

St Edmundsbury Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124762
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	363446
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Reporting inspector	David Jones HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Dart
Headteacher	Joanne Lundy
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2010
School address	Grove Road Bury St Edmunds IP33 3BJ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). St Edmundsbury Primary School was found to require special measures in March 2010. The school was visited by HMI on one previous occasion in September 2010.

HMI observed nine lessons, taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and an associate governor, groups of pupils, and representatives from the local authority. HMI observed the school's work, looked at the pupils' assessment records, the school's analysis of pupils' progress, samples of pupils' work, staff planning and recent monitoring evidence.

- HMI reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.
- The impact of recent initiatives to accelerate learning and progress for all groups of pupils.
- How successfully the school is improving the quality of teaching in order to ensure consistently good progress for all pupils.
- The effectiveness of target-setting and tracking procedures in helping to eliminate underachievement.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management in developing capacity for sustained improvement and overcoming the barriers to good progress.

Information about the school

St Edmundsbury is smaller than the average primary school. The local authority operates a three-phase system and pupils move school at the end of Year 4. The school draws most of its pupils from the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is a third of the national figure and the percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. An early morning breakfast club run by a commercial provider operates within the school building.

The vast majority of pupils are of White British or European heritage. A few pupils are at the early stage of learning to speak English. An executive headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher accepted responsibility for the school at the end of May 2010; both were appointed on a permanent basis in the late autumn 2010. A numeracy coordinator and three new staff took up their posts in September 2010.

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

1

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. In less than two terms, the senior management team has raised expectations and attainment, enhanced pupils' progress, eliminated inadequate teaching, improved behaviour and attendance and established a positive relationship with parents and carers.

Attainment for individuals and groups is above the national average and pupils make good progress. The 2010 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments were completed before the change of leadership was secured. The new headteacher introduced a robust assessment programme across the school. During the previous monitoring visit and as part of this inspection, HMI scrutinised the pupils' work in each year group and found the school's assessment data base to be accurate and up to date. Pupils in all year groups are making good progress as a direct result of the improvements in teaching and learning made since the beginning of June 2010. The scrutiny of work produced clear evidence of very significant progress, with almost all pupils making twice the expected progress in the autumn term. Overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good progress and some individuals are making exceptional progress. Equality of opportunity is outstanding; enhanced provision for vulnerable pupils and those who find learning difficult is helping them progress as well as their peers.

Inadequate teaching has been eliminated and the impact of effective teaching on the quality of learning is evident in the pupils' current work. Teaching is good overall, although a third was judged to be outstanding. When lessons were outstanding, teachers use of assessment information to closely match the task to pupils' learning needs and very clear guidance enables pupils to engage with the task and make good progress. Marking is consistently good and there are examples of outstanding practice where pupils are keen to show the teacher how they have improved after following the formative guidance in their books. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is outstanding: clear professional guidance and support have been a key element. The range of curriculum opportunities is good with effective subject-specific teaching evident in some recently introduced topics. However, there is room to enhance the range of topics and the key skills facilitated by this approach.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Excellent provision is particularly well-managed.

Behaviour is good; this is a reflection of the school's caring ethos and the value placed on positive pupil/staff relationships by the headteacher. Attendance is above average. The care, welfare and guidance provided are outstanding because of a strong team approach; new initiatives and staff training are helping to provide both nurture and challenge.

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However, partnership working with other local schools that could enhance the challenge provided for gifted and talented pupils is limited.

The governing body is satisfactory with experienced members able to support the senior staff as the 'critical friend'. Members recognise that more could be done to further partnerships with other schools and the school's community cohesion.

At the time of the last inspection, parents and carers were critical of the lack of communication and the decline they perceived in progress of older pupils. HMI met with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day. All were positive about the improvements made since September 2010 and they were pleased with the level of communication now available. One typical comment summarised the views of many parents and carers, noting: 'Teaching is good, my child is happy, safe and loves coming to school.'

The current leadership team has done outstandingly well to secure the substantial improvements in pupils' progress, teaching, the Early Years Foundation Stage, equality of provision and attendance. It is difficult to say what more could have been achieved by the current senior staff in such a short time frame; capacity to improve is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to sustain the standards and rate of pupil progress recently secured, the school should seek to extend the range of exciting topic work under development.
- Enhance the provision for the gifted and talented pupils the school is nurturing by seeking to enhance curriculum partnership working with other local schools.
- In order to stabilise the numbers on roll, the governing body should:
 - extend the on-site child care provision available to parents.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment on entry is broadly average and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress as a result of the high-quality, imaginative provision available. Transition to Year 1 is smooth and pupils continue to make good progress. The results of the 2010 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments confirm the above-average outcomes that have been secured for the last five years. The pupils' current work clearly indicates the positive impact of good teaching. All pupils have made above average progress since September 2010 and some individuals have made exceptional progress. The standard of the pupils' work is consistently above the levels to be expected for their age and ability. Vulnerable pupils have benefited significantly from outstanding equality of opportunity. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of well-targeted intervention and a good match of task to the pupils' learning needs. In lessons, all pupils make good progress and this is carefully monitored. Lesson outcomes are strongest where there is a clear focus on what the pupils are expected to learn and pupils respond very well to this challenge. Enjoyment and achievement are good, with strengths evident in individual achievement, enhanced pupils' progress, improved attendance and good behaviour.

HMI found the pupils to be very positive on feeling safe and observed excellent relationships between staff and pupils to support this view. A good range of healthy school

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meals is available and popular with pupils and the proportion of pupils engaged in after school sport is rising. The pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is good overall, with older pupils providing 'buddy' support to the younger pupils and helping with charitable contributions. Overall, the range of skills the pupils develop towards their future economic well-being is good.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have responded well to a range of cultural opportunities. The moral and social maturity displayed by the pupils during this inspection is a testimony to the school's high expectations and outstanding pastoral care.

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	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	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	2
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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good and has developed rapidly in the last two terms. No inadequate teaching was seen. Three outstanding lessons were observed. In a Year 4 numeracy lesson, tasks were very well planned to match the different learning needs of the pupils. Questioning was skilful and learning was driven forward at a brisk pace with precise instruction. In an excellently planned Year 1 numeracy lesson, pupils were learning to handle data and record the information graphically. The teacher's consistent pursuit of the higher-level response nurtured the children's thinking and sensitive classroom assistants maintained engagement and guided new learning. In a expertly managed Early Years Foundation Stage morning session, the teacher made very good use of the morning registration to

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develop the pupils' communication and numeracy skills. Marking has become a real strength, with a consistent style and level of expectation. The use of assessment to enhance learning and teaching is outstanding. Senior staff monitor individual pupils' progress diligently and teachers use the high-quality information well to plan lessons pertinent to learning need.

The effective curriculum introduced in September provides a greater focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills within an imaginative topic-based approach. However, there is room to extend the range of both topics and the enquiries they could facilitate.

At the heart of the school's outstanding care, guidance and support provision are high expectations and a determined approach to equality of opportunity.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and her senior team have embedded ambition and driven improvement in outstanding fashion. The headteacher has high expectations of the effective classroom practice required. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by senior staff are accurate and have been at the heart of much of the progress made. A relentless focus on the quality of teaching has been the critical factor in the rise in achievement. As a result, pupils' progress is good and, in some instances, exceptional. The school's target-setting and tracking procedures are excellent. Attainment in Key Stage 2 is rising as teaching is focused towards challenging targets. Staff and the governing body go to considerable lengths to ensure equality of opportunity is outstanding.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory with a clear focus on school improvement. The governing body's role of liaising with other schools and the community is underdeveloped. Although links with parents and carers have improved significantly and the range of topic work introduced has a global dimension, community cohesion is satisfactory. The school's engagement with parents and carers is good and being enhanced by the daily efforts of all staff. Parents and carers report that communications from school are clear and effective. Safeguarding procedures are good. All the required procedures are in place and the headteacher monitors the implementation of the school's policies robustly. The school's single central record is a model of clarity.

The outstanding school improvement work developed by the headteacher and her senior team is a credit to all involved. Senior staff deploy resources effectively and the school provides good value for money.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The school's Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Imaginative provision and some outstanding teaching ensure children make good progress. Attainment on entry is broadly average and the school does well to enhance the pupils' communication, language and literacy skills. Effective assessment arrangements dovetail well with the Key Stage 1 assessment system and ensure a smooth transition to Year 1.

Lesson planning makes strong links between guided activities and particularly well-structured learning opportunities, so that the pupils' learning is spontaneous, enjoyable and creative. Expectations are high. Good use is made of the space available inside and outside the classroom. The children's oral skills are used effectively to explore phonics and discover new vocabulary. Emerging writing skills are nurtured in a variety of contexts.

The children behave well and relationships are very positive. Very strong leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage has produced outstanding provision. Good arrangements are in place to ensure children are safe and make a smooth transition to Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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Views of parents and carers

HMI took a number of opportunities to speak with parents and carers, all of whom were very pleased with the improvements secured in communication and provision.

Parental and carers' questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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.



3 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Edmundsbury CofE Voluntary Aided Primary, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3BJ

I wanted to write to you to say St Edmundsbury is now considered a good school. As some of you will remember I have been visiting your school since September of last year. This was because inspectors felt the school needed the support of some special measures. I am writing to you to say how pleased I am with the progress I have seen since Mrs Lundy and Mrs Jones took over the leadership of your school.

It was a pleasure to see how well you are making progress, the care and attention you put into your work and how well your school looks after you. Behaviour is good and I could see how happy you were as you came into school in the morning.

I have asked the headteacher and the governing body to do the following:

- extend the range of exciting topic work you do
- develop partnerships with other local schools to help when you move school
- extend the child-care provision at your school to help your parents and carers.

I have really enjoyed visiting your school and it has been a real pleasure to meet all of you. I look forward to hearing of your future successes.

Yours sincerely

David Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

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