

# Aldborough Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120777
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	339774
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Hall

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	126
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Richard Hembling
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Tina Casburn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Alby Hill Aldborough Norwich
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with the headteacher, staff, governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at key documents including samples of the pupils' work, data from the tracking of progress, the school improvement plan, minutes of the governing body and examples of the monitoring. There was also a scrutiny of documents regarding safeguarding and an evaluation of procedures to ensure the pupils' safety. Inspection questionnaires were scrutinised including 65 from parents and 75 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can as they move through the school
- if all elements of the pupils' personal development are well catered for
- whether staff use assessment information effectively enough to challenge all groups of pupils to achieve their best
- if the school monitors the effectiveness of what it provides in a rigorous enough manner to identify areas for further improvement.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size school in a rural area of north Norfolk. Fewer pupils are entitled to free school meals than seen in schools nationally. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English and there is a below average proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds an Eco school award. A major programme of building works was started in September 2009, although such work is currently in abeyance while planning permission is sought. Meanwhile all classes have vacated the main school building and work in portable classrooms.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils say they really like coming to Aldborough and particularly enjoy the wide range of activities available to them and the fun they have learning. Behaviour is good and a key factor in why so many pupils do well. As one parent rightly notes, 'Teachers approach good behaviour as a given in school and treat and talk to children with great respect.' Most parents are pleased with the education their children receive and like the emphasis on the development of the whole child.

Children enter the Reception class with skills that vary from year to year and are currently above the expectations for their age. Children have plenty of social confidence, settle quickly into school and many speak with a mature vocabulary for their age. By the age of 11 standards are above average and sometimes high. The school puts a lot of emphasis on the development of reading skills and across the school many pupils become confident and very competent readers. Overall progress across the range of subjects is good. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make particularly strong progress so that many attain the higher levels in national tests which helps them prepare well for their future. While the progress made by other pupils is often good some could do even better particularly in their writing. This is because writing activities do not always provide sufficient structure to ensure pupils master the skills to write in detail and with technical accuracy.

Pupils are usually keen to learn and try hard with their work. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The teaching of the oldest pupils is particularly successful which ensures they make considerable progress. But, in some classes the planning of lessons is not very detailed and staff do not make good enough use of assessment information to set challenging tasks that move learning forward at a quick enough pace. The curriculum is good and with particular strengths in drama, music and an interesting range of enrichment activities. Staff know and care for the pupils well, enabling them to feel happy at school and grow in confidence.

The staff work well together as a team and do much to support the personal development of the pupils. The headteacher has a clear understanding of what works well and what needs to be tightened in particular areas. Governors are supportive, well involved in school activities and work effectively with staff to ensure there is good capacity to improve further. Everyone connected with the school has worked hard to minimise the issues created during major building works and staff are aware of the need to continue to monitor day-to-day activities rigorously.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

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- Raise standards in writing by
  - providing a wider range of activities where pupils can write in greater depth
  - focusing on the development of strategies to improve spelling and the neatness of work.
  - Ensure the quality of teaching is consistently effective by
  - improving the planning of lessons to make clear exactly what the pupils are to learn
  - using assessment information to ensure the highest appropriate level of challenge for all pupils.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Overall progress across the school is good and in upper Key Stage 2 pupils sometimes make outstanding progress because of very skilful teaching. Standards in national tests at the age of 11 have been above and often well above national averages in most recent years. Data indicates that boys do particularly well and in some year groups, such as the current Year 6, this is evident. There does not appear to be a specific reason for this other than that many boys have a very positive attitude to learning and try hard with their work. Pupils with additional needs make good progress towards their targets. The school places very high importance on reading and has a well established system of training parent volunteers who work with the staff during lessons dedicated to group reading. This helps many pupils develop a real joy in books and standards here are often high, but this does not always translate into such high standards in writing. This is in part at least because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write extended pieces in a variety of genres. Similarly there is not always a great enough focus on developing strategies to spell accurately and to produce neat handwriting.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and many including the older boys take part in discussions with enthusiasm. However, the presentation of pupils' work throughout the school is sometimes untidy and for example does not ensure accuracy in mathematical calculations. Whilst most younger pupils also behave well some do not make enough effort to join in discussions especially when activities last for too long. Pupils get on very well together and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. The school does much to foster healthy eating through excellent quality, locally sourced school meals. There is however, scope to help pupils bringing packed lunches to make more healthy choices.

While there is no school council pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibilities in the school and wider community including the 'Eco Warriors' who have helped set up worm bins and recycling activities as well as organising bat, moth and bug events. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent as reflected in their respect for other people's feelings and values, and a very real interest in learning about others prompted by very strong relationships across the ages. The school works effectively to extend pupils' understanding of other cultures including

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studies during Black History month and a class assembly on the abolition of slavery. Attendance has recently improved and the school is actively working with parents regarding holidays in term time and late arrivals in the morning which disrupt learning.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall although somewhat variable. Teachers manage behaviour well and create a positive environment where pupils want to learn and where their ideas are valued. Some exemplary teaching enables the older pupils to make considerable progress. For instance pupils in Years 5 and 6 are very well taught in mathematics and there is a clear sense of challenge in solving problems. There are suitable procedures to check and track the progress pupils make as they move through the school. However, the use of such information is variable. The school does not have a consistent format for planning and some is not clear enough in identifying specifically what the pupils are to learn.

The curriculum is good and there are some strong elements in cross-curricular links and enrichment activities. This was reflected in an interesting physical education lesson in

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Years 4 and 5 when in limited accommodation the pupils developed their own Centurion marches, learned the techniques to jump over a river and onto a 'horse'. The school puts a lot of emphasis on the development of reading skills but is not as successful in planning activities to develop systematically the skills to write well.

Pupils say they feel well cared for. They think that staff know them well and there is always someone to talk to if they have any worries. The school has good policies and procedures to look after the pupils on a day-to-day basis including in the case of accidents.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The staff team work closely together and are united in their commitment to the school and its pupils. The headteacher has a good vision for school improvement. This, coupled with the support of staff and governors, drives improvement and ensures there is good capacity for further development. The school recognises key strengths in provision although at times has a slightly more positive view of its successes than data and the inspection indicate. The programme for the monitoring of teaching and learning is appropriate, but, feedback is not always used well enough to impact on the quality of provision especially in the middle parts of the school.

The staff have put a lot of time and effort into ensuring the day-to-day work of the school continues during the extensive programme of refurbishment. However, with delays this has been a difficult period. Governance is good as there is a well established programme of meetings and committees. There are also governor links with specific areas or subjects and a programme of focused visits that helps inform governors at first hand of the work of the school. These procedures ensure governors are involved effectively in strategic development.

Equality of opportunity is good with additional support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those identified as gifted and talented. The school works effectively to promote community cohesion by drawing different groups into school activities as exemplified in the organisation of Farmers' Markets that are now under the auspices of the parent group. The school is also working successfully to develop community cohesion in a wider and global sense including direct involvement with a school in Malawi. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. There are clear procedures for Child Protection and careful checks of all adults who work in school.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Most of the children entering the school have attended a local nursery and start with skills that are often above the expectations for their age. Many are happy and confident children who look forward to joining their siblings and friends at school and want to learn. They make good progress in the Reception class and enter Year 1 having achieved and sometimes exceeded the targets expected of them. Data indicates the younger children do less well than other groups and to a greater degree than seen nationally. The school is aware of this and is monitoring the situation in the light of admission procedures. Teaching and learning are good. The job share arrangements work smoothly and children benefit from the enthusiasm of all staff. The assessment of children's initial knowledge and skills is satisfactory, although at times a little cautious and under-values their initial abilities. There is a good emphasis on developing early reading skills and trained parent volunteers and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to encouraging a love of books. The leadership and management of the provision are good. However, staff have not taken sufficient account of the need for outdoor activities during temporary accommodation restrictions to develop the full curriculum for this age.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

A high proportion of parents returned the inspection questionnaire, many with detailed comments. Most parents are pleased with what the school provides and recognise this enables their children to become happy and enthusiastic learners. One comment notes 'My daughter said to me the other day "When I have children I want them to come to this school" - what more can I say!' Many identify with pleasure the wide range of activities available and that the school helps their children develop self-confidence and enjoyment in learning.

A small but significant number of parents have concerns about provision and feel their comments, ideas and suggestions are not welcomed. A range of issues and strongly held views have been raised including about support for individual pupils, the current building situation and school leadership. Inspectors believe that the information to parents is generally good and the staff actively seeks parental views through school questionnaires and regular feedback. A few parents have concerns that pupils with additional needs are not always well supported but the organisation of this is appropriate. The school works hard to manage the admission number whilst noting parents have concerns when children are separated from their friends according to the number in some cohorts.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Aldborough Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 126 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	69	19	29	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	57	26	40	1	2	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	45	29	45	4	6	3	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	51	24	37	3	5	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	42	65	18	28	4	6	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	52	20	31	7	11	3	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	60	24	37	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	50	25	39	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	45	26	40	8	12	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	43	31	48	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	35	30	46	4	6	4	6
The school is led and managed effectively	31	48	25	38	5	8	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	60	19	29	6	9	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



27 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Aldborough Primary School, NR11 7PH

Thank you very much for looking after us when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed meeting many of you in lessons, at lunchtime, in the playground and during assembly. We also enjoyed talking to a group of you and chatting to others in and around school. I would like to share with you some of the things we noticed while we were in Aldborough.

We found that your school provides you with a good quality of education. When you leave at the age of 11 many of you are producing some very good work. You make particularly good progress in Years 5 and 6 because you are interested in what you are doing and try hard. I was impressed by how enthusiastic many of you older boys are. I also liked to see how much most of you enjoy reading. I particularly enjoyed watching the fun some of you had when learning to march in formation as Roman soldiers. We were very pleased to see that you all behave well and get on with the different ages in school.

We think there are some things the school could do better. We have asked teachers to help you improve your writing. You need more help to extend your writing, to learn how to spell more accurately and also to produce much neater work. We have also asked staff to plan lessons a little more carefully and to make it clear to you what you have to do and how to improve your work.

All of you can help the school even more too. Can you try to set out your mathematical work carefully, which will help ensure your calculations are accurate. Can you also try to make sure your handwriting is always neat?

It is a very exciting time for you during all the building work. I hope this all goes smoothly and you are happy with the improvements.

Yours faithfully

Sue Hall Lead inspector

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