

# Ellingham Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121035
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	339839
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth Frith

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anthony King
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline McGowan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Ellingham Suffolk
<b>Telephone number</b>	01508 518250
<b>Fax number</b>	01508 518250
<b>Email address</b>	head@ellingham.norfolk.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 March 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	339839

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited eight lessons and observed four teachers. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation which included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's management plan and pupils' work. In addition, the questionnaire responses of 26 parents and carers, 12 staff and 42 pupils were analysed and their comments taken into account.

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

- whether teaching and assessment are sufficiently effective in improving the rate of pupils' progress, particularly in writing and for higher attainers
- the impact of the school's new curriculum on pupils' learning and personal and social development
- the development of the new Reception class and the impact of this provision on children's learning, progress and personal development.

## Information about the school

This is a very small school which works in close partnership with another local school. Both schools share the same headteacher, deputy headteacher, administrative staff and responsibilities such as subject leadership. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils that have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and the proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs is high. The school has Green Flag Eco-School status and has recently gained the International School Award at Intermediate Level.

Following an unsettled period due to staff absence, staffing has now stabilised as a result of two recent appointments. At the start of the current academic year the school opened a new Reception class where children are now taught separately from Key Stage 1.

**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 where pupils develop a very strong sense of community and do well. The headteacher shows outstanding leadership skills and has successfully created a team of staff who share her vision for the school and show a high level of commitment to the pupils. With enjoyment at the heart of what the school aims for, staff provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities and experiences which support their academic progress and personal development well. Pupils are proud of their school and thoroughly enjoy their learning. This is reflected in their above average rate of attendance. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Equality of opportunity is central to the school's work and pupils are actively encouraged to respect others through learning about a range of beliefs, religions and lifestyles. Pupils are also encouraged to respect their natural surroundings and the environment. They have a very high level of knowledge and understanding about current major issues such as conservation and sustainability. They make an outstanding contribution to the community. Their behaviour is good and helps to create a positive, friendly atmosphere. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils are exceptionally well-cared for and supported.

These positive features help to remove possible barriers to learning so that pupils achieve well and make good progress. Children make a good start in Reception and this is successfully built upon in Key Stage 1. The school has done well to stabilise staffing and address the recent dip in standards and progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress is now good as a result of the continuous drive by staff to improve the quality of their work. However, insufficient time has passed for the oldest pupils to fully catch up lost ground although most are now working at the levels expected for their age. Staff have concentrated on improving attainment, particularly in writing and mathematics, through better teaching and assessment and improvements to the curriculum. Early signs are promising and changes have resulted in good teaching and assessment and an outstanding curriculum. The school is aware of the need to monitor and evaluate the impact of these initiatives on pupils' learning over time. Teaching is effective because teachers capture the interest of the pupils and makes learning relevant. Expectations are high, and pupils respond well to the challenges set. The expertise of the highly skilled teaching assistants is used very effectively to support pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those pupils who need additional challenge.

The excellent partnership with a local school means that the strengths of leaders and managers are used effectively for the benefit of both schools. Staff work very closely together by attending joint staff meetings and sharing curriculum planning. Leadership

**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

roles are developing well, particularly in the collection and use of data to track pupils' progress. This is helping to drive improvement. Monitoring and self-evaluation are good and there is a clear programme for improvement. A regular and accurate review of teaching, together with effective support for staff, is helping to ensure good learning and progress. There have been several recent changes to the school's governing body and new leadership shows a clear plan for improvement. Governors are very supportive of the school but are not yet fully effective in the way they monitor its work and review its policies. Good provision and recent improvements, together with pupils' good progress, ensure the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the new developments in teaching, assessment and the curriculum to ensure pupils make sustained progress and reach higher standards by the time they leave school.
- Build on the good procedures recently developed by the new Chair of the Governing Body to ensure that all policies are regularly reviewed and governors understand how successful the school is and how it needs to improve.

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

The 2009 national assessments for Year 2 pupils show the best results for several years. They indicate good progress, and attainment which is significantly above average overall. Standards in reading are particularly high. The attainment of the few pupils in Year 6 in 2009 reflects their unsettled experiences due to frequent changes in teaching staff. Observations during lessons, an analysis of assessment data and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that they are making good progress. Pupils in the current Year 5/6 class are catching up well due to the focus on accelerating their progress. Pupils are keen to do well and work hard. Art work is of a good quality and pupils develop above average information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Due to good identification of need and effective support, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well and make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. More able pupils make good progress because they are challenged well. Pupils say they feel really safe at school and this view is supported by parents. The 'family' atmosphere supports excellent relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves. The pupils' needs and views are central to developments in the school's practice and in how learning takes place. They feel listened to and know their views and ideas are taken seriously and acted upon, for example, through the eco council. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities such as caring for the chickens and tending the allotment, and all work together very well for the benefit of the school community. Exemplary practice is seen when older pupils care for those younger than themselves. Pupils also have a very strong sense of responsibility to the community as seen when they gave leaflets to local people and organised a public meeting when planning to house a wind turbine in the school grounds. Pupils develop very high-level

**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

personal and social skills through activities such as this which make a good contribution to their future economic well-being. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how healthy eating and exercise impacts positively on their lives, which they voluntarily put into practice. Many attend additional sports activities in and outside school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effectively enhanced through assemblies, the curriculum and day-to-day interaction with staff. Pupils frequently reflect on their actions and how these affect others and the environment. Pupils' moral and social development and the high expectations of staff result in pupils' positive and polite attitudes and the respect they have for others. Pupils gain a very thorough understanding of their own and different cultures through the study of art and music, by learning several languages and through links with other countries.

*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>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is very effective in ensuring that pupils are well-motivated and engaged in their learning. This is because teachers ask pupils for their views and interests before embarking on a new area of learning and integrate these into their plans. Frequently,

<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.

**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

there is a buzz of excitement in lessons as pupils enthusiastically respond to the practical nature of their tasks. Assessment is good, particularly in English, and pupils know what they need to do next to improve their work and learning. Recent improvements in assessing and tracking pupils' mathematics skills are having a positive impact. Questioning is used well to develop pupils' thinking, for example, in mathematics, and to assess if they have understood the key learning points at the end of the lesson. Staff and pupils use ICT particularly well, for example, when video conferencing with their partner school and with experts in universities and museums. The school is forging ahead with successful, innovative curriculum design. The curriculum is very well organised and effective in providing memorable learning experiences which make learning fun. Staff achieve a very good balance between ensuring that all the required elements of the curriculum are covered, as well as following the pupils' interests. Because all areas of learning and the development of skills are well integrated, pupils find lessons relevant. The curriculum promotes several outstanding outcomes in relation to their personal and social development. There is a good range of popular clubs and activities.

Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Well-targeted support for particular groups and individuals ensures pupils are able to make the best of the opportunities provided by the school. The needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are identified quickly and addressed very well through careful monitoring and very effective work with a range of services. There are particularly good arrangements to ensure a smooth transfer into and out of school, and between the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

*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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Staff morale is high as shown in their questionnaire responses and they are keen to support the motivated, committed leaders and managers in bringing about improvement. Pupils' progress is effectively monitored and challenging targets are set based on a realistic evaluation of what each individual can achieve. Appropriate priorities have been identified and all are aware of their roles and responsibilities in driving the school's improvement forward.

Staff help parents and carers to support their children's learning by providing them with information about teaching and the curriculum. There are clear and accessible channels

**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

for parents and carers to communicate with the school and these are widely publicised. The school is highly committed to successful working in partnership with others, including local schools, agencies and other providers.

Staff have a clear understanding of the school's religious, ethnic and socio-economic context and is particularly effective in developing a strong sense of community and belonging. They work well with the local community and have links with a school in France. The school is fully aware of the groups of pupils who may be subject to discrimination, and very effective support and promotion of equality of opportunity ensure that they do equally well in school. Governors discharge their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily and the procedures to protect and safeguard pupils are good. Pupils' outcomes are good and staff manage the school's resources well. Consequently, the school provides good value for money.

*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>
<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>1</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**

Significant improvements have been made to the provision for children in Reception which are having a positive impact on their progress and development. Effective leadership and management are focused on providing interesting and worthwhile experiences, and children's learning, development and welfare are promoted well. The enthusiastic and supportive approach of staff ensures that children settle quickly and enjoy their learning. Many children start school with skills below those expected for their age and for some their skills are particularly low in speech and language. Children achieve well and make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities so that by the time they enter Year 1, many reach age-related expectations across all



**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

areas of learning. Teaching and assessment are good. Staff take note of the children's interests and incorporate these into their lessons. They provide activities which are enjoyable and challenging. Children's independence is developed well, for example when they choose resources and tidy up at the end of sessions. Relationships are very good and children keep themselves and others safe through their good behaviour. Good opportunities are provided for children to explore and investigate in the classroom and staff have appropriate plans to extend this further by developing the outside area.

*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**

About one third of the parents and carers returned the questionnaire. The very large majority say that they are happy with their children's experiences at school and that their children enjoy their time at Ellingham Primary. In particular, they believe their children are kept safe, are taught well and learn to live healthily. Most parents and carers think the school is led and managed effectively but a few would like more parents' and carers' meetings. Inspectors support their concern and are pleased to find that staff are reviewing this now that the school's staffing issues have been resolved. Whilst a few parents and carers think the school does not deal with unacceptable behaviour satisfactorily, inspectors found behaviour to be good and staff effectively encourage pupils to behave well.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ellingham Voluntary Controlled 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 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	62	10	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	54	12	46	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	38	10	38	3	12	2	8
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	38	13	50	2	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	62	8	31	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	46	11	42	0	0	2	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	58	10	38	1	4	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)	12	46	10	38	2	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	42	12	46	2	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	35	9	35	3	12	2	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	27	15	58	2	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	54	10	38	2	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	54	10	38	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

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.**



24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ellingham Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Ellingham NR35 2PZ

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we recently visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. We agree with you and think Ellingham Primary is a good school. Here are some of the things we found out.

You try hard and make good progress.

You thoroughly enjoy learning because teaching is good and the curriculum is very interesting.

You are kind to each other and behave well. We like the way you enjoy working and playing together. You obviously make good friends.

We are particularly impressed with your knowledge and understanding of environmental and ecological issues and the work you do in school and the local community.

The adults look after you really well so you feel very safe in school, and know who to go to if you have a problem.

You thoroughly understand what you need to do to stay fit and healthy, and this affects what you eat and how you exercise.

You attend school regularly so you do not miss any valuable lessons. Well done!

Even in a good school such as yours, there are things which could be improved. We have spoken with the headteacher, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body and they have agreed to do the following things. They will ensure that the new developments in teaching, assessment and the curriculum continue, and check how well they are working to help you make more progress and reach higher standards by the time you leave school. The governors are also going to improve their work so that they know more clearly how successful the school is and how it needs to improve

We know you will all keep on working hard and hope you continue to enjoy being at Ellingham Primary. I certainly have very fond memories of your unique school.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Frith

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**