

Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121025
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358906
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Whymark
Headteacher	Joel Crawley (acting headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2008
School address	School Road Alburgh, Harleston IP20 0BW
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They made visits to seven lessons taught by four teachers. Inspectors met with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and members of staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school development plan, assessment records and safeguarding policies. They analysed completed questionnaires from staff and pupils, as well as 45 from parents and carers.

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

- To what extent does the teaching challenge the more-able pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2, to ensure they make enough progress?
- How effectively does the school ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported in Key Stage 1?
- How well do teachers in Key Stage 1 build on the knowledge and skills children have acquired in the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- To what extent does the governing body build and sustain the school's capacity to improve given the recent changes in headship?

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and serves a largely rural community in and around the villages of Alburgh and Denton. All pupils are White British. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is low in comparison to national norms. An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Though the number with a statement of special educational needs is very small, it is high as a percentage of the total school roll. A few pupils join or leave the school partway through their primary education. In some year groups, this mobility has been quite significant. For example, only one pupil in the current Year 6 has been in the school since the age of five and most have joined during Key Stage 2. Pupils are taught in mixed-age groups. The school has a number of awards including the Healthy Schools, Activemark and the Intermediate International Schools awards. Since the last inspection, the school has had a high turnover of headteachers. The current headteacher was appointed a year ago on a temporary basis to give the school a period of stability before making a substantive appointment later this year.

A pre-school shares the school site but was not inspected at the same time as 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School provides a good, well-rounded education for its pupils. There is a warm and positive atmosphere within which pupils feel safe. They enjoy school and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of activities provided. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils are mature, articulate and reflective youngsters who are well prepared for the next step in their education.

Pupils make good progress overall and achieve well. Their progress over the last year has accelerated and has been significant for many. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a good start to their education. Teachers build effectively on this in Year 1 to extend pupils' learning further. Pupils across the school have good oral skills and most discuss and explain their work capably. They successfully improve their standards of work in reading as they move through the school. The development of their writing skills is a little uneven, particularly lower down the school, because there are missed opportunities to practise and extend these in other subjects. Good attention this year to developing problem-solving skills is helping pupils to make increasingly good progress in mathematics.

Teaching is good and provides pupils with varied and interesting activities that engage them actively in their learning. The school has been focusing well on developing different tasks to meet the needs and abilities of different groups within the class. Occasionally, however, work is not tailored closely enough to the needs or prior attainment of some in the group, resulting in work being too easy or a little too hard for them. In the main, though, able pupils are challenged well and lower attainers supported effectively. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because the school not only ensures effective support in lessons but also provides sharply focused sessions in literacy and numeracy for small groups. Teachers mark books frequently and provide encouraging feedback. However, their written comments do not always give clear enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Pupils are, therefore, unsure about the next steps they need to take to make their work better.

The school is led and managed well. The governing body provides a good strategic lead. Given the past issues of headship, governors have set a clear direction for development. This has included developing their own roles in monitoring the school's work and working closely with senior staff to set priorities. The leadership roles of other senior and middle leaders have been developed so that they contribute increasingly effectively to school improvement. The net result is a successfully embedded and shared vision for the future, and a team approach to tackling priorities. The acting headteacher promotes and manages this collaborative approach well. Good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and tracking pupils' progress are now in place. Senior staff and the governing body have an accurate picture of how good the school is because they now have clear and

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well analysed information based on effective monitoring of the school's work and accurate assessment of pupils' progress. The school has the capacity to improve further as a result.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards further in English by developing the use of writing in subjects across the curriculum so that this:
 - enables pupils to have more opportunities to practise spelling and grammar
 - helps pupils to practise different types of writing and for different audiences
 - builds on pupils' learning in English lessons to extend their understanding of writing structures such as sentences and paragraphing.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - providing work for pupils which is closely matched to their needs and abilities in all lessons so that it extends more-able pupils' thinking and ensures lower attainers do not find it too hard
 - giving pupils clear guidance in written comments on how to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children begin school with a wide range of skills and knowledge. The overall attainment on entry varies from year to year but tends to be below age-related expectations. Children's social, physical and speaking skills tend to be reasonably well developed when they begin, but early reading, writing and numeracy skills are often low. By the end of Year 6, attainment is usually in line with national averages and sometimes above. Attainment in the current Year 6 is broadly average in English and mathematics. There are signs of rising standards, and pupils in Years 4 and 5 are on track to attain higher standards. Those who join after the start of Reception settle in quickly and achieve well from their starting points.

Pupils make good progress in developing skills in using the four rules of number and are keen to investigate mathematical and scientific problems. Their writing develops reasonably well during English lessons, though some younger pupils take a while to develop correct spelling and punctuation, and the confidence to write at length. Older pupils do not always show the same level of organisation in their written work in other subjects as they do in English. Pupils' information and communication technology skills develop well because of the frequent use of computers in lessons.

Pupils' good application to work and high levels of concentration characterise most lessons. They enjoy learning and throw themselves enthusiastically into their work. In a mathematics lesson, pupils in Years 1 and 2 worked with interest in pairs and small groups to identify objects in the school playground that were, for example, spherical, cuboid or cylindrical. As pupils worked, they discussed how the three-dimensional shapes differed from two-dimensional ones. In so doing, they acquired and consolidated new vocabulary and clarified key ideas about, for example, how a circle might be different from a sphere. In the large majority of lessons, pupils demonstrated good listening skills and the curiosity to ask questions.

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Pupils behave well, often outstandingly well, and attend regularly. Older ones look out for younger pupils and this helps to create a strong sense of community. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives and are particularly keen on physical and sporting activities. They contribute to the school and wider community in many ways including raising funds for good causes and promoting eco-friendly practices. Pupils' social skills are exceptionally good and they are proficient in debating moral issues. Through art, music and literature, pupils develop a good sense of their own culture and are developing satisfactory understanding of other cultures and religions represented in Britain today. They enjoy learning Spanish and are interested in the traditions and values of those from different backgrounds to their own.

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	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?

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding and most is at least good. Teachers identify clearly to pupils what they expect them to learn. Questioning effectively checks what pupils know as well as extending their thinking and ideas. Tasks are usually engaging and well structured to enable pupils to work independently. However, sometimes these tasks do not challenge the more able to extend their thinking far enough. Very occasionally, work is a little too difficult for lower attainers working on their own. Teaching assistants, when present, provide good support. They question pupils well and make sure, when they are supporting low attainers or those with special educational needs and/or

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disabilities, that these pupils keep up with the rest of the class. Teachers provide effective and on-going oral feedback to pupils on how well they are working. Pupils are also given targets for English and mathematics based on assessment of their work. However, written feedback does not consistently inform pupils of the next steps in their learning. Hence, they are not always sure of how to improve their work or meet their targets.

Curricular provision is good. Pupils are taught drama, Spanish and philosophy in addition to the National Curriculum. The English and mathematics curricula are well planned taking into account mixed-age classes. There is good emphasis on experimental and investigative work in mathematics and science. However, the use of writing in other subjects to improve pupils' spelling and grammar, including how to structure sentences and paragraphs, and to practise writing for different purposes and audiences is underdeveloped. The curriculum is enhanced well by visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Pupils have had some excellent opportunities to work with prominent authors and artists and this has generated strong interest in reading and creative work in art.

Pupils are well looked after. Transition arrangements to Reception and from the school to local high schools have recently strengthened and are now good. The school works effectively to ensure good attendance and punctuality. The school knows its pupils and their families well. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are given good support, and links with other agencies and professionals are used well to support pupils and their families.

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 partnership approach to leadership, where the governing body works in close collaboration with the headteacher to monitor and oversee the effectiveness of the school's work, is working well. This, combined with greater involvement of other staff in leading the school, ensures that developments to improve the school can be sustained in the future. Delegated responsibilities are clearly defined and managed well by the headteacher. Other senior and middle leaders are increasingly involved in monitoring work in their areas of responsibility with good results. For example, the English and mathematics coordinators have used the information from their monitoring earlier in the year to systematically identify and address issues. As a result, provision in English and mathematics has improved and pupils are making better progress than previously. Staff have received good training and support for their roles, especially in assessing pupils' progress. As a result, assessment is now accurate and the information is used increasingly well to inform future planning and curricular development. A review of support for pupils

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with special educational needs and/or disabilities has similarly resulted in a more robust and systematic approach to addressing identified needs. Overall, good attention is paid to equal opportunities and the school checks carefully how well different groups are performing. Any differences are small and, with the clear and transparent system for tracking progress, quickly identified by staff.

The governing body ensures pupils are safe. Robust systems are in place and all adults in the school, including volunteers and members of the governing body, are checked carefully for their suitability.

The school is a strong cohesive community. Links with the local community are well developed. The school has extensive links with schools in other countries and these help to promote pupils' understanding of other cultures. It is extending links with other schools in Britain to provide pupils with more first-hand opportunities to interact with those from different ethnic, religious and social backgrounds.

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 make good progress in Reception and improve their knowledge and skills well across all areas of learning. They settle in quickly and enjoy their time in school. Good attention is paid to developing children's personal and social skills, and they adjust well to the routines and conventions of the classroom. Children learn to get on well with one another, to share resources and to work together on tasks and activities. They listen intently during whole-class sessions and offer opinions and views readily during discussion. Tasks are well structured and a wide range of interesting activities is planned for them both indoors and outside. Children enjoyed working outside with pupils in Years 1 and 2 making houses for the three little pigs from wooden sticks, straw or small construction bricks. They learned the importance of making the house waterproof, strong enough to

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withstand the wind and large enough to fit into. The school is developing the outside area to make it more stimulating.

Children have good opportunities for role play and to work independently including on computers. Adults question children well and this helps to extend their thinking, particularly for the more able. Occasionally, however, opportunities are missed to provide more challenging tasks for these children. There is good support for those who find work more difficult. Children are looked after well and links with parents and carers are firmly established through home visits when children start. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Assessment of children's progress is accurate and frequent, so that staff have a clear idea of how well children are doing. This information informs future planning and priority setting.

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

A higher than usual proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Their views are very positive and this is reflected in the many complimentary written comments. All who responded agree that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and taught how to lead a healthy life. Parents and carers are particularly pleased with the information they receive about their children's progress and nearly all are happy with their children's experience at the school. A very small number are concerned about their children's progress, how well the school meets their children's particular needs or how well poor behaviour is managed. The inspection evidence indicates that progress is good overall though there are instances when work is not tightly matched to individual needs and there is some unevenness in pupils' progress in writing. No poor behaviour was observed and pupils are adamant that behaviour in the school is good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alburgh with Denton 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 67 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	67	15	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	84	7	16	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	49	23	51	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	47	17	38	7	16	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	53	16	36	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	49	20	44	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	56	20	44	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)	22	49	21	47	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	44	18	40	7	16	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	58	13	29	6	13	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	58	17	38	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	69	12	27	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	58	18	40	1	2	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



30 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School,
Harleston, IP20 0BW**

Thank you for giving us such a friendly welcome when we visited your school recently and for sharing your views with us. Your school provides you with a good education that helps you to make good progress. Children get a good start in Reception. You have regular opportunities to work on computers and to do practical work in science, which you enjoy. You also told us how much you enjoy Spanish and the frequent visits out and visitors to the school.

Your very positive attitudes to learning were obvious when we visited lessons. We also noticed how well you worked with one another sharing ideas and resources. Staff take good care of you and you told us how well older children look after younger ones. This makes you feel safe at school. We agree with you that behaviour is good. A great many of you take part in physical activities after school.

Adults support you well in lessons and teachers keep a close eye on how well you are doing. They ask questions that make you think and give you interesting tasks and activities. Staff and the governing body are keen to make the school even better than it is. To help them do this, we have asked them to:

- improve the teaching even more so that all of it is good or better by making sure that the work you are given is never too easy or too hard
- make sure that teachers tell you, when they mark your work, exactly what you need to do to improve it
- help you to improve your writing skills by using these in other subjects.

To help your school improve, continue to do your best work at all times and check with your teachers on how you can make your work better. We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gulshanbir Kayembe

Lead inspector

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