

Causton Junior School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 124580 |
| Local Authority | Suffolk |
| Inspection number | 340606 |
| Inspection dates | 9–10 March 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | George Logan |

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

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 262 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Barbara Bayley |
| Headteacher | Paul Rooney |
| Date of previous school inspection | 20 September 2006 |
| School address | Maidstone Road Felixstowe Suffolk |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors spent around half their time looking at pupils' learning, visiting 16 lessons taught by 12 different staff. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's self-evaluation documents, including records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Inspection questionnaires were received from pupils, staff and from 54 parents and carers.

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

- how consistently pupils make progress through the school, particularly in English
- how consistent and effective the teaching is and how well staff use assessment to plan work for pupils at the right level
- the effectiveness of school leaders, including middle managers and governors, in raising achievement and the success with which they promote community cohesion.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized junior school. The school serves a residential suburb of Felixstowe. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and none of these are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is similar to that found in most schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high. Of these, the majority have moderate learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school hosts a specialist support centre, which provides for 16 pupils with moderate learning difficulties and complex needs. These pupils are taught separately, or integrated with the main classes for some lessons, as appropriate. The school also provides an inclusion room which aims to offer support and nurture for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Causton Junior School provides a satisfactory education. However, it has significant strengths in the good provision it makes for pupils' personal development. Parents and carers value the positive ethos and the dedication of the staff and recognise the school's commitment to the well-being of their children. Consequently, most pupils enjoy school, attend regularly and feel very safe. Pupils have good social skills, show positive attitudes to learning and behave well. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, supported by their awareness of proper diet and the good opportunities for physical exercise. Many pupils spend their play time gardening in the calm surroundings of the recently-developed and well-resourced allotment area.

Pupils generally enter Year 3 with slightly below average standards. Although teaching in the great majority of lessons seen was good, progress through the school is inconsistent, with some year groups learning at a faster rate than others. Pupils tend to be rather passive in lessons and this affects their learning. While overall progress was good in 2009, it appears more variable, and closer to satisfactory, in the current year, particularly in mathematics. In spite of the good overall profile in 2009, boys did less well than girls, while attainment in English was lower than in mathematics or science. Over time, progress is satisfactory, with some areas of strength, leading to broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils in the specialist support centre also make satisfactory progress. Pupils' progress is variable because staff do not make enough use of available information about their past performance and current attainment to plan work at the correct level. Nor is the school entirely confident as to the accuracy of all assessment information currently available.

The satisfactory curriculum enables pupils to secure sound basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. However, there is some variability from class to class in the progress they make, depending on how effectively teachers plan to meet their needs. Extra-curricular provision is good, enriching pupils' experience well and contributing strongly to their good personal development.

Teachers use some aspects of assessment well to check learning and to plan lessons, including thorough marking of written work, but there is some inconsistent practice between staff. In addition, data are not analysed with sufficient rigour, so that school leaders do not have a clear vision of where progress is slower. Individual targets for improvement, while often evident in pupils' written work, have limited impact on progress.

Particularly in their support for personal development, senior leaders provide a clear

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direction for the school. The engagement with partner institutions, within the local cluster and with specialist secondary schools, is good. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to learn about the diversity of life in the United Kingdom. The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate. A trend of rising attainment at Year 6, improved provision to support pupils' personal development and the strength of some recent appointments all indicate that the school has satisfactory capacity for improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Analyse pupil tracking data more rigorously so that staff have a sharper understanding of the amount of progress which pupils are making.
- Enable pupils to make consistently good progress through:
 - extending existing good practice in the marking of pupils' written work to all classes so that pupils are clear as to what they need to do next
 - ensuring that pupils' individual learning targets are used more effectively to support more rapid and consistent progress in writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers' planning identifies tasks which are appropriately matched to the full range of pupils' needs within the class.
- 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

3

Attainment has improved steadily and, in recent years, has been mostly broadly average by the end of Year 6. The high level of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, both in the main school and in the special unit provision, makes for complex patterns of progress and attainment across the school. Overall, pupils build satisfactorily on their previous learning, despite some inconsistencies in progress. For example, on the data available, the great majority of Year 6 pupils in 2009 made good progress. This is not nearly so evident in the current year, where progress is generally good in reading and science but it is weaker in writing and, particularly, mathematics. There is also some variability between and within years and subjects. In general, those with additional learning needs make steady progress as a result of specific individual teaching and a nurturing environment. Pupils in the specialist support centre, as in the main school, make good progress in their personal development. Academic progress is not better than satisfactory because teachers' evaluations of pupils' progress are not always precise enough to support really focused planning for what these pupils need to do next. For pupils who have special educational needs in the main school, progress is satisfactory. While the school to some extent evaluates the impact of additional support to ensure that it remains effective, the co-ordinator of special educational needs has very little time to monitor the work and effectiveness of support staff. The few pupils of minority ethnic heritage make similar progress to their peers.

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Pupils make the best progress in lessons when they are encouraged to be actively involved, when activities are well matched to their needs, when lower attaining pupils are supported by effective teaching assistants and when more able pupils have the opportunity to work independently. Occasionally, activities are too controlled by staff, the pace flags and attention is lost. Outcomes tend to be better in lessons, such as in a music session, taught by a specialist teacher, where a lively pace and a good range of activities led to good engagement by pupils, and to good learning. In one lesson, progress was relatively slow, in spite of well-judged planning and good relationships, because the teacher did not actively engage pupils or channel their interest creatively. Teachers do not always ask sufficiently challenging questions which invite an extended response and enable pupils' understanding to be evaluated. Pupils respond particularly well when the pace is brisk and expectations are high.

The school's positive ethos promotes a strong sense of community. Behaviour is a strength and exclusions are rare. The school council and class councils are well-established and provide an effective forum for pupils' views. While neither spiritual nor cultural development are quite so strong, pupils are enthusiastic and caring, demonstrating good moral and social skills. They like school and all that it offers, eagerly undertaking posts of responsibility.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 3 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

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

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How effective is the provision?

Staff work closely together and achieve a good level of consistency in their day-to-day practice. Relationships are a key strength and, across the school, effective management of pupils' behaviour supports a positive environment for learning. In general, the work provided meets the learning needs of most pupils. However, pupils are often passive listeners in lessons and are not encouraged or challenged sufficiently to articulate their ideas. Opportunities for pupils to work independently, so that they develop better skills in researching, organising and recording their work, are not extensive. There is still some reliance on worksheets in science, rather than the planned promotion of independent recording skills. Teaching assistants are, in general, deployed efficiently to support learners, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, in spite of the underlying potential of the teaching - and most lessons observed were good - pupils' progress is inconsistent, largely because teachers do not make sufficient use of tracking information to know exactly where pupils are and what needs to be achieved by the end of each year. While the marking of work is very thorough in some classes, there is still variability in practice. Although individual targets in writing and mathematics exist in some classes, their use is not sufficiently embedded in daily practice so that their impact upon pupils' progress remains limited.

The curriculum aims to develop key skills in literacy and numeracy and strongly promotes pupils' personal development. However, not enough attention is paid to its impact on their academic progress. The time given to science, as reflected in the quality and extent of recorded work, appears to be considerably less than in literacy or numeracy. Expectations of handwriting and presentation of work in Year 6 are not always high enough. The revised curriculum provides more opportunities for cross-curricular links, within a developing range of creative themes. Small group interventions, including activities to promote literacy skills, are precisely targeted on pupils' specific needs. Good personal, social, health and citizenship education, together with a good range of visits and visitors and a residential opportunity in Year 6, promotes pupils' personal development well. The good range of extra-curricular clubs are well-supported by pupils.

Staff have a close knowledge of children's needs and support pupils and families in difficulties well. The very few pupils who do not speak English as their first language are integrated successfully and make steady progress in acquiring competence in spoken English. The school engages with a wide range of external agencies to support pupils' health and well-being, and the counselling provision in the inclusion centre effectively supports the health, social or behavioural needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The high level of staffing and cohesive nature of the special unit ensures that pupils with moderate learning difficulties and complex needs are looked after and supported well, as are pupils with speech and language needs across the school. The adoption of the '1-to-1' programme enables the school to work with parents alongside their children. Effective systems to promote attendance ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team has been particularly successful in developing those aspects of provision, such as the high quality care, counselling and nurture groups, which have a positive impact on pupils' well-being and their personal development. Standards have shown a gently rising trend at Year 6 and there is a clear, shared vision for the school's development. However, there has been a less rigorous approach to the accurate benchmarking of pupils' attainment on entry to the school or to the monitoring and analysis of their learning and progress. As a result, the school does not have a clear perception as to where teaching is most effective or where the pace of progress needs to be increased. While challenging targets for performance at Year 6 are well-established, teachers are not yet held sufficiently to account for the extent of the progress pupils make in other years.

Governors bring a wide range of expertise to the school. They monitor provision, visit the school regularly, support it well and are closely involved in shaping its future direction. They hold the school to account in committee meetings and through their links with subject leaders and meetings with pupils, and they are actively involved in school self-evaluation. They have a reasonable overview of the standards pupils reach and the progress they make. They ensure that statutory requirements are met, including the good procedures for safeguarding pupils. Roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding are clearly defined. Potential discrimination is tackled resolutely and equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily, although governors could be more aware of their obligation to monitor and evaluate the impact of this provision. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily, through its good involvement with the local community, regular visits to places of worship and satisfactory provision to engage with the diverse cultures typically found across the United Kingdom. While there is an established link with Kosovo, global links remain the least-developed element.

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 |

| 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 | |
|---|----------|
| 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 | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 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 | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

Although a relatively small number of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, the great majority are very happy with the school. One parent said, 'An excellent school...it has a really caring attitude and encourages all its pupils to do well, regardless of their ability.' Parents and carers appreciate the school's responsiveness to the social needs of their children and the extra help it provides to support their academic development. Only a few minor criticisms were raised, mostly individual concerns around behaviour and aspects of communication. These were discussed fully with the school. School leaders recognise the need to continue to improve communication with parents. Overall, parents and carers recognise this to be a very caring school where pupils' personal development is well supported. Inspection findings largely endorse these positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Causton 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 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 262 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 30 | 56 | 20 | 37 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 30 | 56 | 22 | 41 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 25 | 46 | 25 | 46 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 25 | 46 | 24 | 44 | 5 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 28 | 52 | 25 | 46 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 23 | 43 | 27 | 50 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 21 | 39 | 32 | 59 | 1 | 2 | 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) | 18 | 33 | 29 | 54 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 24 | 44 | 26 | 48 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 16 | 30 | 30 | 56 | 6 | 11 | 1 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 17 | 31 | 31 | 57 | 6 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 24 | 44 | 22 | 41 | 8 | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 28 | 52 | 24 | 44 | 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 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.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Causton Junior School, Felixstowe, IP11 9ED

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you around the school and watching you at work in your lessons. We found that although your school is satisfactory overall, it has some important strengths.

Our main findings are these:

- you behave well, are enthusiastic and work hard
- most of you reach the standards expected by the end of Year 6
- you feel that teachers make lessons enjoyable and support you well in your learning
- you make mostly satisfactory progress as you go through the school
- the adults make sure that you are cared for very well
- you feel very safe and have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily
- the curriculum is satisfactory, you enjoy a good range of visits, and quite a lot of you get involved in clubs or extra activities
- those of you who find learning difficult, or who attend the specialist support centre, get a lot of extra help, so that you make at least satisfactory progress
- school leaders work hard to ensure that you are safe and well looked after.

We are asking the school to make the following changes so that you do even better:

- check and use all the information available from the school tracking system, so that staff know exactly how well you are doing and what needs to be done to help you progress at a faster rate
- make sure that the teaching, and the way in which teachers mark your work, help you to learn systematically and rapidly, making better use of individual learning targets.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead inspector

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