



Earl Soham Community Primary

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124578
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281754
Inspection dates 28 February 2006 to 1 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Godfrey Bancroft LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Street
School category	Community		IP13 7SA
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01728 685359
Number on roll	74	Fax number	01728 685359
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms. Alison Pickup
Date of previous inspection	3 April 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Stephen Wood

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 28 February 2006 - 1 March 2006	Inspection number 281754
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school. The socio-economic circumstances of the community are generally favourable. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is low. The percentage of children who have learning difficulties is average and there are four children who have statements of special educational need. The majority of children are of White British heritage with a small number from other backgrounds. The number of children who join or leave the school, other than at the expected times, is high. Many children come to the school from outside its traditional catchment area.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a happy school in which children enjoy learning. The inspection agrees with the school's self-evaluation that it provides a satisfactory education. The majority of children achieve satisfactorily, whilst those who have learning difficulties make good progress. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and they make good progress. At the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are average, with clear signs of recent improvement in Years 1 and 2. Children respond well and have positive attitudes. Their behaviour during lessons and around the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, in some lessons the work set for the most able children is not hard enough. Sometimes the marking of children's work does not provide them with enough information about how to improve. The curriculum is good and children's learning is enhanced by a good range of additional activities. The school provides children with good care, guidance and support. However, children's knowledge of what they need to do to improve is not linked closely enough to the targets set for their learning. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has introduced many measures designed to improve standards. These are beginning to have the desired effect but have not been in place long enough to impact fully on children's attainment. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and the issues identified at that time have been addressed appropriately. Under the leadership of the headteacher and with the continued support of the governing body the school's capacity for further improvement is good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the work set for the most able children is hard enough and more challenging for them. - Make sure that the marking of work provides children with enough information about what they need to do to improve and is more closely linked to their academic targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment on entry is average, although several of the youngest children do not speak clearly. However, most children in the Foundation Stage are currently attaining the standards expected for their age. Most children in Years 1 to 6 achieve satisfactorily and although higher attaining pupils do not always do as well as they should, those who have learning difficulties make good progress. In recent years standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have been below average. Significant improvements have been made in the work of the current Year 2 children and the school expect them to attain average standards. Standards at the end of Year 6, including those for the current year, are also average. Since year groups are so small, standards in Years 3 to 6 are influenced by year-on-year variations in the numbers who have special learning needs and the high proportion of children who join and

leave the school after their reception year. The current Year 6, for example, has a high proportion of children who have learning difficulties. Many of these children are making good progress and are on course to attain average standards by the end of the year. The school sets suitably challenging targets for children's attainment which they usually achieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good. Children clearly enjoy coming to school and attendance is broadly average. The personal, social and emotional development of the youngest children is good. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Assemblies contribute well to children's spiritual and moral development and the quality of their singing is particularly good. Behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Children work and play together well. Children are eager to take responsibility. Some are trained as sports leaders, to help on the playground. Older children are good at taking care of the younger ones and making sure they are safe and happy. Children are knowledgeable about the need to eat healthily and the school provides each of them with a piece of fruit to eat each day. They also understand the importance of taking regular exercise. Children know a lot about their own community and know that some cultural groups are different from their own. They are sensitive to the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Relationships between staff and children are good. Teachers are good at motivating children by providing them with interesting activities. This is enabling children to become increasingly confident and enthusiastic learners. However, the work set for the most able children is sometimes not hard enough and does not challenge them sufficiently. Teaching assistants contribute well to children's learning and especially to those who have learning difficulties. The assessment of children's progress is thorough and accurate. However, sometimes the marking of children's work does not give them enough information about what they need to do to improve. Similarly the information they receive about how to improve is not linked closely enough to the targets for their learning. Teachers make outstanding use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance children's learning in many subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets children's needs well. Children's learning is enhanced by a good range of additional activities. These include a choir, food club and various

sports clubs. There is also a good range of educational visits, including a residential visit for the oldest children, undertaken in partnership with a nearby school. The use of ICT was a weakness identified at the time of the last inspection. Its development is a success story for the school and it plays an effective part in supporting children's learning in many subjects. In addition to information and communication technology the curriculum pays good attention to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, preparing children well to contribute to their future economic well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support. In discussions, children readily talk about how much they enjoy being at the school. The arrangements to ensure child protection are well-established and secure. The school ensure that children feel safe, secure and well cared for well. Provision for children who have special learning needs is good. The school council is a recent introduction, but ensures that children's opinions are heard and acted upon. There is good support for children who, in the past, have exhibited challenging behaviour. This support is effective and the work done in groups, led by teaching assistants, has resulted in significant improvements. Many children join and leave the school other than at the expected times. These children are supported well. The school is good at helping them to settle in and they soon make friends and begin to learn well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since his appointment the headteacher has worked effectively to overcome many challenges. He has brought together a team of staff who support each other well and are committed to helping children to achieve. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and the school is well placed to make continued improvement. Many innovations aimed at improving standards have been introduced and are beginning to have the desired effect. However, some have not been in place long enough to impact fully on standards. The school's processes for self-evaluation are good and give an accurate view of its performance. Arrangements for senior managers and governors to check and identify ways of improving provision are good. The governing body makes an effective contribution to the life of the school including frequent visits by some. They are very enthusiastic, supportive and are well informed about what the school does well and what needs to be improved. Governors are currently working effectively to bring about improvements to the school's accommodation. They are good at ensuring that the school's resources are used wisely. For example, the resources to support children who have learning difficulties are used effectively. Subject leaders provide their colleagues with good support. Arrangements for the performance management of staff and for their continued professional development are good. Links with other schools are good and include the shared teaching of additional classes for the oldest children. The school serves its community well by providing a venue for adult numeracy and information and communication

technology classes. Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school, raising funds and often helping in classrooms. The school consults frequently with parents and has an excellent website which keeps them well informed about its activities.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for talking to me and helping me during the inspection. I think your school provides you with a satisfactory education. There are also many things that your school does well. It is good at caring for you and making sure that you are safe. I know that you appreciate the help your teachers give you and the interesting activities they provide for you to do. Many of you told me how much you enjoy being at your school. I was impressed by your good behaviour and by how hard you work in lessons. Your headteacher and school governors are introducing many things that will help to improve your learning. The building of your new school hall is a good example of this. To help you to do even better in the future, we have asked your teachers to:

- Make sure that the work set for those of you who are very able is hard enough for you.
- Ensure that when they mark your work they provide you with enough information about what you need to do to improve and link this information to the targets set for your learning.

Well done and keep on working hard.