

# Cliff Park Infant School, Gorleston

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120980
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	339818
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Dawson

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	264
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Philip Gunn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Rigby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Orde Avenue Gorleston-on-Sea Great Yarmouth
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They spent the majority of time looking at learning. They observed 12 lessons, and saw each class teacher at work. The inspectors held meetings with staff, governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, looking at teachers' planning and their tracking of pupils' progress, the school's plans for improvement, documents relating to the monitoring of teaching and learning, the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils, and community links. They also analysed 98 parental questionnaires.

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

- the impact of the school's measures to improve boys' progress
- whether the school's initiatives to address the dip in reading standards have been effective
- the school's promotion of community cohesion and the impact on pupils' learning and development.

## Information about the school

Cliff Park is a large infant school situated within a residential area in a seaside town. It became an infant school in 2008, having previously accommodated Year 3 pupils as a first school. It shares the site with the junior school. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly lower than the national average, as is the number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Very few pupils are in the early stages of English language acquisition. The school has gained several awards including Investors in Families, Active Schools Award, Eco-Schools Bronze Standard Award, and the National Healthy Schools 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

This is a good school. The change in its status has been managed successfully, ensuring that the welfare of the pupils and their families is at the heart of all its work. The school's contribution to community cohesion is exemplary. Parents, grandparents and other members of the community make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. The school goes out of its way to accommodate family needs. For example, the popular breakfast club was initially established in response to a family's specific needs. There is a successful family learning programme and many local organisations use the school facilities. Strong links with other local, national and international organisations provide pupils with a very good understanding of the lives and needs of others. This has resulted in pupils making an outstanding contribution to the life of the school, the community and less fortunate people across the world.

Staff have worked together successfully to introduce measures to improve pupils' progress in reading. New systems for tracking pupils' progress identify any pockets of underachievement and the school has adjusted the provision effectively. For example, a gap between boys' and girls' achievement in both reading and writing is narrowing due to the introduction of drama throughout the school. Most pupils now in Year 2 have made good progress in reading and mathematics. This is because of the consistently good teaching of reading and mathematical skills. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for the most able pupils ensures that they achieve their full potential. These successful measures, introduced as a result of an accurate analysis of the school's effectiveness, and the focused and relevant plans for the future, ensure the school's potential for further improvement is good.

The success in improving reading is not yet reflected in pupils' skills in writing. This is due to a lack of consistency in the written advice teachers provide when marking pupils' work. There is not enough on using joined script, which would help pupils consolidate and apply their phonic skills to their written work. Some pupils are not clear what they need to achieve in their lessons so they are unable to evaluate their progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a good start to their education, most working at age-related expectations by the time they join Year 1. They, in common with all pupils in school, rapidly develop a good understanding of moral and social issues and show great empathy for others. Early Years Foundation Stage teachers make sure that children gain the skills they need across all areas of learning, including the writing of letter combinations that form sounds within words. However, they do not make enough use of the outdoor environment to enrich children's learning and, although skills across all areas of learning are taught well, children are not sufficiently involved in planning their own learning based on their own interests. They have few opportunities to select

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their own materials and methods to answer questions or solve problems.

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

- In order to accelerate pupils' progress, especially in writing:
  - ensure teachers' marking gives pupils a good understanding of how their work could be improved
  - build on the good Early Years Foundation Stage practice by encouraging pupils to use a joined script when they write
  - make sure all pupils know what they need to achieve in their lessons and in their writing so that they can take responsibility for evaluating and improving their work.
- Extend learning opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - using the outside environment to provide more opportunities for independent learning and enquiry, creativity, cooperative play and child-generated exercise
  - encouraging children to pose questions and select their own materials and methods to answer them.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

In the national teacher assessments for seven-year-olds, standards are similar to other schools in reading and writing but consistently above average in mathematics. Pupils' work and the school's assessments show that progress in reading has accelerated this year, several having made significant gains in reading skills, and that most pupils are working at the expected levels for writing. This demonstrates good progress because, although children's knowledge and skills on entry to school are usually similar to others of their age, the number of pupils now in Year 2 with the expected communication, language and literacy skills on entry was below average.

Pupils make good progress in lessons because teachers question them in a way that extends their learning. They enjoy their learning, are enthusiastic and behave well, listening carefully to their teachers and each other. Teachers make learning how to decode words fun and pupils take a pride in their own achievements. They thrive on challenge. In one lesson, as soon as the teacher said, 'These are tricky words', the pupils rose to the occasion and doubled their efforts. The good support provided for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, and the challenge for the more able pupils, ensures that they make good progress.

Pupils feel very safe in school and trust their teachers to take good care of them. They are well aware of how to keep themselves safe and healthy and, in their many jobs around the school, make sure that they apply their knowledge well. They take good care of the environment. Pupils have made labels by light switches, for example, politely asking people to switch them off when leaving the room, as one of their many contributions to the smooth running of the school. All have a strong sense of fair play

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and understand what constitutes acceptable behaviour. They support others less fortunate than themselves, contributing to the Haiti appeal and supporting a child in Kenya. They have many and varied opportunities to learn about other cultures, from enjoying Barnaby Bear's travels around the world to hand painting with Indian visitors.

*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>	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
<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>1</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching has improved since the last inspection. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils, managing behaviour effectively. They make good use of pupils' lively responses as well as their assessment data to extend the learning of others, adjusting their teaching to meet pupils' needs and to challenge them further. Teaching assistants are well qualified and skilled in working closely with the teachers to support individuals and groups of pupils. Adults are particularly successful in teaching basic reading and mathematical skills, enabling pupils to make good progress. They make good use of information and communication technology and of their good subject knowledge to help pupils learn. However, although some teachers give pupils general targets for improvement and the oral advice given in lessons is consistently good, the quality of

<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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written advice is too variable. This prevents pupils seeing their improvement and taking responsibility for improving their work themselves. Pupils are encouraged to make suggestions and give opinions in lessons but have few opportunities to initiate their own lines of enquiry and methods of working. A small minority of teachers rely heavily on adult-generated worksheets for pupils to record their work, preventing pupils from organising their own work and extending their writing skills.

The good curriculum ensures that pupils gain the skills they need and the school is increasingly planning links between subjects. The ability groups for English and mathematics in Year 2 have been successful in meeting most pupils' needs but teachers realise that this is hindering the application of English and mathematical skills within other subjects and are reviewing their practice. The many and varied enrichment activities, through clubs, visits and visitors, are a significant strength of the curriculum. Pupils have access to a wide range of sporting activities as well as subjects ranging from French to philosophy. The wide range of multicultural experiences ensures high levels of racial harmony within school.

The school takes good care of its pupils. All procedures for ensuring their safety are followed to the letter. Effective links with other agencies ensure that pupils and their families have the support they need. A strong curriculum for personal, social and health education helps pupils develop the skills they need for the future and encourages them to empathise greatly with the feelings of others. However, the school does not fully extend pupils' personal development by helping them to take more responsibility for their learning. The school's procedures for promoting good attendance have been effective in reducing unnecessary absence. Any inappropriate behaviour is managed effectively.

*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?**

Leaders are ambitious for the pupils, staff and families. Several teachers and support staff have gained additional qualifications and teachers share their skills with other schools. The school also helps parents gain qualifications leading to employment. Staff training is focused on individual and school needs and pupils' performance is monitored regularly to ensure that support is provided, both internally or from other agencies, when necessary. There are very strong links with the junior school and other agencies, especially family support and social services, to support pupils' welfare and learning.

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Governors support and challenge the school well. One governor is responsible for taking groups of more able pupils to activities in other schools. Many parents and grandparents help pupils with their work in school. All safeguarding procedures and risk assessments are carried out rigorously and staff are up to date with the necessary training to ensure pupils' welfare. The school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for pupils and staff. Measures to ensure pupils' educational needs are met have been successful for the more able pupils and those who find learning difficult. Leaders have identified that a few pupils with average prior attainment in the morning ability groupings need the challenge of working with the more able pupils to accelerate their progress and are taking steps to address this. Changes in adults' responsibilities and roles have been managed sensitively to ensure resources are deployed effectively and staff well-being has a high profile in development planning. The school's outstanding contribution to community cohesion is highly valued amongst local schools and the community at large. The school supports a local centre for the homeless, the Lifeboat station and 'Gorleston in Gear', which aims to improve community involvement in the borough. The French Club is developing links with a school in Gorleston's twin town. Parents have joined the school in a workshop with the pupils and the Nigerian community from the hospital.

*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>1</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are confident and happy. They are well cared for and adults understand their needs well. The classrooms are stimulating and children are provided with a good range of activities to promote learning. Adults teach



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basic skills effectively, providing children with a strong platform on which to build future reading, writing and mathematical skills. Children's personal and social skills are promoted very well and they are extremely clear about what is expected of them and others. In one lesson, they drew up a list of behaviour rules for their parents who were coming to look at their performance in the afternoon. Woe betide any parent who did not sit still and listen! Children's progress is carefully tracked and teachers plan activities to help them to achieve new learning. Children's ideas and opinions are valued and they are encouraged to make suggestions about, for example, story endings. Children are allowed to choose from a range of activities but they rarely discuss what they want to achieve. During the inspection, an adult worked outside with a group of children to draw a treasure map because a child wanted to. However, the child was not encouraged to organise this himself with the help of his friends. Teachers do not make enough use of the outdoor area, missing opportunities to extend children's cooperative skills, enquiry and physical development. Nevertheless, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and they are well-prepared for the next stage of their education. Leadership and management are good and there are significant strengths in the way staff engage with parents and local playgroups, ensuring children settle into school routines easily. Teachers and teaching assistants plan together to ensure all children have equal opportunities and that learning is relevant and interesting.

*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**

Most parents agree that their children enjoy school and are well cared for. They feel the school is well managed and that teaching is good. The inspection outcomes support these views. A very small minority of parents do not feel that the school deals with unacceptable behaviour effectively and that there are incidents of bullying. The inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's procedures for managing unacceptable behaviour are inappropriate. Pupils behave well. Although a very small minority of parents feel that they are not informed about their children's progress or that their suggestions are not followed up, the inspectors found that links with parents are good.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cliff Park First School, Gorleston 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 98 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 264 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	42	53	54	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	44	50	51	4	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	14	65	66	15	15	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	23	65	66	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	24	24	67	68	3	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	15	72	73	8	8	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	27	64	65	5	5	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)	25	26	56	57	3	3	3	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	27	62	63	7	7	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	13	65	66	13	13	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	14	65	66	9	9	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	28	29	57	58	7	7	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	40	51	52	5	5	2	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.**



10 February 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Cliff Park First School, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, NR31 6SZ

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. We all enjoyed talking to you and seeing all your hard work. We were pleased to see how well you behave and how polite you are to each other and grown-ups. Well done. A special thanks to the school council for sharing all your views.

You told us how well your school takes care of you and how much you enjoy school. We agree with you. We were very impressed by all the interesting clubs you belong to and all your visits and visitors. We were especially pleased with the way you help in school, people in Gorleston, and lots of others around the world. We can see that your school plays an important part in the life of Gorleston and helps you and your families in many different ways.

You learn well in school. You are so good at carrying out your duties that we have asked your teachers to help you take more responsibility for making your learning even better. We want them all to give you advice when they mark your work. Please make sure you take their advice. We would like you all, including those of you in the Reception classes, to plan your own learning sometimes, finding out about things that interest you. We also want you to make a real effort to join your letters when you write. This will help you to use the good reading skills that you are all developing. We want all of you to be told what you are expected to learn in each lesson so you can tell how well you are doing. I know how much you enjoy being outside and I have asked the grown-ups in the Reception classes to make sure that you use your outside space as part of your classroom and have lots of interesting things to do there.

You belong to a good school and those in charge do a good job in making sure that you have the help and support you need. Please carry on enjoying your learning and all your school has to offer.

Yours sincerely

Judith Dawson

Lead inspector

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