about improving the overall quality of teaching and learning. Teaching and learning are much improved and are now satisfactory overall and often good or better up to Year 4. In Years 5 and 6, however, sometimes not enough is expected and pupils take insufficient pride in their work. Although 2008 National Curriculum test results indicated exceptionally low standards, school assessments and pupils' work indicate that rates of progress have accelerated considerably since the school was opened. Achievement and progress are now satisfactory overall. Up to Year 4, pupils achieve well and make good progress. Standards in Year 5 and 6 remain below national expectations, but, in other year groups, many more pupils are attaining in line with expected standards. The satisfactory curriculum is suitably modified to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and these pupils are given additional support, enabling them to make satisfactory progress. However, opportunities for independent study, research and investigations are limited, especially in Years 5 and 6. Although more able pupils make satisfactory progress, they are sometimes given insufficient additional support and challenge to enable them to fulfil their full potential.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The headteacher has introduced effective ways of monitoring the progress of pupils, and the information provided is used to allocate additional support to those who are at risk of falling behind. However, too many pupils, especially older pupils, are unclear of what they have achieved to date and where they need to concentrate to improve their work further.

The school is sensitive to the nature of its community and makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion, but recognises that a thorough review of this aspect of its work has yet to be undertaken.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Many children enter Nursery with knowledge and skills well below those typical for their age. Their personal and communication skills are particularly limited. They are helped to settle quickly into school routines. They make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in their language, personal and physical development, because

teaching and other aspects of provision are good. However, by the end of Reception, many pupils still attain below levels expected for their ages. In Nursery and Reception, children enjoy their learning and are able to speedily organise themselves in readiness for activities. Children's progress is assessed and monitored very carefully so the majority move on well with their learning, especially those who need additional help or further language development.

Although planning in Nursery provides children with good activities, such as the outdoor 'Garden Centre' session, assessment information is not always used well enough to ensure that planning is modified to meet the needs of each individual. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is firmly based on practical tasks that children enjoy and these enable them to make good progress. The Reception classes are integrated sensitively so that children learn to mix with each other. Children are taught how to look after each other and behave well, for example when they helped each other dress after their 'Trim-trail' session. The curriculum includes a balanced mix of adult-led tasks and activities that the children can choose for themselves. Good standards of welfare and care are evident and all staff keep a watchful eye on children, continually ensuring they are safe and happy. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed and staff have a clear view of where further improvements are needed. There are good links with parents, for example, through curriculum newsletters, which include information to help parents support their children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 by expecting more of pupils' learning, their behaviour, their concentration and their presentation of work.
- Improve the achievement of more able pupils by providing them with more challenge, support and guidance and also by providing more opportunities for independent research and investigation.
- Ensure that academic guidance is consistently effective in all classes so that pupils have a clear understanding of where and how to improve particular aspects of 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

Standards in National Curriculum assessment for seven-year-olds were very low in 2008 but due to good leadership and management, they are much improved this year and many more Year 2 pupils, are on track to attain average standards. Standards in reading in the younger classes have risen considerably and are now in line with national averages. This is due to improved teaching of letters and sounds, good guided reading teaching and to the helpful contribution that many parents make to their children's good progress and enjoyment of reading. Although more Year 6 pupils are on track to attain expected standards in English and mathematics than last year, standards are still below average. Pupils with learning difficulties make progress in line with that of other pupils of their ages but a few of the more able pupils do not achieve their full potential because they do not receive additional guidance or challenge often enough. This means that too few older pupils attain the higher levels in mathematics and writing. Pupils for whom English is not their first language make good progress and soon develop confidence in speaking, writing and reading it.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are satisfactory. Although pupils show a sound understanding of the cultures and traditions of people from minority ethnic backgrounds who live in Britain or other cultures in the wider world, the school is aware of the need to develop this further. Pupils show a clear understanding of how to lead a healthy life. They respond well to and appreciate the school's emphasis on exercise, sport and healthy eating. Pupils behave with consideration for their own and others' safety and understand how to use the internet safely. Most pupils say they enjoy school. Due to some determined work by the school, levels of attendance have improved well this year and are above average. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and often good up to Year 4. On a few occasions in lessons in Years 5 and 6 some pupils do not behave or concentrate as well as they could. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and local community, for example, through visits to a care home and helping with local projects. The school council are proud of their contribution to designing the good quality playground markings and games. Their satisfactory personal development and improved basic skills give them a sound preparation for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are much improved. They are satisfactory overall and good in classes up to Year 4. In younger classes, teachers hold high expectations and manage pupils well. Consequently pupils concentrate and behave well in lessons, present their work well and make good progress. Expectations are not as high in Years 5 and 6 and this slows pupils' progress. Teachers' marking often gives pupils useful feedback on their achievements and a clear indication of how to improve, especially in younger classes. At times, however, marking provides insufficient challenge and not enough is expected to ensure that pupils, especially the more able, always do their best. Suitable support is provided, often by teaching assistants, to those pupils who have emotional, social or language difficulties. Teaching assistants are deployed less effectively during whole class teaching times. Pupils in some classes are given useful opportunities to talk, share their ideas and discuss answers to teachers' questions. This helps deepen their understanding and develop their speaking and listening skills. This practice is not evident, however, in all classrooms.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum with good opportunities for enrichment. The staff work effectively to make the curriculum more interesting by planning focused themes for example, on the Olympics. A range of visits to local places of interest, such as museums, activity centres and residential centres are used as interesting starting points for learning. Many pupils enjoy the regular opportunities for physical education, swimming and sporting activities and these encourage them to be active. The school has appropriately ensured that its curriculum has been focused on addressing underachievement in English and mathematics, especially, boys' writing. Chances are missed, however, to develop particular writing skills in subjects other than English. The curriculum is suitably modified to meet the needs of pupils with learning

difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak languages other than English at home. However, provision for more able pupils is not yet fully effective and limited opportunities are provided for independent research and investigation.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care and support are good and academic guidance is satisfactory. The school's good links with outside agencies support pupils' pastoral care well. Child protection and safeguarding procedures, including those for the safe use of the internet, fully meet statutory requirements. Pupils say they are well cared for and feel safe in school. The school has introduced targets to guide pupils' learning in writing and mathematics and in some classes, especially up to Year 4, pupils know where and how to improve their work. This is not yet consistent in all classes. Pupils who have additional support generally have individual plans well matched to their needs that summarise their learning targets well and help them make satisfactory progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has ensured that staff are committed to raising standards and improving the personal development of pupils. Pupils' achievement and personal development have improved considerably since the school opened. The headteacher encourages and enables other staff to develop their leadership roles. The senior management team make an effective contribution to improving the quality of provision and raising standards, although some middle leaders have yet to become involved in observing lessons and guiding other staff. Governors have worked hard to establish this new school, know the school well and provide appropriate challenge and support. Parents are consulted appropriately and kept well informed about events at school and how they might help their children at home through a weekly newsletter and other leaflets, for example, on how to help improve their child's writing. Effective staff training and regular follow-up checks ensure that key aspects of teaching and learning, such as how writing is taught, are continually improving throughout the school.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
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?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	3

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	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lakenham Primary School, Norfolk, NR1 2HL.

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We send special thanks to those of you who gave up part of your lunchtime to talk with us. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn.

Lakenham Primary is a satisfactory school. It is well run and has improved considerably since it opened. The school gives you a sound education and preparation for life in your next school and in the wider community. Adults provide satisfactory teaching so that you make sound progress. Many of you in younger classes make good progress. I am pleased that most of you enjoy school and that you and that most of your parents are pleased with it.

You attend regularly and have a clear understanding of how to act safely. You understand what is right and what is wrong. You also show consideration for others. Your behaviour and manners are satisfactory and often good in younger classes. Those of you who find learning difficult make good enough progress because the school helps you learn. Those of you who speak other languages at home make great strides in learning to speak, read and write English and this is really important for your future lives.

There are many things that your headteacher, the staff and the governors want to improve because they want your school to get even better. We agree with them that there are three important things to be done first. These are to:

- help those of you in Years 5 and 6 do your best and concentrate, behave and present your work better
- help you find things out for yourselves more and help those who find learning easier to do better by giving them more extra help
- help make sure that all of you can see where and how to improve particular aspects of your work.

You can help by checking your own work and telling your teachers when you have found your work to be too easy or too difficult.

I send you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Roger Sadler

Lead inspector