

Warren School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124905
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	340679
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Jackie Cousins

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	12
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Dee Moxon
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2007
School address	Clarks Lane Oulton Broad Lowestoft
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with the headteacher, governors, health care workers, senior leadership team, middle leaders and staff. They talked to a group of pupils and parents. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at some documentation including the safeguarding policy, risk assessments and accident records. The school development plan was studied in detail. An analysis was made of school data on pupils' progress, and inspectors looked at pupils' work in books and on display. A scrutiny of 52 parent questionnaires was carried out.

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

- how consistently pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage progress in communication and personal, social and emotional development
- how effectively leaders monitor the progress and attainment of girls in key areas of learning, including information and communication technology (ICT)
- how well the accreditation system been developed in the sixth form
- how the school uses feedback to pupils to increase their rate of progress
- how the school's leaders are working to develop pupils' understanding of the United Kingdom's multicultural community, especially through music.

Information about the school

Warren School is a special school for pupils with severe learning difficulties, and a considerable proportion have profound and multiple learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorder. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and none are at early stages of learning English as an additional language. The school gained Sportsmark and Activemark awards in 2008. A new headteacher took up post at the beginning of this term.

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

Warren School is a good place to learn and it has some considerable strengths. One of these is the good partnership with parents, which helps pupils to settle swiftly into school life whether they join the Reception or any other year group. Virtually all parents who returned a questionnaire were very positive about how their child enjoys being at the school. One parent summed up their thoughts by saying: 'Since my child joined Warren in 2007, he has made great progress and has become a lot more independent. Overall I am very pleased with the school.' Parents strongly agreed that their child is kept safe in school. This is because staff care for pupils diligently. In response, pupils behave well and are thoughtful to others. All pupils said they have someone in school they could talk to if they had a concern or a worry.

The school's leadership gives high priority to assessing pupils' needs carefully. This, together with good teaching, ensures that pupils progress well. Staff use a range of teaching methods and pupils learn through a wide variety of approaches. Assessment information is used well. Occasionally, learning objectives are rather broad and so pupils do not know what skills or outcomes the staff are expecting from them in each lesson. Pupils receive positive feedback from staff but they do not regularly discuss personal targets in lessons so pupils know what strategies they can use to meet them and improve. By Year 11 most pupils gain accredited qualifications, though few pupils gain qualifications in ICT despite some being able to create posters successfully adding images and texts.

A good leadership team is effectively driving improvements. The headteacher's leadership is highly committed and inspires others to be ambitious about what the school can achieve. Considerable improvements since the last inspection include the use of a high quality tracking system from Years 1 to 14 in all areas of learning. In contrast, children's progress in the Reception class is not tracked in detail. Self-evaluation is used successfully by senior leaders and governors and so the school is in a good position to improve in the future. Nevertheless, the role of middle leaders is not fully developed and they are not always productively involved in monitoring pupils' progress. As a result, they do not have a deep understanding of which group or individuals have made expected or better progress or record the strategies in detail which could be used to support those making slower progress. The school's leadership treats all pupils as individuals. This ensures that pupils from all backgrounds and abilities are involved successfully in learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Develop pupils' progress and achievement by:
 - introducing rigorous termly tracking in the Reception class
 - giving those in Years 11 to 14 the opportunity to gain accredited qualifications in ICT
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring all lessons contain:
 - well explained learning objectives which lay out specifically what skills and outcomes the teacher is looking for
 - good quality discussion about pupils' targets which will ensure they know what they have done well and can do to improve their work.
- Enhance the role of middle leaders by making sure that they:
 - monitor the progress made by different groups of pupils in detail
 - celebrate more formally those pupils who have made expected or better progress
 - always record the strategies which will be used to support those progressing less quickly.

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

Achievement is good. Over the last three years, nine out of 10 of pupils made at least expected progress and almost half made above average progress in key areas of learning. The use of a rigorous tracking system is helping the school to analyse carefully the progress of different groups of pupils. For example, girls' progress is a little greater than boys' but they both achieve well. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties make good progress. Last year, all of these pupils made expected progress and over one-third made above average progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are provided for successfully and so they achieve well. Between 2008 and 2009, pupils in Years 7 to 9 made really good progress with nearly all pupils making expected gains in their learning and half making better than expected progress. Those pupils with autistic spectrum disorder achieve as well as others.

Pupils' self-esteem is high because the school works productively to increase their confidence. Pupils form very effective relationships with adults because staff give them positive comments wherever possible. They contribute to the community well. For example, pupils successfully joined a local discussion group to consider how after-school provision could be improved. Pupils learn effectively to value everyone wherever they come from. Pupils' moral development is good and they have an effective understanding of what is right and wrong. They take on safe ways of working together well. This is due to careful guidance from staff. For example, they learn how to handle design and technology equipment maturely. They have positive attitudes to learning and concentrate efficiently in lessons. Pupils enjoy school and say they really like the physical, art and music activities. For instance, they clearly enjoyed composing a musical piece about a stormy sea due to the good use of percussion instruments and specialist tuition. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles well. A high proportion of pupils take part in

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physical exercise activities in outside and inside areas. They are knowledgeable about foods which are better for them and those which should not be eaten too often. Pupils' attendance is good and their basic skills develop satisfactorily. Pupils' personal development is good and their basic skills are sound. This means that they are suitably prepared for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	*
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	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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good and so pupils make effective progress in their learning. In lessons observed, the best sessions used practical teaching methods to ensure that pupils developed their key skills well. Generally questioning is used astutely to extend pupils' thinking. In one outstanding session seen, physical activities were used extremely effectively and so pupils developed their communication skills very well. Assessment consistently informs extra support for pupils. Occasionally, staff do not share highly

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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specific learning objectives and so different groups of pupils are not clear what skills they are expected to utilise. Pupils' targets are not regularly referred to in lessons and few opportunities are taken to discuss examples of how they could be met. This means that pupils do not have an in-depth knowledge of what they can do to improve their work.

The school places strong emphasis on the development of language, literacy and numeracy skills. The pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the world efficiently through investigative activities. Most weeks they have at least three physical activity sessions, including a dance, swimming and gymnastics or ball skills session. The development of creative skills in art is well provided for because resources are used successfully. For example, pupils have made beautiful collages of faces using images of fruit and vegetables, having used the work of Archimbaldo as a stimulus. Music is used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of our multicultural society. Pupils learn about Christian beliefs in assemblies and religious education sessions effectively. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is supported well through group discussion sessions. Provision for the gifted and talented pupils is developing satisfactorily.

Pupils receive high levels of care from the staff. Induction into school life is well thought out. From the moment pupils start at school, their pastoral needs are met successfully. Pupils with medical problems are cared for very considerately. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are identified and supported well. The school works thoughtfully with agencies to support pupils' well-being. A high emphasis is given to promoting pupils' mental health. Pupils' individual needs including physical and speech are well supported because of the good use of health therapists. The school's work with families ensures parents and carers can access training and support their child's needs effectively.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team is dedicated to improving the school. The headteacher leads the school with a great deal of skill and is very committed to the pupils. School development planning sets clear direction for future improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils have equal opportunities to learn because the school works methodically to remove any barriers to learning and staff work rigorously to meet pupils' individual needs. Pupils' achievement is monitored on a formal basis twice a year by

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senior leaders and their individual targets are reviewed regularly. The school is developing the role of middle leaders so that they are clear which pupils make expected or better progress and identify the strategies which could be used to increase the rate of progress for a few pupils.

Governance is good and supports the school effectively. Governors work well with staff. They challenge the school appropriately and are involved in strategic planning for the future. They make sure child protection and health and safety matters receive proper attention. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements well. For example, all staff receive regular training in child protection and thorough records are kept of the checks completed on staff.

Senior leaders work successfully to unite the school and wider community. For example, pupils take part in local church services where they happily sing and sign words to the audience. The school has evaluated its provision for community cohesion rigorously and is developing further links to enhance pupils' understanding of multicultural Britain and the ways to measure the impact on pupils' understanding. Global links are developing appropriately and the school plans to establish stronger links with a school in another continent.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children achieve satisfactorily in the Reception class. The children make sound progress in key areas of learning including communication and personal, social and emotional development. The children develop their basic skills satisfactorily because staff use

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demonstration effectively. Assessments regularly highlight what children can do but staff do not always record the next steps they could take to improve. The starting point of each child is assessed carefully but their individual progress is not tracked rigorously enough. The children's personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory because all adults ensure that the welfare of each individual is supported well. The children are encouraged to be independent and can easily extend their learning by collecting extra pieces of equipment, due to the thoughtful way that resources are organised. Although staff know how to handle medical incidents no member of staff has an up-to-date qualification in first aid for early years children. The leadership of this stage of education is satisfactory. Appropriate management has improved the use of the outside areas suitably.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Sixth form

Students make good progress from Years 12 to 14. All students gain accredited qualifications in various areas of learning. They take part in enterprise activities such as organising and managing a 'prom' party. This project develops their knowledge of how to raise money by planning and holding coffee mornings. Creating shopping lists provides students with opportunities to practise their ICT skills. They have developed their communication skills well in organising a camping trip, and good teaching is particularly evident in work around this activity. Students have good opportunities to develop their sporting skills and one student has been selected to run for the 'England Mencap Athletics Squad' in 2010. Students take part in work experience activities within the school. They behave well and have positive attitudes to learning due to the good quality support and guidance they receive from staff. Sixth form provision is managed well and the leader is clear about ways to develop students' achievement further. For example, the school is planning to enhance further students' ICT skills by expanding the range of courses offered.

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents who returned a questionnaire are very positive about the school and the progress their child is making. Inspection findings support parents' positive views about the school. A few parents express concerns about the ways their ideas and concerns are acted on. The new headteacher has listened to parents' ideas and already made some important improvements to keep parents better informed. Very few parents feel that their children were not making progress but this view is not supported by inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Warren 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 inspectors received 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 105 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	78	10	20	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	71	14	27	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	75	12	24	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	75	9	18	3	6	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	36	73	10	20	2	4	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	65	15	31	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	69	15	31	0	0	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)	29	62	15	32	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	71	10	20	3	6	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	67	15	31	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	69	11	22	4	8	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	35	70	14	28	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	73	13	25	0	0	1	2

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

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

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 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.



19 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Warren School, Lowestoft NR33 8HT

Thank you for helping us to find out about your school. We enjoyed watching lessons and talking to some of you. You attend a happy and friendly school. These are some of the best things about your school:

- you make good progress in your work
- you behave well in school
- your headteacher and senior teachers have very good ideas about ways to improve the school
- teaching is good and the staff work hard to make sessions interesting
- a good partnership is in place between the school, your parents, carers and the therapists who help you
- staff care and support you really well and listen to you thoughtfully so that you feel really safe in school.

We have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The most important things they need to do are to make sure:

- your progress in the Reception class is checked carefully each term
- you gain more qualifications in ICT in Years 11 to 14
- your personal targets are discussed more regularly and you understand more fully what skills and outcomes the teacher is looking for in each lesson
- middle leaders watch the progress made by you in detail, celebrating your successes and recording ways to help those making less progress than expected.

Continue to listen carefully to staff comments, come to school everyday and enjoy all the terrific things you are learning at Warren School.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Cousins

Lead inspector

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