

Emneth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120870
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	339795
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Dawson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Melanie Hilton
Headteacher	Joanne Borley
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors spent the large majority of time observing learning and visited 12 lessons taught by eight teachers. They met several parents, and held meetings with groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment information showing pupils' progress, safeguarding procedures, a range of policy documents, teachers' planning, external reports of the school's progress and plans for development. They analysed 77 questionnaires completed by parents and carers alongside questionnaires returned by pupils and staff.

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

- if the provision and the outcomes for pupils have improved since the monitoring visit by Her Majesty's Inspector in October 2007
- if the progress of Year 6 pupils seen in 2009 assessment information has been sustained
- the impact of the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Information about the school

This average-sized primary school caters for pupils from predominantly White British backgrounds, with a very small minority from Gipsy/Roma families or with a first language other than English. More pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is also greater than in most other schools. The school received a monitoring visit from one of Her Majesty's Inspectors in October 2007, when achievement and standards were judged to be unsatisfactory, and the school had made inadequate progress in addressing the issues from the last inspection. The present headteacher joined the school four terms ago. The school holds the Healthy Schools, the Activemark and Artmark awards. There is a breakfast club provided before school each morning.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

There have been many improvements since the monitoring visit. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 rose in 2008, and again in 2009. The present Year 6 cohort is working at higher levels and assessments show the majority of pupils are on track to attain levels expected for their age at the end of the year. Progress has accelerated over the last year, as teachers make good use of the accurate tracking data to provide additional support. Most teachers now adapt their lessons to ensure that pupils of all abilities, including the most able, are challenged well. Monitoring and evaluation has improved, generating pertinent plans for improvement firmly rooted in raising attainment further. Safeguarding procedures, which did not meet government requirements at the time of the last inspection, are now good, as is the care, guidance and support the pupils receive. Governors are increasingly involved in monitoring performance and support the headteacher well. The headteacher has been effective in empowering them, and the staff, to take responsibility and to contribute to school improvement and evaluation. These improvements have resulted in many aspects of pupils' learning and personal development having improved. These improvements, and the determination of the headteacher, staff and governors to ensure equality of opportunity for all, generate good potential for further improvement.

Although children make broadly satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school has identified improvements are needed in opportunities for children's independent learning. When children work with the adults they make satisfactory progress, but too many of the activities children choose are not geared towards extending their learning or challenging their thinking. Throughout the school, teachers question pupils effectively, but a very small minority do not encourage discussion or adjust their teaching sufficiently well during lessons to extend pupils' learning. Occasionally teachers do not show enough enthusiasm to inspire pupils so that they are eager to learn. Pupils are beginning to assess their learning, and decide how to improve their work, but this practice is not yet established across the school.

Almost all aspects of pupils' personal development are good and they feel safe in school, secure in the knowledge of their teachers' support. One pupil wrote 'They never give up on me when I can't do my work.' They enjoy school but attendance is only broadly average, in spite of the school's efforts to encourage parents to ensure their children attend.

The school is attractive, with displays of high quality artwork and records of visits and community links. Examples of pupils' understanding of the Gipsy/Roma culture, for example, including their visit to the Appleby Horse Fair show the importance the school places on cultural development. This is a happy school where achievement is celebrated.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Disseminate the good practice of most teachers to ensure that all:
 - encourage pupils to discuss their learning and adapt their lessons as a result of their responses
 - engage pupils in evaluating their work and planning their own learning based on a good knowledge of their next steps
 - show enthusiasm for learning that is shared with their pupils.
- Improve learning opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that independent activities are planned to enable each child to consolidate learning and gain new skills.
- Work with the support agencies to ensure that the school's policy of low tolerance towards pupils' unnecessary absence is pursued robustly.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills below that expected for their age and, by the time they join Year 1, fewer pupils than average have attained the expected knowledge and skills for their age. Most pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons. They listen attentively and work hard, taking a pride in their achievements. Pupils are eager to learn and almost all enjoy their lessons. They work well together and respect each other's views and comments. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers and some make good progress because of the good support they receive. The most-able pupils now make satisfactory progress and for some, progress is good. Where progress in lessons is no better than satisfactory, it is because the work is too easy or pupils are not encouraged to talk to each other about their work. Many continue to work hard even when the presentation is not sufficiently motivating, which is a credit to their good attitudes to learning. Although pupils' progress is accelerating the oldest pupils have not enough time to make up for previous years of under-achievement in order to attain above-average standards.

The vast majority of pupils behave well, contributing to pupils' confidence in their own safety. They know how to care for themselves and each other, whether on the roads, at the 'Friendship Stop' or when using the internet. There is no evidence of any discrimination towards minority groups, including the Gipsy/Roma families or the pupils who find either learning or acceptable behaviour challenging. Pupils enjoy the many sporting opportunities on offer and growing vegetables. Pupils carry out their duties conscientiously and the school council have been part of the interview process for new staff. Many contribute to a range of charities and are involved in other fundraising events, including saving up to buy a wooden pavilion for the school grounds. Pupils'

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spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by rich and diverse opportunities for art and music, and a range of visits and visitors including a visit to the Mosque and a visit from a Gipsy storyteller. Pupils show empathy with each other and fictional characters. Year 1 produced interesting 'thought bubbles' for characters in Little Red Riding Hood during the inspection. Pupils are very clear about their own and others' rights and responsibilities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and almost all make learning enjoyable. They are clear about the expectations for each age group, and 'Learning Walls' throughout the school show pupils their targets and what they need to learn next. They question pupils well to extend learning and check understanding but not all teachers adapt their lessons as a result. Several teachers have high expectations of their pupils, generate good pace, lively discussions and set challenging tasks to ensure learning is rapid. Teaching assistants are skilled in extending the learning of the pupils they work with. Subject leaders monitor planning to ensure that there is continuity of learning from

¹ 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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year to year. Assessment procedures are now firmly established and teachers are increasingly using this data to plan activities that closely meet pupils' individual needs. Marking is helpful and older pupils are beginning to evaluate their own learning.

The curriculum ensures pupils learn the basic skills they need and there are increasing opportunities for them to use their skills across a range of subjects. The good range of clubs and enrichment activities, especially for the arts, provide additional breadth and balance. The good provision for personal, social and health education, has resulted in pupils' improved behaviour and personal development. The curriculum is evolving to involve pupils in planning the themes they study, based on a secure framework of skills development. There are effective procedures for caring for pupils. When support is needed, it is identified swiftly and action is taken. For example, robust internal procedures for improving attendance have resulted in the attendance of some pupils improving significantly, although overall success in this area is variable. In spite of budget restrictions, the school ensures that pupils have the academic and pastoral support they need.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has been a catalyst for improvement since joining the school four terms ago. In spite of having to cope with a large deficit budget and a reduction in staff hours, she has the unanimous support of the staff and governors in driving the improvements needed to improve the outcomes for pupils. Effective safeguarding and child protection procedures were swiftly established and pupils set realistic and challenging targets that linked to teachers' performance management targets. Procedures for monitoring teaching, planning and progress are now embedded and subject leaders have a clear overview of pupils' progress and where there needs to be improvements in the provision. For example, punctuation was a weakness in pupils' writing, and there has been a whole school focus on improving this. The improvements are obvious in pupils' work. Observations of teaching have identified where improvements are needed and help to inform professional development needs, as well as whole school improvement. As a result, inadequate teaching has been eliminated. The headteacher takes every opportunity to find funds to support pupils who cannot afford school trips or residential visits, just one example of the school's commitment to equal opportunities. The breakfast club provides pupils with a good start to the day.

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Local community links are strong, and the pupils correspond with schools in Zambia, China and France. However, leaders are aware that they need to promote community cohesion further within the United Kingdom. Leaders and managers have effectively prioritised to address weaknesses and there is a strong ethos of resolve and enthusiasm for future improvement.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are well cared for in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The teacher visits families at home and the neighbouring nursery. Children visit school before entry and start on a part-time basis to help them settle into school swiftly. Adults record children's progress, taking photographs and commenting on what they have learnt. However, these do not identify the child's next steps in learning. Children's 'Learning Journeys' are shared with their families but parents and the children themselves rarely contribute to them.

There is a satisfactory range of activities available in the classroom and outside that help children to consolidate their skills. Planning for developing children's communication, language and literacy and problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is thorough and ensures they make steady progress. A range of topics extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well and, in the lessons, children cooperate well with each other, sharing and taking turns. There was sound learning for most children during the inspection as they learnt new letter blends with their teacher. Teachers and support staff work with

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children on specific tasks linked to themes for each half term. However, although children happily play independently with the available toys and construction kits, this does not provide sufficient scope for promoting learning or for children to pose questions and experiment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers are extremely positive about the school and their children's experiences and many wrote comments about the effective leadership in particular. A very small minority expressed concerns about behaviour or the account the school takes of their suggestions or concerns. The inspectors found behaviour management effective and communication to be good. Others had reservations about the way their children are prepared for the next stage of their education. The inspectors agreed that this needs improving, but found that the school is working hard to develop more links with the pupils' next school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Emneth 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 211 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	60	25	32	4	5	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	50	65	25	32	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	49	34	44	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	53	29	38	3	4	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	39	51	29	38	6	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	56	31	40	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	48	34	44	6	8	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)	31	40	32	42	8	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	47	31	40	7	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	35	35	45	6	8	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	47	32	42	7	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	51	34	44	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	47	35	45	6	8	0	0

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



17 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Emneth Primary School, Wisbech, PE14 8AY

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help during our visit to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing your lovely artwork around the school. The choir's lively singing made our feet tap as we worked. We wish you the best of luck in the competition. I am sure you will do well. A special thanks to the Second World War Year 6 pupils who let us sample their potato scones. They were very tasty in spite of the rationing!

Your headteacher, teachers and governors are improving your school. This is helping you all to make better progress. You all work hard and try to do your best and we can see that your work is getting better and better. Keep up the good work! We have asked your teachers to help each other to make sure you all achieve well and have plenty of challenge. We want all teachers to listen to you in lessons and, if they need too, change their plans to help you understand more easily or to move on to new things if you already know what they are teaching. The children in the Reception class learn steadily when they are working with a grown up. We want their teachers to give them lots of opportunities to learn for themselves, by giving them things to do by themselves or with other children that makes them think, ask questions and find the answers.

We know you enjoy school and feel safe and happy. In spite of this, a few of you are away from school too often, which means you are not learning as well as you could be. The school knows this, and is working very hard to encourage your parents to ensure you attend regularly. We want the school to have more support from other grown ups to help achieve this. Please try your best not to miss school.

We know you will help your teachers continue to make your happy school even better and wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Dawson

Lead inspector

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