

# Northgate St Andrews First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120981
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	339819
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alan Lemon

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>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	224
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Cooper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Douglas Dale
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2006
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventeen lessons were observed, which were taught by a total of nine teachers. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at a range of documentation, including school policies and information on standards and pupils' progress. Inspectors scrutinised 46 parental questionnaires.

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

- whether standards in writing and mathematics have improved sufficiently from their low point in 2009
- whether the current performance and progress of boys and pupils whose first language is not English is adequate
- if the quality of teaching is setting high expectations, assessing progress and ensuring work is matched to each pupil's capabilities
- whether the leadership and management of the school are effective in driving improvement and raising standards.

## Information about the school

The school is average in size. About double the national average of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A higher than average proportion have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual time is above average. The majority of pupils are White British and a very few are from a variety of minority ethnic and linguistic heritages. Twenty-seven pupils speak English as an additional language and a half of these are at an early stage of learning to speak English.

The school is led by a temporary headteacher until September 2010, when a permanent headteacher takes up the post. The school has the Healthy Schools award, Activemark and the Nurture Quality Mark.

**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. It has improved well, to the extent that some key features are now outstanding. The work of the school and the outcomes for pupils have benefited from fresh impetus in leadership and management over this academic year. The assistant headteachers are now taking a significantly greater role in leading the school and driving its improvement. This, together with the positive impact of the temporary headteacher, means the school now has good capacity for sustained improvement, and it has gained momentum towards achieving higher standards. While there has been success in recruiting a full governing body they are not yet making as full a contribution as they should to monitoring and influencing the direction and work of the school.

There has been much progress made on two important issues for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has been strengthened considerably as a result of the work done on this by senior staff and subject leaders. Rigorous tracking and analysis of pupils' progress, together with widespread use of assessment information to plan lessons and the curriculum, has come to fruition this year. The curriculum has been changed so that new learning opportunities being offered match pupils' needs closely and tackle effectively pupils' weaknesses in writing and mathematics. Effective strategies to develop writing and mathematics have played a key part in pupils' current good achievement.

The expectations of how much pupils can achieve in lessons are higher. This has led to pupils having more challenging work, although pupils are not consistently stretched. Current standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, which is an improvement on previous years. In writing, this represents a considerable step upwards in standards, especially at the higher level. Boy's needs have been taken effectively into consideration and, while they are a minority in some classes, they are well motivated learners keeping pace with the girls. Strong support in lessons for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or because they are learning to speak English, means they all make good progress.

The outstanding care and support staff provide ensure pupils feel safe, valued and able to enjoy learning. This applies in particular to nearly a half of all pupils because they need support in relation to either their special educational needs and/or disabilities, learning to speak English or their vulnerable circumstances. The well-established, excellent nurture programme builds pupils' confidence, self-esteem and social skills. The significant progress pupils make in these respects counts considerably towards their outstanding behaviour. In turn, their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development boosts their personal skills and enables them to become confident and rounded individuals with a broader understanding of the wider world. Pupils are very

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co-operative, considerate and show a high regard for each other, in particular a respect for cultural, racial and religious differences. Better progress, higher standards and good personal development prepare pupils well for moving to the next stage of their education. Attendance and punctuality are much improved as a result of the school's determined drive with pupils and parents to come to school every day on time.

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

- Develop, where needed, the expertise of teachers to strengthen further their approaches to learning and assessment in order to increase pupils' progress and raise standards higher.
  - Increase the effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school by:
    - ensuring the whole governing body is informed and skilled at holding the school to account for its improvement and performance
    - gathering and taking account of the views of staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders.

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

In lessons, pupils' progress is good because work challenges them and expert teaching ensures they usually develop knowledge, understanding and skills at a good pace. Attainment is broadly average. In identifying different three-dimensional objects, Year 2 pupils used a well developed mathematical vocabulary to categorise them, naming triangular based and square based pyramids. In Year 1, pupils use the good knowledge they have acquired of letter sounds to read words. By Year 2 they are competent in spelling a good many words correctly and are able to change the spelling, for example 'funny' to 'funniest'. In Year 1, they use their good knowledge of verbs to enliven their writing and, in Year 2, boys enjoy composing poems and discovering combinations of rhyming words.

Pupils feel safe particularly as a result of the close attention and clear expectations of staff. Safety is enhanced by pupils' good knowledge of the risks they might face, how they can manage these, and their outstandingly good behaviour. Pupils have a good regard for their own well-being from what they know of a healthy lifestyle. They think about their diet and understand that staying active is important to their health. The high value they place on school, seen in their enjoyment and rapidly improving attendance, makes them enthusiastic contributors who are helpful around school and who work to raise money for good causes. Pupils show concern for and help each other, which is especially noticeable in the support they give to pupils learning English.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers and classroom assistants know pupils well and their effective planning ensures work is matched closely to each pupil's capabilities. Activities are carefully organised so that the pupils who require more support have their needs met effectively. Good subject knowledge makes learning lively and enjoyable for pupils. A variety of approaches to learning, for example pupils discussing problems in pairs, working in small groups under their own direction or evaluating their success at the end of an activity, strengthens their engagement, making teaching and learning good and occasionally outstanding..

The curriculum is showing some significant strengths and its impact on standards is already being felt. New projects and changes in emphasis are raising the profile of writing and mathematics. For example, building a Second World War bomb shelter, linked to a history topic, was planned with many mathematical problems included. Themes such as superheroes, cars and sports writing are improving boys' interest in writing. Some play 'history detective', investigate topics such as Ancient Egypt and broaden their research by visiting museums. There are good opportunities for practical and imaginative work through science experiments, designing and making habitats for insects and preparing food. Higher attaining pupils attend after-school activities to further improve their mathematical and literacy skills. All of this makes the curriculum interesting, enjoyable and relevant and it is enriched well with many additional opportunities offered by visitors, trips, sports and music.

Very strong links with agencies enables the school to collaborate extremely effectively alongside other professionals in working with families and supporting pupils. This has helped the school improve attendance so that it is average. Late arrivals have also being

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dramatically decreased. Short-term, small group 'nurture' activities for a few pupils with severe needs is very successfully enabling them to make good progress acquiring learning skills and in their attitudes to learning. Staff get pupils ready with considerable care for their move to junior school, through opportunities for them to visit, meet teachers and pupils and find out as much as possible about their new school.

*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	2
<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>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leadership across the school is ambitious and well focused on continuous improvement. Staff are well motivated with a clear sense of purpose and work well as a team. The governing body review and update school policies systematically. They are kept informed by the school about its work and take note of its strengths and weaknesses, but do not yet play a decisive enough part in helping to improve the school.

The school's equalities policy informs practice well. As a result, good care is taken to meet the needs of individual pupils and to close any gaps in the attainment of different groups. Effective action to remove barriers to achievement, such as the recent improvements in attendance and the curriculum, ensure that all pupils achieve equally well. Safeguarding requirements are made effective through well implemented policies and procedures, which are known well by staff and parents. A good understanding of the area it serves has enabled the school to actively plan and promote community cohesion, especially through its many contacts with community groups, local agencies and schools. The school contributes well to developing a positive view of cultural diversity, both that represented in the school and in the United Kingdom. International awareness of global affairs is promoted through the curriculum, visits out and visitors to the school. Pupils' horizons are also broadened by theatre groups, story tellers, artists and musicians, some from different parts of the world

*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>3</b>

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<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>2</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**

The majority of children start Reception below the level expected for their age. As a result of the good provision made for all children, particularly teaching and support and guidance, their progress is good. The use of good assessment in all activities leads to children's work being well planned. Their imminent move into Year 1 has been considered carefully and the balance of work has shifted slightly more towards teacher led activities and emphasis on literacy, numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world. Nevertheless, the opportunities for children to continue choosing their activities inside and outdoors remain good. These are enjoyable, engaging and challenging, particularly in encouraging children's social skills and creative development.

The majority complete the Reception year achieving the expected average points score across the early learning goals. Higher attaining children exceed these in some areas of learning, such as communication, language and literacy and problem solving, reasoning and number. The children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their low starting points. Most progress is made in children's disposition and attitudes, which provides them with a good start when they enter Year 1. Progress is also particularly strong in linking sounds and letters, and in aspects of problem solving, reasoning and number. The good leadership of Early Years Foundation Stage means that children's transition from Reception into Year 1 is effectively managed and they benefit from a good start to their education.

*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



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## **Views of parents and carers**

A small minority of parents returned questionnaires and most expressed positive views of the school. No significant level of concern was raised. Parents all agree that their children are safe in school; that they are kept informed about their children's progress; that teaching is good and that they are helped to support their children's learning at home. Almost all agree their children enjoy school and make good progress. Inspectors endorse all of these views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Northgate St Andrews First School, Great Yarmouth 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	76	10	22	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	30	65	16	35	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	57	20	43	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	63	16	35	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	63	17	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	52	22	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	59	18	39	0	0	1	2
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)	21	46	22	48	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	59	17	37	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	46	21	46	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	33	28	61	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	41	24	52	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	67	14	30	1	2	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.**



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northgate St Andrews First School, Great Yarmouth NR30 1BP

Thank you for your warm welcome and help during our visit to your school. Thanks also to the group of pupils who met with an inspector to talk about their views of school. As a result of our inspection, we judged your school to be good. It is made effective in several ways:

- the standard of your work is improving, particularly in writing and mathematics
- you are making good progress, helped by your willingness to work hard
- you stay safe and adopt healthy lifestyles because you listen and take seriously what teachers say about these aspects
- your behaviour is outstanding, and attendance and punctuality are getting better.
- the care and support you are given by staff is excellent and this is very helpful to those who find learning more difficult and those who speak another language at home and are still learning to speak English
- teaching is good so your work and activities are interesting, challenging and enjoyable
- all of the staff are working hard and successfully to improve your school even more.

Your school could be more effective if:

- the headteacher took the necessary steps to make all of your lessons as good as the best that inspectors saw
- the governors looked more closely at the work of the school, so they are in a better position to help with its improvement

Inspectors hope that you continue to keep up your excellent behaviour and come to school every day on time so that the school's record on attendance and punctuality is even better. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alan Lemon

Lead inspector

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