

# Yaxham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121129
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	380172
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Martin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sandra Nightingale
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Norwich Road Yaxham Dereham NR19 1RU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01362 692033
<b>Fax number</b>	01362 692033
<b>Email address</b>	office@yaxham.norfolk.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection team visited nine lessons or part lessons taught by three teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring such as lesson observations, analyses of pupils' work and other assessment information. The inspection team scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 68 parents and carers, as well as 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 has pupils' cultural understanding improved since the last inspection?
- How well do teachers plan work to meet the wide range of pupils' abilities in mixed-age classes?
- Are monitoring arrangements rigorous enough to bring about improvements?

## Information about the school

Yaxham is a very small primary school. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The school has the Activemark and Healthy Schools status.

**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

Yaxham is a good school. It has made rapid improvement since its last inspection and standards are now above average. Pupils have an excellent understanding about how to keep safe, for example around fireworks. Their behaviour is outstanding, as they care for one another extremely well and older pupils help the younger ones. Parents and carers are very happy with the school. One, speaking for many, said, 'My child has really progressed and has much more confidence.'

The headteacher has built a strong staff team who work together well and share her vision to raise standards and accelerate progress. Teachers reflect carefully upon their practice and are keen to try out new ideas, for example to develop mental mathematics. Because teaching is consistently good, pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff know pupils as individuals and generally match work well to their particular needs. Occasionally, work is not sufficiently challenging for the most-able pupils. The curriculum is exciting and pupils enjoy going on trips to support their learning. Whole-school topics engage all classes around a common theme. Teachers take on board pupils' ideas and suggestions to make learning relevant and enjoyable for them. They are more involved in shaping their learning than at the time of the previous inspection. At times, however, they do not have the opportunities to devise criteria to show them how successful they have been in lessons.

Pupils love coming to school and consequently attendance is high. They take plenty of exercise and house captains and vice-captains organise play equipment at break times. Pupils take an active part in the local community. For example, they have grown acorns into saplings for a local woodland group and have helped a heritage group restore an ancient tomb in the graveyard. They have a good understanding of cultures different from their own and have established links with schools in Germany, Slovenia and Romania.

School leaders and the governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development through regular monitoring. They have seen considerable improvements in the key areas they have made priorities, such as pupils' progress in mathematics. Just occasionally monitoring is not evaluative enough to pinpoint precisely for teachers how to move teaching to outstanding. Members of the governing body visit the school on many occasions to view aspects of its work, but have only recently aligned their monitoring to key priorities on the school's development plan. The school's good track record since the last inspection,

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its accurate self-evaluation and clear strategic plans give it a good capacity for further improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move the quality of teaching from consistently good to outstanding by:
  - precisely matching tasks to pupils' abilities, especially for the most able
  - keeping the pace of learning brisk throughout lessons
  - encouraging pupils to devise their own criteria for what makes their learning successful.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of monitoring by:
  - ensuring all monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous
  - consolidating the monitoring role of the governing body to be more cohesive and closely aligned to the school's priorities for improvement.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Year groups are small and this can lead to fluctuations in results, but the trend of improvement is upwards at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In 2011 all Year 6 pupils made at least two National Curriculum levels of progress in English and mathematics from their starting points in Year 3. Standards are generally above average in different year groups, although there are small variations. Results in mathematics rose sharply across the school because this was a focus for improvement. Teachers also adopted a new approach to developing reading skills and this resulted in reading standards rising rapidly.

Pupils enjoy learning and have positive attitudes in lessons. They like doing practical activities such as studying Victorian artefacts or designing an experiment to find out which battery lasts longest. They work well together in groups, or in discussing aspects of their learning with a partner. They take pride in producing high-quality work. For example, Year 3 pupils published booklets about animals based on research they had done, including interesting articles and attractive illustrations. Staff fully include pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in lessons. Skilled teaching assistants ensure they make good progress by helping them to reach their individual targets. All groups of pupils achieve well, including the few known to be eligible for free school meals.

Pupils helped the police catch speeding motorists outside the school and then interviewed them to find out why they were willing to put pupils' lives at risk. This not only enhanced pupils' contribution to the community but also raised their awareness of the hazards they face each day coming to school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to make healthy choices and have exercised this by requesting

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baked potatoes for lunchtimes. Pupils have established strong links with the parish church and raise funds for a variety of charities. The local community supports the school’s annual scarecrow festival, which this year was on the theme of occupations. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respond sensitively to daily collective acts of worship and have a strong sense of right and wrong. They communicate with children in Germany by a video link and have been writing blogs about toy bears they have exchanged. Pupils’ above average basic skills and their good personal qualities prepare them well for secondary school.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers make good use of technology to engage and interest pupils. Their enthusiasm and good subject knowledge enhance pupils’ desire to learn. For example, when pupils suggested some metaphors for a class poem, the teacher responded, ‘I’m savouring these words – it’s like a delicious meal!’ Relationships in lessons are excellent and this creates a purposeful learning environment. Teachers deploy teaching assistants well to meet the full range of needs in mixed-age classes. Work is usually challenging, although the most-able pupils sometimes sit through explanations they already understand when they could be working independently. The pace of learning is good. On rare occasions pupils take their time to move between activities, or wait to be told what to do when they have finished a piece of work. Pupils know their individual targets and find comments in their books helpful in showing them how to improve.

<sup>1</sup> 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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The lively curriculum contributes well to pupils’ enjoyment of school and their good progress. They benefit from memorable experiences such as a visit to the Youth Prom at the Royal Albert Hall. When a nationally renowned chamber ensemble gave a concert at the school pupils made masks to fit in with the historical theme. An actor from the Royal Shakespeare Company ran a workshop which helped pupils to put on a production of *Othello* as part of a local Shakespeare festival. Pupils practise their basic skills well across a range of subjects.

Parents and carers value the school’s good pastoral care. One said, ‘I know that if I have any worries or concerns I am able to approach any member of staff to help me.’ Staff support pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable well, to ensure they settle quickly into school and overcome potential barriers to learning. Effective induction and transition arrangements help children who join the school and Year 6 pupils move to secondary school. The school has been successful in reducing the number of occasions when families go on holiday in term time, and this has contributed significantly to their rising attendance rate.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher sets high expectations for the whole school community and equips staff well to drive forward improvement. Teamwork is a key feature. Staff share good practice and try out new ideas, working closely together. Teachers carefully track and measure pupils’ progress and quickly identify any at risk of falling behind. Monitoring is regular and usually rigorous, although occasionally it becomes too descriptive rather than focusing on the impact of provision. The governing body’s effectiveness is good. Members of the governing body have been instrumental in securing additional substantial accommodation for teaching groups of pupils. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements in particular are outstanding with exemplary systems for recording concerns. All staff receive high quality training and they keep policies and procedures under constant review. The Chair of the Governing Body has recently introduced changes to make monitoring more cohesive, which includes aligning governors to particular school priorities.

The school keeps a careful check on how groups of pupils are performing and ensures that there is good equality of opportunity with no discrimination. Girls’ performance in mathematics improved rapidly to catch up boys following intensive work on developing problem-solving skills. The school promotes community cohesion

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well. It reaches out to a wide range of local groups and has established very positive links with schools abroad. Pupils have a growing awareness of the diversity of cultures in the United Kingdom through joint projects with other schools such as taking part in music festivals, and through residential visits.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Reception class with a wide range of skills and abilities often broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress because they enjoy a stimulating diet of exciting activities across all areas of learning both inside and outdoors. They use their imaginations and develop basic literacy and numeracy skills effectively through high-quality role-play. For example, in the Victorian sweet shop children weighed out the correct amount of ‘sweets’ for their classmates. Outside there seemed to be constant enjoyable drama in a spate of emergencies requiring the assistance of the fully-equipped fire brigade. Fire-fighters thankfully ‘saved’ members of staff on numerous occasions, usually by being doused with a handy hose.

Consistently good teaching means children learn quickly. They concentrate well and happily take turns. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. Occasionally, children do not choose an interesting activity adults have explained to them until prompted later. The teacher’s careful assessments build up clear pictures of children’s achievements which are recorded in easily accessible and attractive ‘learning journeys’. The Reception class is led and managed well, with a strong team of adults who understand well how young children learn.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 very high proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. They all agree that their children enjoy school, make enough progress, that the teaching is good and that the school meets their children’s particular needs. Inspection findings support these views. A few isolated concerns were discussed in general terms with the headteacher, but the overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very happy with the school’s work.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Yaxham Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 78 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	82	10	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	85	7	10	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	37	54	26	38	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	50	34	50	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	54	29	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	36	53	30	44	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	50	33	49	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)	31	46	31	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	40	59	27	40	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	44	32	47	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	43	36	53	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	59	26	38	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	47	69	21	31	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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



7 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Yaxham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Dereham, NR19 1RU**

Thank you for sharing your views with us when we visited your school recently. We agree with you that Yaxham is a good school. Here are some of its strengths.

- You make good progress in your work and standards are above average.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe, and the school is extremely good at making sure you stay that way.
- Your attendance rate is high.
- The teaching is good and makes learning enjoyable.
- There are plenty of visits and clubs for you to enjoy.
- You have a good understanding of how children live and work in other countries such as in Germany and Slovenia.
- The headteacher leads the school well.

Even good schools can improve, so we have asked the headteacher and the governing body to:

- make sure all your work makes you think hard and keeps you busy in class
- involve you more in deciding what success looks like in lessons
- check closely how well the school is doing.

You all can help by telling your teachers how you well you think you are learning.

Many thanks once again for your help and our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt  
Lead inspector

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