

Hopton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121098
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358928
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Cheryl Thompson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Shelley
Headteacher	Christabelle Whiteley-Tye (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventeen lessons were observed involving all teachers present during the inspection. Meetings were held with staff, governors and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school evaluation documents, data on pupils' progress, external monitoring reports and development planning. Responses from 83 parental questionnaires were analysed. The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

How effective the teaching is for girls, especially in mathematics.

- How effective the monitoring of the school's work is in providing a precise understanding of strengths and areas to improve.
- What the school has done to make sure pupils feel safe in school.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school serving the local area. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school at times other than normal is a little higher than average. Since September 2007 it has grown from a first school where pupils left at the end of Year 4 to an all through primary. This change has meant that, since the last inspection, there has been a gradual increase in numbers of pupils and staff as well as a programme of building and refurbishment work.

Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average although the proportion of pupils with statements of educational need is high. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils are taught in single year group classes including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage who are taught in the Reception class.

There has been a high turnover of headteachers, seven in the past nine years, all of whom have been new to the role of headteacher. The school is again without a permanent headteacher. Since January 2011, the school is being led by an acting headteacher who is usually the deputy headteacher of the school.

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

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. While progress is satisfactory overall it is stronger in Reception and Key Stage 1. Progress slows for some older pupils because of inconsistencies in teaching. There has not been enough regular and rigorous monitoring by senior staff to ensure teachers are helped to improve their practice.

Behaviour is good. Pupils have well-developed social skills and good manners. They enjoy taking on responsibilities around the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves fit, healthy and safe.

Teaching is satisfactory. Relationships in all classes are excellent and pupils are very keen to work hard. There is considerable variation in the quality of teaching. For younger pupils it is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. In the older year groups, little use is made of links between curriculum subjects to make learning exciting. Teaching in these year groups does not always use knowledge gained from assessment to pitch lessons at a level to challenge pupils sufficiently, especially the more able. Introductions to lessons are sometimes too long so that pupils do not have enough time to complete their work. Pupils' work is marked but there is inconsistency in the usefulness of this marking in helping pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

Pupils receive good care, guidance and support. Good systems identify vulnerable groups or individuals. Pupils are known well and any unhappiness or uncharacteristic behaviour is noted quickly and support provided promptly. Pupils who have the highest level of special educational need and/or disability also receive good care and support for their personal development. These pupils have good self-esteem and make satisfactory progress because work and support are planned jointly with outside agencies to match their needs. Parents and carers are fully informed and as involved as possible in their child's work and progress.

The capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Leadership and management of the current senior team are satisfactory. The acting headteacher has the confidence and support of staff, pupils and parents. This senior team have had limited opportunities to develop their skills in monitoring teaching but are adept at analysing data to check on pupils' progress. They provide good role models with their teaching and are keen to support and challenge their colleagues.

The governing body are very supportive of the school and put great emphasis on pupils' safety and well-being. They recognise the need to be more rigorous in checking to ensure that agreed procedures are followed. They know they need more training on how to interpret data provided about the school so that they can question and challenge from a more informed base.

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Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to a consistently good level in order to increase progress and raise attainment further by:
 - planning to ensure pupils are challenged at an appropriate level in lesson introductions
 - making more precise use of assessment to pitch lessons at the right level to challenge more able pupils
 - making sure there is a suitable balance between teacher talk and time for pupils to work
 - monitoring lessons rigorously with a greater focus on pupils' learning and progress.
 - Improve leaders' and managers' skills so that school self-evaluation is more precise and provides an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas to improve by:
 - providing leaders and managers at all levels with training and time to enable them to fulfil their monitoring roles rigorously and regularly
 - increasing the governing body's awareness of strengths and areas to develop so that they can hold the school to account for improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

From broadly average starting points, pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory as they move through the school. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Data indicates that progress of boys and girls is similar in reading, writing and mathematics. More able and gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress, but a few are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons so they achieve at the highest levels. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory academic progress as a whole and strong support has made a particular difference to some individuals, resulting in them being able to manage their own behaviour and having a confident approach to learning.

Pupils are very keen to learn, especially when lessons are inspiring. Even where teaching is less effective, pupils remain well behaved. During the inspection, in an outstanding lesson for Year 2, pupils could not wait to close the visors on their helmets and gallop their horses to a tree to collect the latest scroll from Sir Questalot. Although they found understanding how shapes fit together challenging, they persevered so that they could 'tile' the castle floor as the knight had requested.

In the past, evidence shows that pupils have had more involvement in their own and local community. These opportunities have diminished. Pupils say they like school and demonstrate this with satisfactory attendance. As one pupil said, 'I think this is a great school and all the teachers are nice'. They show a good level of respect for one another's opinions and work very well in groups. Older pupils take pride in being members of the

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school council. They know their opinions are valued and believe that they can make a difference to the school. They have a satisfactory understanding of their personal targets and what they have to do to improve further. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and how exercise is good for you. They are also well informed about how to stay safe.

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	3
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	3

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?

Key strengths across the school are the excellent relationships in classes and pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to reinforce learning. In outstanding and good lessons, there is a high level of challenge and productive balance between teachers talking and giving pupils time to work. These lessons move at a brisk pace. More typically, particularly in older classes, the pace is slower and on occasions pupils sit for too long listening to lesson introductions. Teachers are beginning to use precise assessment to plan future lessons but on occasions these lack challenge, especially for more able pupils. In the best lessons, teachers frequently check their pupils' understanding and adjust questions or work accordingly.

The curriculum for Year 1 and 2 is exciting because teachers provide memorable experiences and weave subjects together, such as history and writing. For the older pupils, the curriculum meets requirements but subjects are taught mostly

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- in isolation. The programme for personal social, citizenship and health has a good impact on pupils' good understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Sports partnerships and the willingness of staff to run a good range of after school activities have a significant impact on pupils' enthusiasm for sport and practical activities such as gardening.

The school has good systems for identifying and catering for any potentially vulnerable pupils, so that any difficulties or unhappiness are noted quickly and remedial action taken. Strong links with specialist advisers are effective in ensuring pupils have the right equipment and/or work programme to help them at school. These links also help staff develop their knowledge of specific methods to help pupils with a high level of need. As a result, these pupils have increased confidence in their own learning. Transition arrangements for children starting and leaving school are good and appreciated by parents and pupils.

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 acting headteacher and governing body successfully promote a welcoming and inclusive school where pupils develop as responsible young people and feel safe. The school's links with parents and carers are productive, especially in supporting pupils who need extra help and there are suitable opportunities for them to talk to teachers about their child's progress.

The succession of headteachers new to the role has hindered the school's steady improvement. Over time, a pattern of improvement in some areas of the school's work and decline in others is evident. For example, pupils' contribution to their school and local community was at one time clearly a strong feature but currently it is not. Since the last inspection, reasonable progress is evident in analysing pupils' progress. However, little progress has been made in skilling up senior leaders to enable them to initiate and evaluate development. This lack of progress is particularly noticeable in information and communication technology where no progress is evident for at least one year. Little has been done to iron out inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and develop individual teachers' talents. However, the acting headteacher and senior team have quickly identified what needs to be done and now have the authority to take action.

Current school development planning is not based on secure self-evaluation. For example, an area for improvement is identified as writing. School data indicates that standards in writing are currently above average, especially in Year 2. The school has precise data

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regarding all groups', classes' and individuals' progress but is not making the best use of this in their school development planning to set easily measurable success criteria.

Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily and particularly well for pupils identified as having autistic spectrum disorder. Safeguarding procedures are good, updated regularly and known by all. The school satisfactorily promotes community cohesion, this is stronger within its own and local community than in the United Kingdom and globally. While the school recognises this, it yet to identify how this is to be done.

Governance is satisfactory. The governing body are well aware of the difficulties caused by the high turnover of headteachers. They have been proactive in managing the school's budget in order to appoint a deputy headteacher, in September 2010, to provide stability within the management. However, procedures to question or challenge the school to do even better are not embedded.

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
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception class provides a secure and welcoming environment so children settle quickly and happily into school. Relationships are excellent. Staff look after children with great care and attention and children feel safe.

Children's skills are broadly those typically found when they enter the school, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress across all the areas of learning so that by the end of their Reception year, children's attainment exceeds the national Early Learning Goals. They soon develop very positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Children work very well independently and in groups, happily initiating conversations with adults about what they are doing. These qualities, together with the

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secure progress they make in learning letter sounds, prepare them well for their start in Year 1.

Teaching is good and children love learning because they are provided with a good range of opportunities to explore and discover for themselves. For example, children thoroughly enjoyed tracking down dinosaurs' footprints around the classroom and recording the ones they could identify. Adults work well together and make careful observations of what children can do, planning work that is matched closely to their interests and learning needs. There is a good balance between activities directed by adults and those chosen by children. The development of language skills and extending vocabulary is given a high priority. The accomplished teaching of letter sounds and how to use these to read and spell is leading to good progress in these areas. Parents are welcomed warmly into school. They are helped and encouraged to contribute to their children's learning. Links with pre-schools and home visits are good in ensuring a smooth start to school.

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

Views of parents and carers

Just over two fifths of parents and carers returned the questionnaire and almost all agreed that they are happy with their child's experience at the school. A small number of parents and carers raised two main concerns: that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and that the school does not take account of concerns and suggestions. These concerns were followed up during the inspection. Discussions with pupils indicated that they are very confident that staff will 'sort out' any poor behaviour and that very recent playground rules have curbed the over-boisterous behaviour at playtimes. Teachers and the acting headteacher make themselves available to parents at the start and end of school days so that any concerns or suggestions can be promptly dealt with.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hopton Church of England 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 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 188 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	59	28	34	3	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	56	67	26	31	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	39	44	53	7	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	45	41	49	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	52	39	47	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	48	38	46	4	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	57	29	35	5	6	1	1
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)	36	43	40	48	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	52	37	45	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	36	42	51	4	5	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	34	46	55	3	4	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	38	46	40	48	1	1	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	58	31	37	2	2	1	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



24 January 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Hopton Church of England Primary School, Great Yarmouth, NR31 9BT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your thoughts and ideas about it. This helped us to make our judgements about your school, which is providing you with a satisfactory education. These are the things we liked best:

- you all enjoy school and feel happy and safe
- your progress in years 3 to 6 is satisfactory but good in Reception and in Years 1 and 2
- your behaviour is good and you work and play together happily
- you are well looked after, particularly those of you who have particular needs

We think there are some key areas where the school can improve. We have asked your acting headteacher to:

- help you to make faster progress especially in Years 3 to 6
- make sure that teaching is always at least good
- work with senior teachers to check on the school's work more carefully, so they can decide what needs to be done to help you make better progress

You are positive about learning and we were impressed with your good manners and how welcoming you are to visitors. We hope you will keep this up!

Thank you again for your help and all good wishes for your continued success.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Thompson

Lead inspector

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