

Old Catton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121050
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	339847
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2009
Reporting inspector	John Foster

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Clabon
Headteacher	Mrs Ashley Best-White (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Street Old Catton Norwich
Telephone number	01603 426973
Fax number	01603 424029
Email address	office@oldcatton.norfolk.sch.uk

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2009
Inspection number	339847

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.

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

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including the governing body minutes, the draft evaluation document and improvement plan and the school's policies. Seventy-one parents/carers returned the parental questionnaires.

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

- the role of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance
- the steps taken by the school to ensure similar progress is being made in English, mathematics and science
- the effectiveness of the safeguarding procedures
- the quality of teaching to confirm whether the high standards and progress can be maintained.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average junior school. In September 2007, the school was formed as a junior school during the local authority's re-organisation of education, having been a middle school prior to that date. Pupils come from a predominantly White British background, though there are pupils from a range of other minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has had an acting headteacher since October 2008. The previous acting headteacher resigned his post in August 2009 and a new acting headteacher was appointed from the beginning of the current term. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities is above average though the percentage with a statement of special educational need is average. The school was awarded the Arts Council Artsmark in 2008.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The standards attained by pupils are above average and they make good progress during their time at the school.

The quality of teaching is good overall, though assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Though the governing body does not evaluate or monitor the school's performance fully, governors are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have taken appropriate action to ensure that the school is in a good position to move forward.

Parents' views suggest that they are not well enough informed about what is happening at the school, nor are they sufficiently involved in their children's education. The school has started to address this by sending out weekly parents' newsletters.

The newly appointed acting headteacher has already taken positive action in evaluating the school's performance and planning for its future to ensure that it is in a better position for improvement.

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. During the past two years, governors have had limited influence on school improvement as they have not undertaken a systematic evaluation of the school's work, nor have they monitored the performance of the school. Inspection evidence indicates that the acting headteacher and governors have already made a positive start to improving the school's provision by undertaking an effective evaluation and devising a draft plan for improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the governing body's role in evaluating and monitoring the school's performance so that governors are more involved in planning for the school's future improvement by:
 - taking an active part, alongside the headteacher, in assessing what the school does well and what needs to be improved
 - ensuring that governors are actively involved in all aspects of the school's work
 - devising an action plan, complete with success criteria, financial implications and realistic timescales for its implementation.
- Improve the relationships between parents/carers and the school so that they are more closely involved in their children's education:
 - through organising regular meetings between parents and staff to discuss children's work and identifying ways in which parents can be involved in the process

- by keeping parents fully informed, at an early stage, about what is happening at the school
- through involving parents in decision making about all aspects of the school's work.
- Further develop assessment procedures and use the data gained more effectively and consistently to improve learning further:
 - by implementing procedures to enable coordinators to monitor their subjects more effectively
 - through developing and implementing a marking policy which enables pupils to know how they can improve their work.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter the school with attainment that is broadly average for their age. By the time they leave, they have made good progress and standards by the end of Year 6 are above average. The latest national data (2008) suggest that standards in English were slightly below those in mathematics and science and pupils had made slower progress in English. Since then, because teaching is good and the staff have identified where improvements needed to be made and implemented them, progress in English has accelerated. All groups of pupils achieve equally well and make similar levels of progress. During the inspection, the quality of teaching observed was good and this enabled pupils to make good progress in their lessons.

Pupils say that they enjoy school and told inspectors that teachers make learning fun. This is reflected in their good behaviour in classes and about the school. Whilst some say that there is a small amount of bullying, they agree that it is dealt with effectively by the staff. Though some parents indicate that they feel their children are not safe at school, the children themselves say that they feel totally secure and if they have a problem there is always an adult with whom they can discuss their problems. Pupils are active in having a say in school activities through, for example, the school council. However, links to the wider community are limited to those with the local church. Pupils were keen to point out how much they enjoy their involvement in Christmas performances and in raising money for charities.

The good basic skills they acquire in numeracy and literacy, their good attendance and the preparation for secondary education means that they are well prepared for the future. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. They have well developed social skills and relate to each other well.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching observed during the inspection was good. At its best, teaching enables pupils to make excellent progress, because their knowledge of the subject and the pupils means that their planning is well focussed to enable good learning to take place. Of particular note within the better lessons seen was the good planning for learning by different groups, the expectations of teachers and the pupils' good behaviour, meaning that teachers were able to concentrate on pupils' learning rather than on maintaining discipline. In contrast, where teaching was satisfactory, the pace slowed at times during the lesson and teachers spent too much time talking, leaving limited time for children to complete their tasks. The lesson plans in the satisfactory lessons did not include enough detail about the learning to take place in the lesson. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory. Too frequently, pupils are not made aware of what they need to do to improve their work. Because of this, they are not clear about the levels they are working at, or how they can reach the next level.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met and there is a satisfactory, though limited, range of activities arranged for pupils beyond the normal school day. These extra activities are predominantly sporting and include football and cross-country running. The school participates in sporting activities with other local schools. Currently, the school is evaluating the effectiveness of the use of visits in enhancing the curriculum, with plans to revise the number and range of visits in the

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

future.

Children are cared for satisfactorily. Policies relating to areas such as child protection, equal opportunities and security are in the process of being evaluated and, though draft copies are in place, these have yet to be ratified by the governing body as current policy. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that there is always an adult with whom they can share problems. Good relationships exist between the feeder school and the receiving school. Attendance rates are good because the school encourages regular attendance and pupils enjoy coming to school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Following a period of instability, an experienced acting headteacher has been appointed to oversee the school's future development. Already, in the space of three weeks, she has undertaken an evaluation of the school's work and this closely matches the findings of the inspection team. Additionally, based on her findings, she has produced draft plans for the school's development and improvement. Because of the work she has done with the school it is now better placed to improve. The governing body has experienced a difficult period in managing the school. Their role in evaluating and monitoring the school's performance has not been effective in the recent past, but they have been sufficiently aware of some of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision to have undertaken effective action, along with the local authority, in minimising the effects of the weaknesses. Well led by the chair, they have a clear vision for developing the school in the future and are working closely alongside the acting headteacher to ensure school improvement. However, it is early days for the partnership and the governing body has yet to agree the results of its evaluation, to formalise plans for development and ensure their implementation.

Links with parents are satisfactory and improving. A high percentage of parents who returned the questionnaire noted that communication between the school and home has been extremely limited. Recently, this communication has been extended to include a weekly newsletter to parents giving information about the school and its activities. Parents say that they are told about what is happening very late. They feel that they are not given enough opportunities to discuss their children's work with the teachers, nor are they involved well enough in making decisions about their children's learning. Though not supported by inspection evidence, many indicate that inappropriate

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

behaviour is not dealt with effectively. A small minority of parents criticise the school's leadership. Whilst this relates largely to the past, a few note that they have not been informed fully about the appointment of the current acting headteacher and show concern that she has responsibility for two schools.

Subject coordinators have also been limited in the ways they have evaluated and monitored their subjects. As a result, they do not have a full picture of the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. The current leadership has developed arrangements for coordinators to undertake monitoring of their subjects in order to produce effective action plans for future development. In spite of limiting factors, the staff has worked closely together to ensure that pupils have made good progress.

Arrangements for safeguarding are good and the school has effective systems for checking on adults working in the school, to ensure children's safety. The headteacher has devised appropriate plans to ensure that pupils are kept safe during their time in school, though these remain at a draft stage.

The school's arrangements for promoting community cohesion are satisfactory. Whilst local links are established, there is little development beyond the local area. The school's procedures for promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination are satisfactory. There is a new draft equal opportunities plan which has yet to be discussed and adopted as policy, but evidence shows that all pupils are given the same chances, such as when they have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

A high percentage of parental questionnaires was returned. Parents' comments on many of the questionnaires suggest that they are dissatisfied with the school. The table below shows clearly that of the 13 areas asking for a response, seven have answers where more than 20 per cent show dissatisfaction. Inspection evidence points to many of these areas of dissatisfaction being related to the historical situation of the school and are less relevant to the present position. The current acting headteacher has ensured that parents are kept better informed of school activities through weekly newsletters, parents of the new entrants have been invited to school to meet their children's teacher and the new behaviour charter is already having a positive effect on pupils' attitudes. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and inspection findings are that pupils behave well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Old Catton Junior 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 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 135 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	30	45	63	4	6	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	20	28	45	63	5	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	2	3	44	62	16	23	3	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	10	38	54	14	20	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	8	11	45	63	9	13	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	5	7	39	55	19	27	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	8	53	75	7	10	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)	3	4	47	66	9	13	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	4	6	43	61	13	18	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	6	42	59	15	21	7	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	3	4	41	58	13	18	5	7
The school is led and managed effectively	2	3	32	45	20	28	4	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	11	45	63	10	14	2	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



6 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Old Catton Junior C of E School, Norwich, NR6 7DS

This letter is to thank you for the welcome you gave to my colleague and I when we came to inspect your school recently. I would like to thank you for helping us with our work and to tell you what we found out about your school.

Your school is satisfactory overall though there are some important areas which are good. You told us that you enjoy school and that the teachers make learning fun. Your behaviour is good and you get on well with each other. You are taught well and this, along with your good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning, enable you to make good progress with your work so that by the time you leave Old Catton Juniors, you reach above average standards. You also told us that if you have a problem there is always an adult you can talk to and you will receive help to solve your problem.

In order to make the school even better, we have asked the headteacher, the staff and governors to:

- make sure that they check regularly on what is happening in the school and use the information they get to devise plans to make the school better
- check that your work is challenging for all of you
- improve the information your parents receive from school and involve them more in your education.

You can help the staff and governors to achieve this by working hard and continuing to behave well.

With best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

John Foster

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.