

Sir Robert Hitcham's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

College Road, Framlingham, Woodbridge, IP13 9EP

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in all year groups and attain above-average standards in English and mathematics.
- There are effective procedures for tracking pupils' progress and providing additional support where it is needed.
- Most teaching is good with some examples of outstanding practice. Teachers plan a variety of activities which fully engage pupils so that they consistently make good progress.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school organises a range of outside visits and additional activities which greatly increases pupils' enjoyment and experience of school.
- Most pupils behave well and feel very safe in the school.
- Attendance is well-above average and reflects the pupils' enjoyment of school.
- The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors are providing clear and effective leadership, which is supporting the good standards in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers are not setting challenging enough progress targets for themselves or the pupils.
- Performance targets for individual teachers are not always addressing specific areas for improvement.
- Some teachers are not making sure that the activities and instruction are set at the right level for the individual pupils in the class.
- Not all teachers are giving pupils enough opportunities to find things out for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, senior leaders, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors took account of the 47 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire and the 28 responses from the staff questionnaire distributed for the inspection.
- Inspectors examined a range of evidence, including the school self-evaluation form, the school development plan, the system to track pupils' progress, and records relating to behaviour and attendance. They also looked at records of lesson observations by senior staff, performance management information, safeguarding documentation, and a sample of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Stephen Walker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Diana Songer-Hudgell

Additional Inspector

Heather Weston

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school, serving the town of Framlingham and the surrounding villages.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There is a small number from various minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The original Victorian school building has been extended and refurbished.
- A smaller-than-average proportion of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils with a parent in the armed forces and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more of it is outstanding and never less than consistently good across the school by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to work on their own and find things out for themselves
 - planning and adjusting work in lessons so that it is at the right level for all pupils
 - making sure that teachers set challenging targets for more of the pupils to exceed expected progress
 - making sure that teachers' performance targets are more sharply focused on pupils making better-than-expected progress, and also address specific areas for improvement in teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress during their time at school, and the large majority of parents and carers agree. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is typically above average, which shows good progress from their average starting points. Most pupils make the progress they should and an increasing number exceed expectations in English and mathematics. The progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups is as good as that of other pupils.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because of the well-planned provision and the good teaching by both the teachers and the teaching assistants. Structured activities and the good use of the inside and outside resources are having a significant impact on children's personal development, as well as encouraging number and language skills.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and 2, where there is a strong emphasis on the development of the key skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Over half the pupils are now gaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress in reading so that attainment is well above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. The school is effectively using a more consistent approach to teaching phonics (the sounds represented by letters) across the school. The greater emphasis on speaking and listening in class and the clear guidance on what is expected in successful writing are supporting the improvement in writing skills for both boys and girls.
- The school has addressed previous weaknesses in mathematics teaching which were identified in the last inspection. There is now a well thought-out course on key skills and problem solving which has led to considerable improvements across the school. More pupils are making faster progress in numeracy than in previous years.
- The new systems to track pupils' progress are used quickly to spot any pupils who need extra help and make sure that extra support is provided for them. The school has recently identified and supported a number of average-ability pupils in Years 5 and 6 who were in danger of not making the progress they should in English and mathematics.
- The school aims to make sure that all pupils make expected progress from their starting points. However, targets for pupils and staff are not always sufficiently challenging to see that more pupils are aiming to make better-than-expected progress and achieve their full potential.
- The school is using additional funding very effectively to close the gap between the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and the other pupils, so that their attainment and progress are now broadly similar in English and mathematics. This is the case for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and pupils from service families. Money is mainly allocated for extra teaching assistants to support interventions in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, in line with their peers, due to effective work from teaching assistants who provide additional support in the class and in small withdrawal groups. The extra support for these pupils helps them overcome their learning difficulties and make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in most classes is good, with examples of some outstanding teaching. As a result, most pupils make good progress in all years. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well and pupils agree.
- Pupils behave well in classes and this provides a purposeful atmosphere for learning. They want to do well and teachers expect them to work hard. Lessons involve a range of interesting activities so that pupils normally display enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration. Teachers regularly follow-up the various visits outside school and make sure that these are used to support learning in the classroom.
- Displays in classrooms provide a stimulating environment for learning and celebrate pupils' work. There are good examples of marking across the school which commends good work but also shows pupils how to remedy any weaknesses.
- Outstanding aspects of teaching are seen in a number of classes, when teachers regularly check pupils' understanding, make sure that tasks provide sufficient challenge and encourage pupils to rely less on adults and more on themselves when learning. For example, Year 4 pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of complex subtractions because teacher explanations were very clear and tasks were appropriately demanding across the range of ability in the class.
- However, in some lessons, teachers do not give the pupils enough time to answer questions and often do the thinking for the pupils. They are not always providing enough opportunities for the pupils to work on their own or find things out for themselves.
- Teachers are generally using questioning well to engage pupils, check understanding and challenge them to develop further their understanding. Supportive questioning enables pupils to make contributions to class discussions and a number of teachers are skilled at getting pupils to explain their understanding of concepts to the rest of the class.
- A small minority of teachers do not make sure that the activities are set at the right level for the individual pupils even when the classes are taught in ability groups. Some pupils are not sufficiently challenged by some of the tasks because the work in lessons is sometimes too easy for them. Similarly, some pupils, particularly in lower sets, are unable to progress at a sufficient pace because the work is too hard for them and they do not completely understand the tasks.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Most pupils behave well in lessons, and this contributes to a calm and orderly environment for learning. There are clear expectations of behaviour and consistent systems to deal efficiently with any misbehaviour. The large majority of parents and carers are positive about behaviour in the school.
- Pupils feel valued as individuals, even in a larger-than-average sized school. They respond well to the strong tradition in the school of caring for one another. Pupils are considerate, polite and courteous to staff and each other and this contributes well to their learning.
- Parents, carers and pupils confirm that bullying is very rare in the school. Pupils say that any unkind behaviour such as name-calling and teasing is dealt with quickly and effectively if it is reported, in line with the anti-bullying policy. They are aware of the different forms of possible bullying such as cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to sex, gender, race and

disability. The school is thoroughly addressing a few cases of recent homophobic name-calling in the playground.

- Pupils say they feel safe in the school and display a good understanding of issues relating to safety, such as crossing the road, using the internet and not talking to strangers. Older pupils are aware of the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs although they mentioned that they would appreciate more time discussing these issues.
- The inspectors found that the very small number of pupils who display challenging behaviour are managed well and are not allowed to disrupt the learning of the other pupils. Pupils confirmed that disruptions are rare and that any misbehaviour is dealt with appropriately by the teachers and other adults.
- A good level of supervision during morning break provides a clear framework for pupils. Behaviour, though still good, is more boisterous during the lunch break than at any other time. Pupils are developing their skills in managing their own behaviour and older pupils are increasingly encouraged to take on responsibilities such as buddies and peer mediators.
- Attendance is well-above average and reflects pupils' enjoyment of school. The school is active in following-up absences.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is providing clear and effective leadership, which is supporting the school in its next stage of development. She is well supported by the senior leadership team, which is taking on more responsibility within the school. Staff as a whole work well as a team and are committed to the further improvement of the school.
- The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. The school development plan is a comprehensive working document with clear actions and targets that are focused on improving the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress.
- There are regular lesson observations by the senior staff, who have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching in the school. The new system for managing the performance of staff means that teachers are accountable for the progress of their pupils so that salary progression can be linked to pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. However, teachers' performance targets do not consistently refer to the proportion of pupils making good or better progress, or tackle specific weaknesses in teaching.
- Professional training for teachers and support staff is effective in causing them to reflect on their practice. The literacy and numeracy leaders are taking an active part in running regular workshops for the teachers. There are clear plans for additional training for teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors and adults who support with reading.
- The school is active in encouraging good relations with the local community. There is a strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- The local authority adopts a supportive approach to the school and makes sure that advisers are available to offer a range of effective training for the teachers and support staff.
- There is an imaginative range of subjects and topics, which is relevant to pupils' needs and provides a variety of activities including a number of 'theme days'. A range of outside visits and

a large number of additional activities, particularly in music and sport, greatly increase pupils' enjoyment and experience of school. The broad range of experiences contributes well to pupils' achievements and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are fully involved in community events and regularly raise money for charities and schools particularly in Ethiopia, Liberia and Tanzania.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is well informed about the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. Governors know about the achievement of pupils and how this compares with all schools nationally. They are fully involved in monitoring progress and in holding leaders and staff to account through the management of their performance and setting targets. They have been very active in reviewing school procedures to improve communication with parents and carers. They are aware of the quality of teaching and are able to make informed decisions on salary increases. They know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance. Robust procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. They are active in overseeing the use of the pupil premium and making sure that it is effectively spent to support eligible students. Governors have been active in establishing a strategic committee which is planning for the long-term development and sustainability of the school. Governors make sure they receive the professional training they need to develop their roles further.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124775
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	403564

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	343
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Graham Owen
Headteacher	Helen Picton
Date of previous school inspection	17 April 2008
Telephone number	01728 723354
Fax number	01728 724834
Email address	admin@hitchams.suffolk.sch.uk

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