

Capel St Mary Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124749
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380972
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	256
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Marr
Headteacher	Darron Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2008
School address	The Street Capel St Mary Ipswich IP9 2EG
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who visited 23 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and carers, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, the analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, attendance records, school policies and procedures, school leaders' monitoring records, school planning and risk assessments. They also analysed the questionnaires received from 92 parents and carers.

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

- What has been impact of measures aimed at raising attainment and rates of progress?
- How effective is the school in identifying pupils' specific learning needs, particularly in catering for more-able pupils and those who need extra help with their learning?

Information about the school

This school is a little larger than average. Almost all of the pupils are White British. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, although there is an above average proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The headteacher was appointed in April 2010. The school has an ActiveMark and Sing Up Gold awards and Healthy Schools status. There is registered childcare provision on the site but this is independently managed and did not form part of this inspection.

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

2

Main findings

Capel St Mary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school has improved considerably over the past year or so. Children get off to a consistently good start in the Nursery and Reception Years, not least because the Early Years Foundation Stage is extremely well run, but they have not always been helped to capitalise enough on this in Years 1 to 6. As members of the governing body acknowledge, there have been periods since the last inspection when the school was coasting. Improvements to the curriculum over the past year have better engaged pupils so that they are well-motivated and work with enthusiasm. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving, as is the rate of pupils' progress. Senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's many strengths and of where further improvements are needed. The success of leaders and staff in moving the school forward show Capel St Mary's good capacity for continued improvement.

The school sums up its aims through the apt acronym: Care Achieve Persevere Enjoy Learn. The good quality of care is evident in the support given to pupils with special educational needs, many of whom make good progress to attain standards in line with those expected for their ages. It is also particularly evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where several parents and carers comment favourably on the support their children have been given. Typical was the account of a mother of a child just starting in Reception: 'His first day was very tearful, but teaching staff were brilliant and I felt confident leaving him. He settled very quickly and is very excited to be at school.'

Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in reading are consistently above average, but those in writing and mathematics have been more variable and are average overall. However, rates of progress are improving with the improvements in teaching. The use of assessment is also improving. Assessment is used well in some classes, both to adapt lesson planning to meet pupils' specific learning needs and to involve pupils in evaluating their own learning. However, this is not a consistent feature across the school. Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning mean that they usually listen well in lessons and persevere with their work. Increasingly, creative links made between subjects help to make the curriculum more relevant and exciting. It results in pupils who enjoy school and who show they want to learn and do well. Pupils are keen to play active roles in the school and wider community but they do not have enough opportunities to learn about other cultures and ways of life in the United Kingdom and wider world.

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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?

- By the end of the summer term 2012, further raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress in lessons by:
 - maintaining a brisk pace of learning and not allowing lengthy periods of passive listening to limit the opportunities for pupils to get on with writing and practical activities
 - always giving teaching assistants an active role during whole-class teaching
 - making more effective use of 'talk partners' to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.

- By the end of the spring term 2012, improve the effectiveness of assessment by:
 - using ongoing assessment information always to adapt lesson planning to take account of gaps identified in pupils' understanding
 - making sure that all pupils know and understand their individual targets and the next steps they need to take to move their learning on
 - consistently giving all pupils clear guidance through marking that shows them what they need to do to improve their work
 - giving pupils throughout the school the opportunity to routinely check their own and each other's work
 - ensuring that pupils have time to read and respond to the comments teachers make in their marking.

- By the start of the summer term 2012, extend opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and ways of life in the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment at the end of Year 6 is average. This represents satisfactory progress in relation to children's starting points when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage, but the rapid progress made in Nursery and Reception has not been consistently sustained in Key Stages 1 and 2. Boys and girls are now making good progress in an increasing proportion of lessons, helped by their good concentration and positive attitudes. Where progress slows, it is often because teachers' explanations or introductions go on for too long. This occurred, for example, in an otherwise very well-planned English lesson in Key Stage 1. Because pupils were expected to sit overlong on the carpet listening, rather than being allowed to get on with the

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practical activities planned for them, they began to get fidgety and restless. By contrast, pupils in a parallel class who were allowed to more quickly get on with writing and other tasks worked with enthusiasm and made more rapid progress.

Pupils greatly enjoy the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities within the school, for example as 'Green Rangers' policing the switching off of lights, 'Helping Hands' in Year 6, and as 'Fact Finder' librarians. Some bemoan the fact that they are only allowed to take on one key responsibility at a time. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and of the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise. They are also sensible about keeping a balance between conflicting pressures. As one Year 2 boy explained, 'I eat junk food sometimes but I make up for it with lots of sports.' Although some pupils miss out on valuable schooling because of family holidays in term time, attendance is good. Along with pupils' strong sense of community and teamwork, this prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

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	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	3

How effective is the provision?

Pupils are well-motivated because the curriculum is made interesting and exciting and because teachers develop good relationships with their classes. Activities are designed to stimulate pupils' imagination and provide them with memorable learning experiences. Year 4 pupils, for example, eagerly described the spouting volcanoes they had made last year. Many pupils take part in the good range of clubs and extra-

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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curricular activities on offer. The school’s strong musical tradition is reflected in its Sing Up Gold award. In addition to the two choirs, many pupils learn to play instruments.

Teachers routinely set out learning objectives and success criteria at the start of each lesson so that pupils know what they should be learning. There are examples of teachers making good use of ongoing assessment information to adapt their lessons to take account of gaps identified in pupils’ understanding from the lesson before. This is not established as a feature of teaching throughout the school, however. This can mean that, in some lessons, more-able pupils go over again details they already know, which slows their learning. There is variation too in the quality of marking: not all gives pupils a clear picture of what next steps they need to take to move their learning on, and not all pupils know and make use of their individual targets. Even where marking offers detailed guidance to pupils, its impact is limited when pupils are not given the time to read, reflect and respond to the teacher’s comments. Pupils do not all check their own or each other’s work, which means that they sometimes make avoidable spelling and punctuation errors.

Teachers frequently encourage pupils to share their thoughts and ideas with a ‘talk partner’. Often, however, pupils only repeat to the class what they have previously told their partner rather than what their partner has said to them. This limits the impact of ‘talk partner’ discussion on developing speaking and listening skills. Teaching assistants provide mostly well-planned, well-focused support for those in their charge, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is appreciated by parents and carers. As one wrote, ‘My son received a good deal of additional help with English and mathematics to help him attain the nationally expected level in both subjects.’ Teaching assistants’ skills are not always fully utilised during periods of whole-class teaching. Often, in lesson introductions and summary sessions at the end, teaching assistants are largely passive observers.

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?

In order to achieve a balanced budget, the headteacher has been very effective in leading the school through a difficult period which involved staff changes and redundancies. Notwithstanding, staff show a shared commitment to school improvement, as evidenced by the notably faster progress now being made in Key

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Stage 2. Some subject and year group leaders are relatively new to their current roles, and none have undertaken lesson observations to give them a full picture of teaching and learning within their subject or year groups. The school has correctly identified this as an area for development. Equal opportunities are promoted well. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are helped to attain standards in line with their peers, and there is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

The governing body is supportive. Its members visit regularly and report on what they see. They appreciate that, in the past, they have been too dependent on leaders for information on how well the school has performed. The school development plan gives a strategic overview of improvements planned over the next four years, but the governing body does not have a clear picture of the action needed over the immediate year ahead to equip it to check on progress and fully hold the school to account. It has ensured that arrangements for safeguarding meet regulatory requirements.

Although the school plays an active part within the local community, it has begun to develop meaningful links with schools in India as a way of broadening pupils' horizons. Pupils have relatively few opportunities to learn at first hand about life and different communities or faiths in other parts of the United Kingdom.

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	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	3
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

When they start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills, knowledge and abilities are in line with those expected for their age. Children make a good start to

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their education and, as a result, they leave the Reception Year with skills and capabilities that are above average. Staff are skilful in the way they encourage children to enjoy learning as they establish, from the very start of each year, an exciting learning environment. The children respond well and become very involved in their activities, often working and playing in close harmony. Children, for example, were purposefully engaged in designing and building an elaborate water pipe system to fill the 'swimming pool' others had built out of plastic blocks. They showed impressive maturity in the way they shared tasks in order to get the 'job' done.

Staff make detailed assessments of individual children's progress to ensure that activities are planned which are pertinent to the needs of each child. Because provision is extremely well run, a strong collaborative and self-evaluative ethos has been established with all staff. This is in the process of being extended to increasingly include the views of parents and carers, and the children themselves.

Staff know their children well and care about their welfare as well as their academic and social development. All health and safety checks are completed meticulously and daily risk assessments ensure the safety and well-being of the children throughout the day. Resources are well maintained and used very effectively. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision enables the children to grow and develop while enjoying their introduction to school life.

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	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers express mainly positive views about the school, although some would like more guidance on how best to help boost their children's learning. Not all share the view of the great majority of parents and carers that pupils' behaviour is managed well. However, inspectors saw consistently good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils told inspectors that any lapses in good behaviour are quickly sorted out.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Capel St Mary 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 inspection team received 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 256 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	46	42	46	5	5	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	44	48	46	51	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	27	30	62	68	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	33	50	55	10	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	32	58	64	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	30	33	51	56	6	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	40	50	55	3	3	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)	43	47	39	43	5	5	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	31	34	49	54	9	10	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	30	51	56	8	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	33	50	55	6	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	34	37	48	53	6	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	44	48	41	45	6	7	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



15 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Capel St Mary Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Ipswich, IP9 2EG

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit. We found that your school has come a very long way over the past year or so, but your headteacher knows that it still has a little further to go before you all make the consistently good progress that the children make in Tadpoles and Frogs. That is why we have judged the school as satisfactory. Whereas, in past years, pupils have left Year 6 doing less well than they should, you are now all making at least satisfactory progress and some of you are doing better than this, particularly those of you who need extra help with your learning.

It was good to see how well behaved you are and how well you get on with each other. You are keen to take on responsibilities within the school, and we were pleased to see you listening carefully and working hard in lessons. Although teaching is already much improved, we have suggested some further ways in which teachers can help you to make faster progress. We have also suggested improvements to the arrangements for assessment and marking your work. You can help with this by always carefully checking your work, taking time to read the comments teachers write when they mark your work and doing your best to follow their advice. It will also be helpful if all of you knew and referred to your individual targets and the 'next steps' you need to take to move your learning on.

One of the reasons so many of you enjoy school is because teachers take good care of you and make the subjects and topics you learn interesting and fun. We were as excited as you to see the alien space ship that landed in the Year 1 and 2 area, and so we were not surprised to see that it prompted you to work with such enthusiasm!

Thank you for being so helpful on our visit, and our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Selwyn Ward
Lead inspector

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