



Creeting St Mary Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124770
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281800
Inspection dates 4 July 2006 to 4 July 2006
Reporting inspector Ms. Ruth Frith AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	All Saints Road
School category	Voluntary aided		IP6 8NF
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01449 720312
Number on roll	49	Fax number	01449 720312
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Julie Lynch
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Lyn Spall

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 9	4 July 2006 - 4 July 2006	281800

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average size primary school situated in the village of Creeping St Mary. Approximately half of the pupils live outside the immediate catchment area. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. Children are mainly from White British backgrounds, with a few speaking English as an additional language. All teaching staff, including the headteacher, started in the school in 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that its effectiveness and the value for money it provides are satisfactory. This is a school with a welcoming and friendly atmosphere, where pupils are happy and looked after well. Prior to the appointment of the current staff, standards had declined and pupils were not doing as well as they should. This trend has recently been reversed due to the strong commitment of staff and improvements to teaching, learning and the curriculum. Pupils now make satisfactory progress so that, by Year 2 and Year 4, most pupils reach the standard expected for their age in English and mathematics. However, there is a need to provide additional challenge so that more capable pupils, in particular, do as well as they can. Overall, quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and help children to make a sound start in school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The development of initiatives to improve reading has proved successful in raising standards, but the school recognises that more needs to be done to improve pupils' writing. Staff have introduced assessment procedures which are helping to identify what pupils have achieved. This information is not used systematically to plan work which matches pupils' capabilities and extends their learning at a good rate. Marking is not always helpful in ensuring that pupils know how well they have done or how they can improve. Significant improvements have been made to the curriculum, which ensure that pupils experience a good range of activities. Additional activities at lunchtime and after school are of a good quality. These and the use of visits and visitors help to stimulate pupils' learning and extend their skills. The good focus on improving the climate for learning and a consistent approach to managing behaviour have resulted in pupils' good behaviour and attitudes. Pupils' personal, social and emotional needs are well met and pupils feel well cared for. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has had a positive impact on the development of the school and gained the confidence of parents. Systems for evaluating the school's performance are satisfactory. Staff have a reasonably accurate picture of strengths and areas for development and the findings of the inspection confirm these. The school's monitoring and evaluation procedures have resulted in significant improvements this year, but they are not yet robust enough to ensure that managers, staff and governors have a full picture of how pupils are learning across the curriculum. The school has dealt with the issues from the previous inspection successfully and, because of the recent developments, the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by placing a greater emphasis on developing the content of pupils' work and accuracy in spelling.
- Use assessment information more effectively to match pupils' work to their next stages in learning and thereby provide appropriate challenge, particularly for the more capable pupils.
- Set challenging individual targets for pupils to know how to improve their work, based on more rigorous assessment.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation so that staff and governors have a clear view of how well pupils are learning and how the school is meeting its aims.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' progress is satisfactory and they reach expected standards. Standards have improved since 2005 when they were low in the Year 2 national assessments, particularly in writing. There has been significant improvement in reading, particularly for Year 4 pupils, due to the school's involvement in a local reading project. This is proving to have a particularly positive effect on the performance of boys. Action is also being taken to improve pupils' writing through work on a project with local schools, but this is at an early stage of development. Currently, there remain weaknesses in pupils' writing in relation to spelling and the content of their work. Sometimes there is insufficient challenge for more capable pupils so that they do not always do as well as they should, particularly in writing and mathematics. Year 2 pupils have exceeded the targets set for them this year but these were not especially challenging. Year 4 pupils broadly met their targets for reading and mathematics but not for writing. Children settle well in Reception and make satisfactory progress so that most reach the nationally expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress overall but progress is better than this when they work with support assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to others in the class.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and quickly develop positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Pupils develop a keen spiritual awareness through areas of study such as science, art and religious education. Through this they are encouraged to think about themselves and the world around them. Pupils' cultural development is supported well through awareness of local and national events and work to help them discover ways of life and beliefs different from their own. Pupils behave well and develop very good relationships. Older pupils were seen caring for those younger than themselves and the 'Buddy' system ensures that children new to the school are supported by those in Year 4. Pupils are encouraged to keep themselves safe and happy through taking part in a range of activities, including cycling proficiency and developing personal safety awareness. They act sensibly and safely when at work and play. Pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and eating a range of foods. Pupils know their ideas are taken seriously and the school council works well to ensure that they have a say in improving the school. Good links exist with the local community. Pupils' involvement in local events and work on ecology have a good impact on their personal development. They develop good skills of working together, and reach satisfactory levels in basic skills. These skills contribute towards their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Relationships between staff and pupils are particularly good and form the basis of productive learning. Teachers use their skills well to motivate pupils and sustain their interest. They make good use of classroom technology and successfully incorporate the use of computers across subjects. When pupils are working as a class or with an adult, the pace of learning is frequently good. However, when they are working alone the pace of learning slows. There is good collaboration between teachers and learning support assistants. Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning overall, especially those with learning difficulties. Recent improvements in assessment have helped staff to identify what pupils can do but the results of this assessment are not always used effectively to plan work which matches pupils' capabilities. Targets are set for literacy and numeracy but there is some confusion amongst pupils about the aim lessons and their own personal targets. They are not sure how to improve their work. Also, marking is often not helpful in guiding pupils towards the next steps in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The youngest children take part in a good range of activities working with the Year 1 children. The school has recognised the need for more of their learning to take place outside and has plans in place to create a specific outdoor area. In the meantime, staff make the most of the school grounds to teach across all areas of learning. Throughout the school, there is good use of cross-curricular activities. Significant improvements have been made in the use of ICT and this has helped to raise standards. For one afternoon a week, the whole school works together on an 'I Wonder' session when they develop their religious and spiritual education whilst studying a range of topics. Pupils say they particularly like this work, which is of a good quality. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of educational visits and knowledgeable visitors. There is a very good variety of extra-curricular activities for a school of this size.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils' care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Pastoral care is strong because all staff know the pupils well and pupils receive the personal support they need, when they need it. Consequently, pupils feel safe and well cared for. Child protection procedures are in place and staff are trained regularly in their use. Effective support for pupils who have learning difficulties or other learning needs ensures that they develop confidence as learners. Liaison with parents and carers and with external support agencies is also good. Guidance and support for pupils' academic development

is not as sharp as it should be. Staff have recognised the need to improve target-setting so that children become more involved in their learning and know how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall and there have been significant improvements in the last couple of years which show aspects of good leadership. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and has been particularly effective in building a staff team who share her sense of purpose. She has gained the confidence of parents, staff and governors, who are pleased with recent improvements. Staff morale is high. Teachers successfully take on a variety of management responsibilities and this is helping to improve the curriculum and introduce new strategies to raise standards. The headteacher and subject leaders now need to establish a more focused role in monitoring teaching and learning, and raising standards. Some of their work is quite recent, so its full impact cannot yet be seen but they have made a good start. Further work on the tracking of pupils' progress and the provision of specific strategies to promote learning is needed. Self-evaluation is accurate and parents and pupils have been asked to contribute their views about the school. There are satisfactory systems for checking how well the school is doing and identifying what it could do better. Governance is satisfactory. Governors show strong commitment to the school through their work in committees and the chair of governors has a clear understanding of the school's strengths. Governors are now in a position to develop their monitoring role further in order to ensure that the school continues to improve at a good rate.

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?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	2	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?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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	3	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 say how much I enjoyed visiting Creeting St Mary Primary. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for talking about your school and the work you have done. I think your school is getting better and there are many good things happening. I was particularly pleased with the following: - You obviously enjoy school and are keen to do good work. - You are achieving more and doing better work. Your reading is developing particularly well. - All the staff work well to make sure that you enjoy your lessons. They enjoy teaching you and the teaching has improved. - You behave well and I saw you being very kind to each other. You work and play together well. - The things you learn about and the activities you do are good and help to make school interesting. You told me that you particularly like school clubs, visits and the 'I Wonder' lessons. - Staff look after you well and you feel safe in school. There have been many good improvements to the school and all staff and governors are working well to ensure that the school gets even better. I have agreed with them that they will help you to improve your writing and make sure that those of you who find learning quite easy achieve as much as you can. Teachers will also improve the way they assess your learning and mark your work so that you have a clearer idea of how to improve. Teachers and governors will regularly look at how well the school is doing so that they can quickly make changes if they need to. Thank you once again and good luck in the future.