

Ranelagh Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124645
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359735
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Thomas
Headteacher	Diane Ekins
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 16 lessons taught by 10 different teachers. Meetings were held with staff, the senior management team, pupil members of the school council, and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at minutes of meetings, teachers' planning, a range of policies and a wide sample of pupils' work. They analysed 114 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The team looked at how effectively the school was trying to raise standards in mathematics.
- It looked at how well those new to the school and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported.
- It considered the impact of recent work on assessment of pupils' progress.
- It looked at how well the changes made to the curriculum to link subjects together are helping to improve pupils' key skills.
- It investigated the impact of the new senior management team.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very high. A high proportion of the pupils are from minority ethnic heritages, mainly Other White backgrounds, Bangladeshi and African. An above-average proportion of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, and very high in some year groups. The numbers of pupils who join or leave partway through their primary school education is above average. The school has Healthy Schools status.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has maintained many of its strengths from the last inspection and built on weaker areas to improve further. It provides its pupils with a good start to their education and helps them develop into successful learners. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and honest and the senior staff have a good awareness of what is needed to raise standards further. The successful work already done to raise standards in writing and mathematics reflects the good capacity the school has for sustained improvement.

Children join the school with low skill levels, but by Year 6 attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. Current pupils are on track to exceed the challenging targets set. In particular, the number of pupils set to reach the higher levels has greatly increased. In Year 2 there has been a sustained and steady rise in standards over recent years. A great deal of external support and training has taken place to help raise standards in mathematics. Much of this work has been recently done and has not yet had a full impact on attainment. The quality of work in art and design is often very high and standards in music and physical education are often above those expected nationally. The rich curriculum meets pupils' needs well in most respects, but teachers sometimes miss opportunities to help pupils to increase and use a wider vocabulary, or to develop their thinking and problem solving skills. Good progress is made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the growing number who speak English as an additional language. The school works hard and successfully to quickly integrate newcomers who join partway through the year or in different year groups, and these pupils often make good progress. Pupils throughout the school are now achieving well and enjoying their learning.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have worked hard to develop an interesting and imaginative curriculum. They have improved their assessments skills and the ways in which the resulting data are recorded, and they use this information well to tailor planning for individual pupils in different ability groups. However, teachers are yet to develop pupils' self-assessment skills to help them think more independently about their learning. The care provided for pupils is reflected in the good provision for pupils' personal development and in the positive feelings that parents and carers and the pupils have about the school.

Leadership and management are good and the senior leaders have clear and focused plans for raising standards which are already having a positive impact. The governing body is very supportive of the school and its place in the local community. It knows the school's strengths and weaknesses but its evaluation of the school's performance is not systematic enough. Despite the strong links with parents and carers in most respects, the school finds it very difficult to recruit them onto the governing body. This blunts the contribution that can be made to school improvement by parents and carers.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by:
 - embedding and making more consistent the recent improvements to teaching in mathematics
 - providing more regular opportunities for pupils to increase and extend their vocabulary in all subjects
 - helping pupils to develop their problem solving and thinking skills
 - extending pupils' opportunities to assess how well they and their peers are learning, and to become more reflective learners.
- Encourage more parents and carers to join the governing body, and develop more systematic ways for it to evaluate the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment is rising rapidly. This is evident in the work seen in books, and the standards reached in lessons. Past underperformance has been addressed and most pupils now make good progress. In Years 1 and 2 pupils build on the early years work well and are developing satisfactory basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. In a Year 1 lesson good use of imaginative objects helped encourage discussion, while pupils at an early stage of learning English were making good progress in a phonics session. In Key Stage 2 pupils' progress has been more inconsistent, but current standards show a huge improvement after a dip in 2010. Standards in writing and mathematics have now reached similar levels to reading and pupils are writing some imaginative responses to stimuli such as poetry. In Year 6 more pupils are achieving the higher levels. In a good literacy lesson they created some imaginative and emotional flashbacks for a story. Pupils' cultural development and their learning about how others live and worship are good.

The school is effective at teaching pupils how to stay safe and healthy. The firm focus on internet safety is a strength. When they are given a responsibility such as being a member of the school council or helping look after the school chickens, they take the role seriously and carry it out conscientiously, thus making a good contribution to the community. The school is satisfactorily preparing pupils for their future education. Attendance is broadly average and the school works hard to encourage parents and carers not to take children on extended holidays.

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

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	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
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	3
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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have built strong relationships with the pupils. These encourage good behaviour and attentiveness, which are clearly having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Their planning is good and the individual needs of all pupils are very well thought through, especially when organising smaller groups to support learning in literacy and numeracy. The work of support staff makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers' skills in assessing pupils' progress have improved and this helps them to plan work that builds more effectively on pupils' prior learning. The curriculum has been developed to include effective links between subjects so pupils learn to use their key skills in different subjects, although they do not always have enough planned opportunities to expand and consolidate their vocabulary. It is enhanced and enriched well through music, art, sport and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. However, teachers have yet to provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their learning, to reflect on their work and their peers' learning, or to consolidate their problem solving and thinking skills. The school provides good levels of care, guidance and support, especially for those pupils whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. Recent work to improve the transition of pupils between classes and key stages has been of particular benefit in supporting these pupils.

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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?

Good leadership and management are ensuring that all senior leaders and staff have a consistent vision for the future of the school. This is because of the headteacher's enthusiastic leadership and her use of different staff members' strengths. The newly created senior management team has a range of experience and shares a clear ambition to raise standards and to ensure the school does all it can to support the pupils. The impact of good community cohesion is evident in the way pupils from such a wide range of backgrounds get on together so well. All safeguarding and child protection requirements are met. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. Its current systems for evaluating the work of the school rely too much on information supplied by the headteacher, and lack the important element of formal input from parents and carers. The school is good at supporting all of its pupils from all their different backgrounds, thus ensuring equality of opportunity. Partnerships are effective in supporting the curriculum and making learning more meaningful to pupils. Links with outside agencies are particularly helpful in supporting those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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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	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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

The nursery and reception classes provide children starting school with a bright, exciting and imaginative environment. This includes the outdoor areas, which are a key strength and offer a range of surfaces and play and learning opportunities. In one good session, nursery children greatly enjoyed their walk to the forest area to meet the characters from a popular storybook. The good provision is clearly supporting good progress from often very low beginnings and for children who speak little or no English. A lot of good adult intervention encourages children to talk about the activities. In one good session a teacher worked on finding shapes with children using magnifiers and photographs of the local area. Good individual observations and assessments are made and adults know their children well. Even so, the data have not been fully used to provide an overview of progress in the past. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well by the coordinator, and some aspects of the school's work in this area are used to spread good practice in other schools.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

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

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Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire was above average, and the vast majority are happy with their children's experience at the school. All are happy that the school keeps their children safe. They say their children enjoy school and the vast majority say the teaching is good. A very small minority think the school does not deal with misbehaviour well, or that their children are not making sufficient progress. The inspectors followed up their concerns but judged that behaviour is good and systems for rewards and sanctions are effective. In the vast majority of cases pupils are making good progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ranelagh 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 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 201 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	61	43	38	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	66	58	48	42	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	63	55	46	40	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	59	41	36	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	66	58	45	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	54	45	39	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	53	49	43	5	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)	62	54	40	35	4	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	52	46	40	6	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	50	48	42	8	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	57	50	52	46	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	66	58	44	39	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	74	65	39	34	1	1	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 all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



9 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ranelagh Primary School, Ipswich, IP2 0AN

Thank you for the way you welcomed us when we visited your school recently. Thank you especially to those who met with an inspector and talked about the school, and those in the school council who gave me their views.

Yours is a good school. It provides you with a stimulating environment indoors and outside in which you are learning a lot of new things and making good progress. Your headteacher is very enthusiastic and, along with the teachers and other adults, works very hard to provide you with challenging activities to help you learn.

You help the teachers teach you by being so well behaved and attentive in lessons.

The school is good at helping you learn to stay healthy and safe, and you enjoy the responsibilities and jobs you are given.

To help the school get even better we have asked the staff to do the following things:

- continue helping you get better at mathematics
- make sure they take every opportunity to encourage you to learn and use a wider vocabulary
- give you more time to think about your learning and to solve problems
- get more of your parents and carers to be school governors, and for the governing body to check more closely how well the school is doing.

Thanks you again for your help. Enjoy your time at Ranelagh and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector

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