

Queensway Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 120897 |
| Local Authority | Norfolk |
| Inspection number | 339807 |
| Inspection dates | 20–21 January 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Faysal Mikdadi |

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

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 195 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Carol Maggs |
| Headteacher | Linda Grainger |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 October 2006 |
| School address | Queensway Thetford IP24 3DR |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons; observed all the teachers teach and met with the chair of governors, pupils and key staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of data, external evaluation reports and 28 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress given the low prior attainment on entry
- the effectiveness of the school's provision to improve pupils' social and communication skills
- the impact of leadership on improving progress

Information about the school

Queensway is a small infant school and smaller than average nursery. There is a significantly higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and one in five pupils comes from minority ethnic backgrounds and has English as an additional language. Many pupils join the school after attending other schools for various lengths of time. The school has won a Healthy School Award.

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

Queensway is a happy, warm, bustling and busy school that provides a good quality education for its pupils and takes excellent care of them. One parent reflected the views of others in saying, 'I am so pleased with my son's progress. He's settled in and his confidence has grown. He's very happy.' Pupils, teachers, parents and carers and governors speak highly of the senior leaders' contribution to creating a school within which pupils from all backgrounds, including the very high number with special education needs and/or disabilities, feel safe, secure and settled. The headteacher has empowered her staff to do their best for their pupils. She has done so by emphasising continuing professional development which has, for example, allowed four teaching assistants to study for teaching degrees. This has also benefited the school by keeping teaching methods continuously in view and regularly refreshed with new ideas. Subject co-ordinators monitor provision in their subjects, including the quality of teaching. All leaders observe lessons regularly and suggest improvements. They also monitor pupils' progress and set realistic targets for improvement which the pupils understand. The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The headteacher is effectively supported by her deputy and a good governing body that both supports and holds the school to account for the pupils' outcome. Pupils speak highly of their teachers. One reflected the views of others when she said that teachers 'care what we do' with another adding that they helped pupils 'find out lots'. Pupils feel valued and listened to. They are also comfortable with the school's high expectations of behaviour to which they respond well. The school works very closely with parents and carers with the result that many are happy to approach the school for help with their children's learning.

When children join the nursery and reception class, their social and communication skills are very low. They make good progress and quickly adopt the school's high expectations of social behaviour at all times. This in turn leads to relationships being good and an atmosphere in which pupils can develop well socially, emotionally and academically. The school's end of Key Stage 1 results are broadly average. They have fluctuated over the years with the most recent results approaching national averages with an improving trend. Given their low starting point, the end of Key Stage 1 results and the standards seen during the inspection, the progress that pupils make is consistently good. However, boys' writing lags behind and in mathematics, pupils' understanding of numbers does not always lead to them being able to apply their knowledge to problem solving and practical mathematics. Pupils' scientific investigative skills are good with frequent opportunities made available to do practical work in this area. Parents and carers and their children agree that the teachers and assistants do a good job. The main strand

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that runs through all lessons is the school's successful focus on active learning which engages the pupils and makes learning fun. The result is good progress and, as one parent typically expressed it, a clear gain in confidence by children.

The school has successfully linked with parents and carers in order to facilitate transfer in and out of the school. This enables children to settle in quickly and effectively. There are also effective contacts with many agencies that successfully help with family difficulties and other aspects of the children's development. The school provides effectively for the high numbers of families for whom English is an additional language by helping improve the pupils' use of English, helping parents and carers understand by using interpreters where needed and by ensuring that staff understand the pupils' religious and ethnic needs. Attendance has improved over the last two years and is now satisfactory having been below average previously. There are still pupils being taken out of school for family holidays.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards further by:
 - improving boys' writing skills by linking the practical work that they enjoy doing with some writing tasks
 - helping pupils to use and apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum
- Raise parents' and carers' awareness of the importance of regular attendance to their children's learning by:
 - publishing attendance figures for Key Stage 1, class by class, in the school Newsletter
 - offering motivational prizes for 100% attendance

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

Observations of pupils' learning and performance in the classroom, together with a review of their work show that pupils make consistently good progress and build well on the good progress that they make in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities, who make up the majority of the school's population, make equally good progress as their peers, as do those pupils with English as an additional language. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has fluctuated over the years and is broadly average. Pupils' writing skills are less well developed particularly the boys' who lag behind girls. The school is successfully addressing this and has started a programme to encourage pupils to write as part of their hands-on learning experiences. For example, whenever they are carrying out a science experiment, pupils are encouraged to write a plan and to write up their findings. They are often encouraged to use information and communication technology (ICT) to do so which supports their developing skills in this subject very effectively. Boys are particularly motivated by these strategies. Pupils' mathematical skills are satisfactory with many calculating in line with national expectations. However, many are less able to use and apply these number skills

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in different situations. Again, an increasing focus on hands-on active learning provides pupils with good opportunities to do this in different ways.

Behaviour in the classroom, around the school and at the beginning and end of the day at the school gates is never less than good and often outstanding. For example, during lunch children sit eating in a quiet orderly way. They call on adults when they have finished before being accompanied out to the playground to play. Despite often underdeveloped communication and social skills, pupils are happy to chat about their school. They are polite, pleasant, and generally communicative and are keen to show visitors aspects of their school of which they are very proud. There are no recorded incidents of racial or other forms of bullying. The school is a safe and happy environment in which pupils enjoy their education. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of health issues and talk knowledgeably about them considering their age. As a result the school won the Anglia Television 'School of the Month' for healthy eating as well as the 'Healthy Schools' Award for 2009. Pupils feel safe walking around the school and many enjoy taking on some responsibility. The school council feels that it is listened to and valued. Pupils do a great deal for their community to raise funds for charity, perform in sheltered housing and help those in need. The pupils' basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT prepare them adequately for the next stage of their education. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and effectively promoted. Attendance, which is satisfactory, has risen significantly over the last two years.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|--|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| 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 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |

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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| | |
|--|----------|
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers successfully create opportunities for pupils to take part in practical, active, hands-on activities that support learning well. Lessons bustle with tasks being carried out and pupils fully understand what is expected of them. Consequently behaviour is good and activities are safe. Teachers' questioning strategies are good and help pupils to respond, and sometimes to expand on their responses, despite the lack of confidence of many. Assessment is rigorous and effectively used to help pupils know what they need to do to improve further.

The curriculum successfully meets the needs of all pupils, including the large numbers with special education needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. It is flexible enough to allow for immediate adaptation and the inclusion of active learning. The curriculum is supplemented by additional activities which are designed to enhance learning and pupils' social skills, such as performing in assemblies, taking part in local community activities, producing a newsletter and participating in other sporting and cultural events.

The school takes outstanding care of its pupils. It makes them feel safe, secure and welcome. It enhances their social, emotional and learning skills. The school monitors pupils' progress rigorously and sets realistic targets for them to work towards. Effective contacts with pupils' homes involve parents and carers in their child's learning. These include staff visits to the home, parents' and carers' visits to the school, participation in parenting classes and joint 'fun' sessions with parents and carers and children. The school has been particularly successful in implementing its outstanding personal development programme although, for reasons beyond its control, this has not yet reached every home in the way the school would like.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

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The school enjoys strong, approachable and rigorous leadership by the headteacher and her deputy, ably supported by a good governing body. Leadership has successfully enhanced links with parents and carers, improved the children's social and personal skills, put procedures in place to equalise opportunities for all to learn and has led to a well supported group of teachers who successfully focus on learning. Most parents and carers feel comfortable approaching the school although this is not yet universal particularly because of the relatively high level of changeover of families in the school. One parent reflected the majority view when she said, 'The teachers are very polite and they have helped in any way they can when I have asked any question or expressed any worries that I may have.' Governors are involved in monitoring teaching along with leaders and both know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Safeguarding procedures are effective and there are excellent procedures for caring and supporting pupils.

Leadership, supported by governors, staff and effective links with many local agencies, has created a cohesive community which successfully encourages links with the home. Regular surveys are carried out to gauge community satisfaction with the school and action is taken based on survey findings. The headteacher and her colleagues know a great deal about the home backgrounds including the religious, ethnic and social backgrounds. This knowledge is used successfully to support learning. The school has also used visitors from minority ethnic groups to enhance pupils' understanding of British cultural diversity. It has also made some links with other countries.

The school works hard to establish and maintain relationships and partnerships which help to embed ambition within its local community. Leadership has also successfully focused on raising the children's self esteem, confidence in their abilities and in enhancing poor social and communication skills. The links with the home have improved attendance significantly over the last two years. Planning is good in establishing and implementing priorities. Self evaluation is accurate and leads to sustained improvement. The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement and it ensures good value for money.

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 | 2 |
| 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 |

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|---|----------|
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children first join the school, their social and communication skills are very low. The school quickly addresses these issues and consequently the children make good progress in their nursery. This is done through a strong focus on classroom practical activities that allow pupils to work collaboratively and independently and to discuss what they are doing with each other and with adults present. The Early Years Foundation Stage good leadership has ensured that each child is regularly assessed and has realistic targets set. Lesson planning relies heavily on ensuring that these targets are reached and reviewed before the child moves on to the next stage of learning. The result is a happy and productive Early Years Foundation Stage group of children who enjoy coming to school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| 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

Most of the parent and carer survey returns were positive. Parents and carers who wrote in said that they were happy with the way that the school supported their child, helped them gain in confidence and made them feel happy and well settled in. Parents and carers felt that the school did particularly well in enhancing their child's learning and achievement. A very small number felt that the school could do better in the way it responded to them without making any assumptions about their levels of understanding of education. The inspection team found no evidence to support this view.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Queensway Infant School and Nursery, Thetford 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 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 children registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 13 | 46 | 15 | 54 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 16 | 57 | 10 | 36 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 11 | 39 | 15 | 54 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 12 | 43 | 15 | 54 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 12 | 43 | 15 | 54 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 11 | 39 | 16 | 57 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 10 | 36 | 18 | 64 | 0 | 0 | 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) | 7 | 25 | 15 | 54 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 10 | 36 | 15 | 54 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 11 | 39 | 13 | 46 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 8 | 29 | 15 | 54 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 10 | 36 | 18 | 64 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 14 | 50 | 13 | 46 | 1 | 4 | 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

| | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| Type of school | 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.



22 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Queensway Infant School and Nursery, Thetford, IP24 3DR

Thank you very much for making our visit to your school so enjoyable. We were grateful to you for answering our questions about your school and telling us all about the many interesting things that you do. I am happy to tell you what we thought about your school.

Queensway is a good school. We agree with you that your headteacher and your teachers take excellent care of you. This allows you to learn well. We were impressed by the many exciting things that you are able to do in your classroom. You obviously enjoy making interesting things to share with each other, with your teachers and to take home to show to everyone there. You are well behaved at all times. We were especially impressed with your behaviour during lunch. You have an excellent understanding of how to be healthy. You feel safe in your school and you enjoy doing a lot for your community. Your headteacher is well supported by everyone around the school and by the governors, your parents and by you.

To help your school become even better, we have asked your headteacher to do the following:

- help the boys more with writing
- give you more opportunities to use your number skills
- make sure that as many of you as is possible come to school every day.

You can help by working hard on your writing and by getting up in the morning ready to come to school on time every day.

Yours sincerely

Faysal Mikdadi

Lead inspector

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