

Cockfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124694
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359748
Inspection dates	30 June 2011–1 July 2011
Reporting inspector	June Woolhouse

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	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	56
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Carter
Headteacher	Eunice Francis
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who visited six lessons and observed all four teachers. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, representatives of the governing body and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at: the school development plan; safeguarding documents; school policies; school assessment information; pupils' work in their exercise books; and displays. They analysed information from 37 parent and carer questionnaires in addition to those from staff and pupils.

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

- How effective is teaching in mixed-aged classes and are pupils making sufficient progress, especially in Key Stage 2?
- Is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage effectively promoting children's learning and how accurate are evaluations of their progress?
- Is governance sufficiently robust so that the school is challenged and supported in tackling weaknesses?
- To what extent do all staff understand assessment information and use it to inform what is taught next to ensure that pupils make enough progress in all year groups?

Information about the school

Cockfield is a smaller-than-average primary school set in a small rural community in Suffolk. It serves the local villages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Their needs include specific learning difficulties and emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and no pupil speaks English as an additional language. The school holds the Eco-school and Healthy Schools awards. In line with local authority reorganisation proposals, Cockfield will become a 4 to 11 years primary school in the near future. There is a privately run pre-school setting on the school site which has been inspected separately. There have been two long-term staff absences since 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This school provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. Its overall effectiveness has slipped since the last inspection but the new headteacher, who has been in post for six terms, has worked with great drive and determination to improve the provision. The school is a bright and attractive place to learn; since the last inspection, the Early Years Foundation Stage accommodation has been improved, especially the outside area. Good links with parents, carers and other agencies contribute well to pupils' well-being and personal development. A relatively new governing body is discharging its responsibilities satisfactorily. The school, through the timely action of the headteacher, has secured the services of a very experienced chairperson from a nearby school. Safeguarding procedures are good and regularly monitored by the governing body. In addition, close links with the village community, including sharing a well-appointed hall and working with the pre-school, mean the school has a solid basis and satisfactory capacity for improving further. Most parents and carers are happy with their children's experiences at Cockfield. Almost all pupils enjoy school and say that they are well cared for by adults. They all think the school helps them to be healthy and to feel very safe. They say that the headteacher and staff do a good job. They do, indeed, benefit from good care, guidance and support systems. This is reflected in their consistently good behaviour, above average attendance, and the respectful and considerate way they treat each other.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' progress is satisfactory and by the time they leave school in Year 4, attainment is in line with what is expected for their age. Pupils' attainment and progress vary from year to year and some instability in teaching in the Key Stage 2 class has had a detrimental effect on learning, slowing down overall progress. Some assessments have been over-generous and do not always reflect the work in pupils' books, especially in the quality and range of writing, presentation, regular marking or the application of numeracy skills to solve problems. Children in the Reception Year learn with pupils in Year 1 and both groups achieve at the expected levels. However, the younger children do not always have the opportunity to exploit independently a range of experiences across all the six areas of learning.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and there were examples of good teaching during the inspection. This range in teaching quality corresponds to the school's own evaluations. The headteacher, assisted by good local authority support, monitors teaching and learning systematically to track pupils' progress and to intervene when it is insufficient. A proportion of lessons is still not effective enough to promote good learning and progress. Recent disruptions to teaching mean that lessons are not always planned well enough to match the range of needs in the school's mixed-aged classes. The curriculum is well planned and pupils enjoy the creative and thematic approach to their lessons, especially through visits and after-school clubs. The strengths in art and design, modern foreign

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languages, personal, social and health education and physical education are shown in the quality of work on display and the sports awards gained by pupils.

Staff are beginning to take on management responsibilities, for example for special educational needs and subject leadership. Good systems to track pupils' attainment and progress are developing well but not all staff are using the information to plan for the wider ability range in mixed-aged classes or to set realistic but challenging targets related to national expectations.

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?

- Raise attainment and improve the rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - increasing significantly the proportion of teaching that is good
 - improving short-term planning so that learning activities challenge the wide range of ages and abilities in each class
 - increase teachers' understanding and application of information from information to identify gaps in learning and to set more realistic targets for individuals and groups
 - improving the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' performance in all classes through using national guidance.
- Extend the role of teachers in leading and managing aspects of the school's work in special educational needs and in National Curriculum subject or topics by:
 - involving teachers in the analysis of data that informs them about pupils' attainment and rates of progress
 - establishing a programme of monitoring and evaluating pupils' performance in all curriculum subjects or topics.
- Improve the organisation of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision by:
 - setting up tasks and activities that enable children to explore independently all six areas of learning
- prepare outdoor learning to reflect what is going on indoors across all six areas of learning
 - maximise the use of playground space so that children can develop their physical skills when they choose to do so.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with what is expected of pupils in Years 3 and 4 but progress is less than expected based on pupils' achievements at the end of Key Stage 1. Work in books and pupils' responses in lessons confirm that some assessments within one year group are generous. This affects the accuracy in determining how much progress pupils make each year and the precision with which

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lessons are planned for the range of ability in each class. The quality of presentation in exercise books varies and pupils do not always present well-formed handwriting or accurate spellings. Work remains unfinished and unmarked. Pupils do not write for a sufficiently wide range of purposes and there is little evidence of enough extended writing in Key Stage 2. In mathematics, pupils complete work sheets regularly but do not engage in enough problem-solving activities or investigations using their numeracy skills. In one mathematics lesson, younger pupils worked well together to identify the properties of plane and solid shapes, and made good progress. They used their knowledge well and applied it to begin designing a castle following their recent visit to Colchester. Older pupils worked well together to plan how they would complete a recount of a text, but made insufficient progress in the time available because they were not required to start drafting their ideas in the lesson. Pupils behave and cooperate well in groups. Their enjoyment of practical activities shows in high-quality art work, model making and crafts. Their oracy skills are well developed and they can express their ideas better in words than in writing.

Pupils contribute enthusiastically to charity events and behave responsibly as monitors or playground friends. They plan and deliver assemblies, engage in charitable activities and have links with a school in Ethiopia, all of which contribute effectively to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. While attendance is good, a small number of pupils occasionally arrive late for the start of the school day.

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	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	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

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How effective is the provision?

Teaching overall is satisfactory but the quality is inconsistent. There is not enough good teaching to accelerate pupils' progress and to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding, especially in English and mathematics, by the time they leave school in Year 4. Curriculum planning has improved and promotes a good thematic approach, linking subjects in topics that make more sense to learners. At present, some lesson planning and teaching lack coherence, especially when there are changes in staffing. Information from assessment is not sufficiently accurate to pitch lessons at the right level and progress slows. Not all pupils are given enough guidance about what they need to improve although there are class targets displayed in classrooms as a general reminder. Teaching assistants support individuals and small groups effectively and these pupils catch up with their class mates.

The recent improvements to the curriculum, including enrichment activities and school visits related to topics, are working well. These practical activities motivate pupils and they achieve more because they are interested in following up their own enquiries. This was the case when pupils followed up the questions they had posed before their visit to Colchester Castle. It was also evident in the productive and cooperative way they worked in groups on their return.

Care, guidance and support are strengths of the school. Pupils are well known to adults, individual needs are quickly assessed and relevant support brought into school to help them. Staff are trained to manage vulnerable pupils and the special educational needs coordinator is engaged in further study to increase the school's expertise. Pupils say they feel very safe and their parents and carers agree. There are good induction procedures, especially for the youngest children who are already familiar with school routines from their time at the pre-school setting. Pupils leaving for the middle school are supported well and given individual support if necessary. Attendance and punctuality are rigorously managed. There are good links with a range of specialist agencies and partnerships, providing further support for pupils and their families. School policies for child protection and safeguarding are in place and staff receive regular training.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are satisfactory in all respects. The headteacher has set a clear direction for school improvement and is ambitious in her plans to implement necessary changes so that this will happen. There is a clear school development plan,

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strengthened by termly action plans which focus on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy. These are relatively new and have not had sufficient impact or time to affect pupils' rates of progress. Teachers are becoming more involved in monitoring teaching and pupils' progress but at present they rely too much on the analysis of the headteacher. The governing body, half of which is new, is fully aware of its responsibilities. It is ready to work with the headteacher to consolidate the areas that have improved and also to challenge the school to ensure pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Safeguarding procedures are good: they are monitored regularly by a dedicated and experienced governor. The governing body is about to update its training to include safer recruitment requirements. This is an inclusive school where all pupils are given equal opportunities to thrive and succeed, and the increasingly effective tracking system means that individual pupils are quickly identified and get extra support when required. Community cohesion is promoted well in school and this shows in the harmonious atmosphere and good behaviour. There are good links with the local community and plans are in place to exchange information with an ethnically diverse school further afield. The pupils are already involved at a global level through their work with an African school.

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	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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides children with a satisfactory start to their schooling. Children enter the Reception class with skills and experiences similar to those expected for their ages. They make satisfactory progress and achieve levels in line with national averages by the end of the year. Some younger Year 1 pupils are also in this class and a range of activities, planned across the six areas of learning, is shared with them. This benefits both groups of children and those in the Reception group have examples of good social behaviour to follow. The Reception children settle quickly because of effective transition arrangements and many have attended pre-school settings. They learn and play

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well in improved accommodation with space outside to continue what they are doing indoors, if they so choose. At present, this area is not sufficiently well-prepared and linked to indoor learning opportunities. Not all areas of learning are readily available for exploration and investigation, for example, there are few materials to develop reading and mark making, mathematical materials or interesting objects connected to their topics. Children concentrate well on adult-directed tasks, for example when they used paint to produce representations of Colchester Castle which they had visited the day before. They have fewer opportunities for extended play in self-chosen activities because of the demands made on the adults by the Year 1 pupils.

Welfare, health and safety procedures are fully in place and routines are established at appropriate times throughout the day. Assessments are completed through direct observations and each child's progress is accurately recorded throughout the year. Individual needs are quickly identified and these children receive good support so that they make equal progress to their peers. Good links with parents, carers and other partners contribute well to the children's personal development and well-being. The headteacher coordinates the work of the setting and has been instrumental in improving the outdoor provision with good input from local authority personnel.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire was above average for a primary school and their views were mostly positive. Most parents and carers agree that their children enjoy school and felt that the school keeps their children safe. Inspectors investigated some individual concerns raised by a small number of parents and carers about how the changes to teachers in Key Stage 2 had disrupted and affected their children's progress. The headteacher and governing body are fully aware of the problem and are working together to resolve the present difficulties.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cockfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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 inspector received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 56 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	57	14	38	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	41	20	54	2	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	14	38	18	49	2	5	2	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	35	16	43	7	19	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	18	50	11	31	1	3	2	6
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	35	14	38	5	14	2	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	41	19	51	2	5	1	3
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)	12	32	14	38	3	8	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	41	13	35	7	19	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	38	18	49	3	8	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	32	17	46	4	11	4	11
The school is led and managed effectively	12	32	12	32	6	16	5	14
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	49	13	35	3	8	3	8

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	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.



4 July 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Cockfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Bury St Edmunds, IP30 0LA**

Thank you so much for helping us to inspect your school and making us feel welcome. We were impressed with how well you behave and the considerate way you treat each other. This makes your school a happy place to learn. We also thought you enjoyed many of your lessons, especially when you were making things or doing sports activities. At present your school is satisfactory. There are some things that are good and this shows in how well you get along together, how you behave in such a responsible way and how you have such good attendance rates. Please make sure that you do not arrive late for school in the morning. Perhaps you will have to set the alarm clock 15 minutes earlier!

We have asked your headteacher to make some improvements so that you will learn even more things and make more progress as you go through the school. We think you can improve how to write and present your work in English and mathematics. This will help prepare you for the harder work you will be asked to do when you are older. We have asked the teachers to make sure that lessons challenge everyone in class and that they mark your work in more detail so that you know how to improve. We have asked that the Reception class areas, both inside and outside, have lots of interesting activities that the younger children can investigate for themselves and that they can use some of the playground to ride bikes and play football.

We hope you enjoy the end of term experience and wish those who are leaving well in their new schools. You will soon settle and have a great time.

Good wishes to everyone.

Yours sincerely

June Woolhouse

Lead inspector

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