



Fingringhoe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115139
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279521
Inspection dates 3 July 2006 to 4 July 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Martin Beale AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Road
School category	Voluntary aided		CO5 7BN
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01206 729266
Number on roll	59	Fax number	01206 729266
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Malcolm Kimmance
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Julia Longman

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small Church of England primary school in a rural area to the south of Colchester. All but a very few pupils are of White British background. Free school meal entitlement is low. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes throughout the school. Attainment on entry is average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The inspection agrees with the school's view that it is satisfactory but improving quickly. The school's resources are used particularly effectively providing at least satisfactory value for money. Parents think it is doing a good job and pupils are proud of their school. There is a strong family atmosphere where all pupils are well supported, valued and respected. This is embodied in a pupil's quote in the school brochure, 'If somebody is new, I will introduce them to all my friends and look after them so that they don't feel left out.' Pupils' personal development is good. They have good social skills and show great respect for others although they do not always have sufficient understanding of cultures other than their own. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Several changes of staff, including three headteachers since the last inspection, have severely limited the school's capacity for sustained improvement resulting in considerable challenges, which the new headteacher and staff team are now tackling with increasing success. Self-evaluation is thorough and forms a secure basis from which to identify priorities for attention. Recent improvements are quite marked and give a secure platform from which the school can progress further. Several staff are inexperienced but are being well supported and trained to become more effective teachers, although their leadership skills are underdeveloped in several cases. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. Provision for the children in Reception is satisfactory so that by the time they enter Year 1 most have achieved the goals expected of them in all areas of learning. The curriculum and range of other activities is satisfactory. Teaching is sound and improving, as is the progress pupils make, but there is scope for both to be better. Standards are broadly average and starting to rise. The use of assessment to guide teachers' planning and to help pupils understand how to improve their work is a weakness that remains from the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the agreed plans to ensure that the standards of teaching and learning continue to improve throughout the school.
- Develop leadership and management skills more widely amongst staff so that everyone can work together to bring about the required changes.
- Use assessment information more effectively to plan lessons and help pupils see how to improve the quality of their work.
- Extend provision for cultural development so that pupils have a greater understanding of cultures other than their own.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and pupils make sound progress. There is no significant variation in the progress made by different groups including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. A legacy of some past underachievement has been eliminated because the action taken to provide greater challenge for more able pupils is bearing

fruit. Increasing numbers of pupils are now working at above average standards. Pupils mostly achieve their targets, but there is scope for these to be even more challenging. Children make satisfactory progress in Reception. Most have reached standards expected for their age by the end of the year and some exceed these, benefiting from working alongside Year 1 pupils. Both Year 2 and Year 6 test results were broadly average in 2005. School data and pupils' work shows that standards are rising, particularly in English. Progress in English is good and standards are now above average by Year 6. Slightly slower progress is being made in mathematics and science, because limited attention is paid to developing investigation and problem-solving skills. Standards in other subjects vary because the timetable is focused too narrowly on literacy and numeracy.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are polite and talk openly with pride about their school. They work hard, enjoy school and like being with their friends. Most pupils attend regularly and overall attendance is average. They enjoy supporting younger pupils and caring for each other. One result is that Reception children settle quickly into school, work confidently and enjoy the opportunity to initiate activities themselves. Behaviour is good and pupils say that there is no bullying or racism. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils show great respect for others and although they have some understanding of cultures beyond their own the school recognises that this could be improved. Pupils make a significant contribution to school and community life. They have good ideas and initiate many activities, such as fundraising for charity or identifying potential improvements to the school. Pupils work and play safely and learn how to assess and avoid risks. The school successfully promotes positive attitudes towards healthy living. Large numbers of pupils participate in physical education and sporting activities and they understand the importance of healthy eating. They learn much about working together, sharing and taking responsibility through group and team work both in and out of the classroom.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Considerable time and effort has been put into raising the quality of teaching and learning. Observations throughout the year and during the inspection show this is having a positive effect but that more needs to be done. Most teachers have established a secure learning environment in which pupils feel their efforts and contributions are valued. Pupils' learning benefits from small class sizes and other adults are deployed well to support specific groups or individuals, or to undertake specific programmes. Interactive whiteboards are used as an effective tool to make teaching more interesting, and pupils have well-planned opportunities to use computers to develop their learning. Teaching of core subjects is more effective than in others, although time is not used

well in some long literacy and numeracy lessons, which results in slowing of the pace of learning. Inconsistencies in marking and assessment are starting to be eliminated but teachers do not use information sufficiently to plan for all pupils, particularly the most able.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum satisfactorily promotes pupils' personal development and supports the school's focus on raising standards in the core subjects. The curriculum in Reception is sound and has an appropriate balance between teacher led activities and those initiated by the children. A major strength is the wide range of clubs, trips and residential visits that are much appreciated and greatly enjoyed by the pupils. These not only support learning but also considerably enrich the pupils' experiences. Programmes for pupils in mixed-age classes are planned carefully so that they do not repeat or miss work. Teaching of French broadens the pupils' experiences. The strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy means that other subjects are not always taught in sufficient depth. Furthermore, insufficient attention is paid to investigation and problem-solving in subjects such as mathematics and science. Good support programmes are in place for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, but in contrast limited action is taken to enrich the experiences of pupils identified as having particular talents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a very caring and supportive school community where all pupils and their particular needs are well known. Parents and pupils view this as a considerable strength. All adults are firmly committed to ensuring the care and protection of the pupils. Health and safety procedures are rigorously implemented and child protection arrangements are fully understood by staff. Pupils feel safe and secure and know that they have an adult to turn to if they need help. Early assessment of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities ensures that appropriate support programmes are put in place and their impact regularly reviewed. The use of individual targets to support pupil achievement is at an early stage of development. Consequently, pupils do not always know clearly the steps to take to reach the next level in their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has made significant progress in the last two years under the strong and effective leadership of the new headteacher, which places the school in a secure position to improve further. Staff share the aim of meeting the needs of all pupils, although this is fulfilled more effectively for pupils with learning difficulties than for those with particular talents. Thorough and rigorous monitoring is leading to honest and accurate self-evaluation. The school knows where its problems lie and how to

tackle them. Improvements are under way in many areas, but the challenge remains to sustain this with relatively inexperienced staff. Strong teamwork is emerging but much of the burden of management rests with the headteacher. Opportunities to devolve leadership to others are being taken at appropriate times. Action taken to improve teaching and learning is starting to have a beneficial effect on pupils' progress. Staff training is targeted carefully to address any identified gaps in expertise. Governors are well led and becoming increasingly effective. They are very supportive of the school and check carefully to see that governing body decisions are being implemented effectively, but they are not sufficiently involved in shaping future developments. Recent building work has enhanced the accommodation and learning resource levels are good. Finances are carefully managed and allocated to meet identified priorities.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and watching you learn. There are very many aspects of your school that I liked. You and your parents are right in thinking that you go to an improving school. What I liked about your school: - You are cared for and looked after very well in school. - You are making good progress in English and your writing is improving all the time. - You have plenty of opportunities to use computers to help you learn more. - You enjoy taking part in the additional activities at lunchtime and after school. - You behave well around the school. - You play nicely with your friends at lunchtime and speak very politely to your teachers and visitors. - You care for each other and contribute much to improving the school. - Your teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to make sure that you all get the right sort of help you need. - Your headteacher runs the school well. I am very pleased to see how your teachers and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. I am suggesting to them that they try to make teaching even better, provide more help for you to understand how to achieve your targets, and also to help you learn more about other cultures and customs. I wish you well for the future.