

Occold Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124601
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380930
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Judith Dawson

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Grange
Headteacher	Kevin Knights
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2009
School address	The Street Occold Eye IP23 7PL
Telephone number	01379 678330
Fax number	01379 678330
Email address	ad.occold.p@talk21.com

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	29–30 September 2011
Inspection number	380930

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who observed five lessons taught by four teachers. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and pupils and there were informal discussions with parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's plans for improvement, teachers' assessments and pupils' work, systems for ensuring their welfare and safety and teachers' planning. They also analysed 35 parental questionnaires.

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

- How effectively does the school use the information from the assessments of pupils' progress to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they can?
- Does the school have rigorous systems in place for monitoring the impact of actions taken to improve the school and the effectiveness of teaching and additional support for pupils?
- How well does the school meet the needs of the increased number of pupils and the different age groups and abilities in each class within the limited space available?

Information about the school

Although this school remains much smaller than most primary schools, the number on role has increased by almost 40 percent since the previous inspection. This means that more pupils than average join the school after the usual time of entry. Almost all pupils are White British and all have English as their main language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very small. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that in most primary schools. The school provides a breakfast club each morning. At the time of the last inspection, the school had just formed a federation with a local school, sharing its headteacher. This was disbanded after 18 months and the headteacher returned to his full-time commitment at Occold School. The school holds several awards including the middle level of the International Schools Award, and the Silver Eco award. It shares good practice locally in the teaching of French in primary schools.

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

This is a good school that puts pupils' welfare at the heart of all its work. There is a strong sense of community where new pupils are swiftly made welcome. Parents and carers are included and make a good contribution to the life of the school. During the time the school shared its headteacher with another school, there were several changes in staffing and some pupils, including the oldest, did not have the continuity of teaching they needed to continue to make good progress. However, this has now been fully addressed. Pupils now have targets for improvement based on accurate assessment of their progress. Pupils in Year 6 are already working at the levels normally expected at the end of their final year in school. The swift action by the governing body to dissolve the federation has returned the school to its well-deserved position as a good school in the heart of the community. The school's plans for improvement show that leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to improve. When evaluating these, just occasionally, too much emphasis is placed on actions taken rather than the impact they have had on pupils' learning. The improvements in attainment and pupils' progress and the governing body's effective actions, demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

Pupils behave outstandingly well, both in lessons and around the school. They are very considerate towards one another. They are concerned about the environment, as their Eco-award demonstrates, and strive to maintain healthy lifestyles. Older pupils, for example, lead the school to 'Wake and Shake' on the playground every morning. They feel safe in school, and feel confident to raise any concerns they may have. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding and a tribute to the high levels of pastoral guidance and support they receive. Pupils of all ages have high self-esteem, enabling them to be confident learners. Teaching is good throughout the school and teachers have risen to the challenge of additional numbers and meet the needs of the range of abilities in their mixed-age classes well. However, some pupils' targets, including those for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are not sharp or immediate enough. This makes it difficult for pupils to see clear improvement and to build rapidly on their successes. Monitoring of teaching and learning is not always systematic enough, resulting in some missed opportunities to share good practice and follow-up points for improvement. The curriculum is rich and interesting, with many visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Although all other aspects of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, the outside area for children has some shortcomings.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning in order to raise pupils' achievements further by:
 - ensuring plans for improvement are evaluated against their impact on pupils' learning
 - monitoring teaching and learning in each class regularly to share good practice and follow-up points for improvement.
 - making good use of the well-established assessment and long-term target-setting procedures to involve pupils in setting short-term, personal targets that motivate and challenge them.

- Improve the provision for outdoor learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with a range of abilities, but overall their knowledge and skills are broadly similar to those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, almost always attaining higher than average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. There has, in recent years, been significantly high attainment in mathematics throughout the school. A recent dip in attainment to just above average by Year 6 has been reversed and pupils throughout the school make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress, exceeding the rate of progress of similar pupils nationally. This is because the school's tracking ensures that additional, well-focused support is provided to meet their needs and they are encouraged to take a pride in their achievements.

All pupils work very hard in lessons, enjoy their learning and respond very well to their teachers' varied and well-planned lessons. In one lesson, for example, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 used their good knowledge of Roald Dahl's books to plan a story themselves. They were fascinated by the many draft plans the author produced before he started writing. Pupils' handwriting has improved since the last inspection and older pupils are beginning to evaluate how well they have achieved their tasks in lessons themselves.

Pupils excel in several aspects of their schooling. The quality of both instrumental music and singing is high. Throughout the school, pupils are gaining a good grounding in the French language, helped by regular exchange visits with a school near Calais. Their International Schools Award reflects this. The British Food Fortnight, being celebrated in school during the inspection, displayed their very good cooking skills. Pupils use their academic skills in a way that promotes their future economic well-being effectively. For example, they took care to cost, buy and price

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

the food they sold to parents and carers in order to make a profit for charity Their attendance is above average. Pupils make a good contribution to life in school and the village, recycling and composting materials and supporting many local events. Some are trained as playground leaders, providing organised games at lunchtime. Older pupils are very knowledgeable about the life, beliefs and cultures of people across the world. The many sporting activities, including weekly swimming lessons for the whole school, ensure they maintain healthy lifestyles. Pupils feel confident there is always someone in school among staff and their peers who they can confide in, and know that they are each valued and respected. Some feel they would like to have more responsibility in contributing to school development.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	1
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	1

How effective is the provision?

The school provides well for the pupils in its care. Teachers know their pupils well and ensure that they have the individual support and challenge they need to make good progress. Relationships are good and lessons are fun. Teachers are good at encouraging pupils to use their skills across the curriculum. Information and communication technology is used very effectively by teachers and pupils alike. Pupils are questioned effectively in lessons, both to evaluate understanding and to extend learning. Written advice in pupils’ books is both evaluative and helpful. Although pupils are encouraged to evaluate how well they have achieved the lesson objectives, they are not often helped to set their own targets for improvement based on knowledge of their performance overall. Teachers make good use of their expertise by providing specialist teaching to all pupils in French, music, swimming

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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

and science. Teaching assistants provide valuable additional support when needed.

Teachers are also good at using the environment, local facilities and other agencies to enrich pupils’ experiences. Parents and carers make a significant contribution to this, supporting in school and on visits. The well-organised breakfast club provides a good start to the day for the pupils who attend.

Pupils are extremely well-cared for and procedures for ensuring their safety are extremely rigorous. All staff have up-to-date training in child protection and first aid. The environment is made as safe as possible and pupils are taught how to make sure they keep themselves and others safe. Teachers are skilled in helping pupils to develop self-esteem, confidence, high aspirations and empathy for others. High expectations of pupils’ attitudes and personal responsibility make a significant contribution to the harmonious environment and pupils’ outstanding behaviour. The school is committed to maintaining a very strong bond between school and home and most parents and carers are regular visitors to school. Any concerns, either at school or from home, are shared and acted upon so that the school ensures pupils’ well-being is at the heart of its work. External professionals are used very effectively to provide specialist support when needed.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher knows that teaching is effective, that pupils are enjoying school and that they are learning well. Plans to establish secure systems for monitoring pupils’ progress have been achieved successfully. The overriding achievement of the school team, including the governing body, is in the strong community spirit and sense of purpose among all stakeholders. All pupils, whatever their abilities and needs, have equal opportunities to thrive. Pupils new to the school are made very welcome and swiftly settle into school routines. Teachers’ practice is observed informally, but the outcomes sometimes lack helpful feedback to enable individuals to celebrate good practice and make improvements. The governing body’s effectiveness is good. It is knowledgeable about pupils’ progress and ensures that all procedures for safeguarding pupils are fully in place. Policies are reviewed regularly and are specific to the school. The many parents and carers who support the school have the necessary checks. The difficult school site is well-maintained and procedures for pupils moving to the playing field, for example, are rigorous. Parents and carers are kept well-informed about their children’s progress and school events. They have the

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

opportunity to meet with teachers when they come to school for coffee every two or three weeks. The breakfast club provides a useful service for families. School leaders and the governing body take seriously any issues parents and carers may have. For example, the governing body’s concerns about the federation were reinforced by the views of parents and carers, and it acted accordingly.

The school’s contribution to community cohesion is good. It is a focal point for the community and its contribution to the many village events are highlights of the school year. The four-year partnership with Ecole Jules Ferry in Bethune promotes a deep understanding of French culture and has benefited pupils from both schools. Other links are being established with schools in Uganda and Zambia and the school makes the most of parental links with other countries. Leaders have identified from their audit that making links with contrasting environments, cultures and economies within the United Kingdom is an area to develop further.

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

At the time of the inspection children had only been in school for three weeks, many parents and carers opting to send them part time. They have settled in well and are enjoying their activities in school. Teaching is good, enabling children to make good progress. Most of the current cohort has above-average knowledge and skills and the teacher has responded to this well. For example, in an adult-led session, she used a computer program where children fired cannons at a pirate ship, encouraging them to count accurately beyond 10, as many of them know how to count accurately in single digit numbers. This was good fun and was part of the class ‘Pirate’ theme. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and there is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children’s personal

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

development is promoted well. The teacher and teaching assistants record children’s progress regularly, using samples of work, photographic evidence and day-to-day comments on their achievements in their ‘learning journeys’. Parents and carers are encouraged to come to school and look at these, although they or their children do not actually contribute to them. There are good procedures to help children make the transition from the playgroup, including regular visits to share activities in school. The extent to which children can experience all areas of learning in the outside area is constrained somewhat by its limited size.

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

The percentage of parents and carers responding to the questionnaire is higher than usual. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly appreciative of the work of the school. In particular they cite their children’s enjoyment of school and the good level of care and progress. Where a parent or carer has indicated disagreement with the statements, there has been no written comment to explain why. Praise for the school has been fulsome. One parent reflected the views of many when writing, ‘We love this school and so does our child.’

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Occold 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 70 pupils registered at the school. The return rate was above average for primary schools.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	77	8	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	77	8	23	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	26	74	7	20	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	66	11	31	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	77	8	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	29	83	5	14	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	83	6	17	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)	28	80	5	14	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	29	83	5	14	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	77	7	20	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	80	5	14	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	80	7	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	30	86	5	14	0	0	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.



3 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Occold Primary School, Eye, IP23 7PL

Thank you all very much indeed for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. A special thanks to those of you in Class 3 who gave me your views and to Class 2 for inviting me to your lovely lunch. I was very impressed by your singing and ukulele playing. You all behave extremely well and work hard in your lessons. This means that you make good progress during your time in Occold Primary School. Well done! Keep up the good work!

You have a good school. You told me how much you enjoy your lessons and all the interesting activities that make learning fun. I agree that your teachers do a good job taking care of you all and making sure that you learn the things you need in interesting ways. I have asked the school's leaders to visit lessons more often and see that teachers share the best things they are doing to help you learn even more effectively. I have asked them to see what difference their plans make to your learning, especially with any extra help you are given. I have also asked them to help you set your own personal targets that you can achieve quickly. All of you can help by telling them about what you enjoy learning.

I have also asked those in charge of the school do do what they can to improve the outdoor space for Reception children. There is not enough room for you to do all the things that help you to learn outside as well as in your classroom.

I wish you all the very best for your futures. Carry on enjoying your friendly and welcoming school.

Yours sincerely

Judith Dawson
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**