

# Margaretting Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115116
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX
<b>Inspection number</b>	290137
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Watts

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	53
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jo Stevens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Fiona Mulligan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 November 2001
<b>School address</b>	Penny's Lane Margaretting Ingatestone Essex CM4 0HA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01277352114
<b>Fax number</b>	01277 354483

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Margaretting CE is a much smaller than average primary school. Most pupils are from a White British background. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school provides for pupils from the village of Margaretting and the wider area, including Traveller families. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is about average and the proportion eligible for free school meals is well below average. Children's attainment on entry to Reception is broadly in line with national expectations, although it varies from year to year. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal starting points is higher than average. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was also overseeing the leadership of a neighbouring school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Margaretting CE Primary has made considerable improvements recently and its overall effectiveness is now good. Pupils achieve well overall and their personal development and well-being is good.

Effective leadership by the headteacher and the involvement in local initiatives have contributed to improvements in assessment, teaching, the curriculum and leadership by others. Pupils are now achieving well, particularly in Years 3 to 6 and the school is in a good position to raise achievement further. Team spirit among the staff is strong and there is a clear commitment to making the school even better. Leadership responsibilities have been effectively shared in this small school and roles have been strengthened so leaders are more active in monitoring and developing their areas of responsibility. Parents hold positive views about the school and are pleased with the care and education provided. There are a few though who think that the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns.

Good care, guidance and support, and a positive school atmosphere contribute to pupils' good personal development. Effective induction procedures enable new arrivals to settle quickly and these pupils receive good support, particularly those who have learning difficulties. Pupils enjoy school and this is shown by their keen participation in activities. Clear expectations by staff and very good relationships lead to good behaviour. Pupils show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe. They willingly take on responsibilities which contribute well to the school and to the wider community.

Satisfactory provision in Reception means that children get off to a sound start. While satisfactory, the range of activities, particularly for outdoor work, is limited in Reception. Satisfactory progress continues in Years 1 and 2 although it is better in reading than in mathematics and writing. Not enough more able pupils reach the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics. The school is aware of this and is taking appropriate action to tackle it. Standards can fluctuate from year to year, particularly in Year 6, for two main reasons. There are small numbers in each year group so one pupil's performance is a high proportion of the whole year group's and the proportion of pupils who join and leave the school, particularly after Year 2, is higher than usual. In recent years, this mobility of pupils has tended to deflate standards. Standards in Year 6 are broadly average. Teaching and learning are good overall. Improved assessment procedures means that teachers have a better understanding of how well pupils are doing. Assessment information is consequently used more effectively to plan lessons and match tasks to pupils' needs, especially in Years 3 to 6. Where this happens, pupils are challenged and make good progress. However, challenge and pace are not as consistent in Years 1 and 2 and this can slow the rate of learning. A well-planned curriculum is enriched with a good range of additional activities. In order to raise achievement in writing across the school, a wider range of writing opportunities is being provided. Problem solving activities have been increased in mathematics to raise achievement. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2, so that more-able pupils attain the higher levels.
- Ensure that all lessons are suitably challenging and that learning maintains a brisk pace.
- Increase the range of learning activities for the children in Reception.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress and by Year 2, standards are above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Standards, particularly in Year 6, vary from year to year because of small year groups and changes to these groups as pupils join and leave, particularly in Years 3 and 6. During the past three years, a significant proportion of pupils with specific learning needs have joined the school after Year 2. National performance data for Year 6 in 2005 showed that pupils were not making enough progress in Years 3 to 6 and standards were well below average. Since then, the school has taken effective action to improve achievement. In 2006, national test results for Year 6 were average in English, mathematics and science and pupils' achievement was satisfactory. Further improvements made have resulted in pupils currently making good progress and achieving well taking account of their prior attainment. The good assessment and tracking data available indicates that pupils who receive most of their schooling at Margaretting tend to reach higher standards than pupils who are there for shorter periods.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. Attitudes particularly in Years 5 and 6 have improved significantly since the last inspection. Behaviour throughout the school is good because of clear expectations conveyed by staff and an effective code of conduct. Relationships within the school are very good. Attendance is satisfactory. Attendance levels are just below average but the school has effective procedures to monitor and promote good attendance. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles. They speak knowledgeably about healthy diets. They appreciate the need for regular exercise and participate well in physical activities. Pupils are keen to help others who are less well off than themselves and this is demonstrated by their success in raising funds for charities. Class monitors take their responsibilities seriously. Older pupils take on responsibilities such as being house captains or librarians. Pupils make good progress overall in acquiring and applying literacy, numeracy and information, communication and technology (ICT) skills. These skills, together with their good social skills, prepare them well for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Effective monitoring and support has led to improvements to teaching and learning. Across the school, teachers share learning objectives with the class well so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Interactive whiteboards are used well to illustrate main learning points in an attractive and visual way. Teachers promote new vocabulary and provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work. Skilful questioning challenges pupils' thinking and checks their understanding. Assessment is usually used effectively by teachers to enable them to match tasks to pupils' different abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are challenged well, their interest is maintained and they make good progress. Occasionally, work is not sufficiently challenging and the pace and flow of the lesson declines. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants who give good quality support, particularly to pupils with learning difficulties.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

A recently revised and improved curriculum is now good overall. The Foundation Stage curriculum, while satisfactory, is not supported by a wide enough range of resources and activities. Effective strategies have been implemented to raise achievement in writing and mathematics. Pupils now have more opportunities to apply and develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. Effective links between subjects are adding relevance and meaning to pupils' learning. These positive changes are having a significant impact on pupils' achievement particularly in Years 3 to 6. French and German adds an interesting dimension to pupils' learning and to their cultural development. The accommodation has been extended since the last inspection, with better provision for indoor physical activity. A good range of additional activities including dance, drama, football, gymnastics and multi sports add to pupils' interest and enjoyment. Local and residential visits successfully broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils particularly enjoyed the visit to the National Art Gallery and family trips to France contribute to the home-school partnership. Healthy lifestyles and personal safety receive good attention.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Good pastoral care and support contribute well to pupils' personal development. Adults know the pupils well and have established very good relationships with them. One parent commented, 'The staff are very approachable and any problems are dealt with straight away'. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are effective. Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress are good. Assessment information is generally used well to plan teaching activities and to set challenging individual learning targets in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils know what they are working towards in these subjects. This successful target setting is not used for science or ICT.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management have successfully promoted pupils' care and personal development. The headteacher provides clear educational direction and with her staff has improved educational provision and pupils' achievement. After some disappointing Year 6 results in 2005 and disruption caused by a building project, effective action has been taken to bring about improvements. Through the Primary Leadership Programme, subject leaders' roles have been extended so that they are more effective in monitoring and developing their areas of responsibility. There have also been improvements to assessment and tracking so staff have a clearer overview of how each individual is doing.

Self-evaluation is effective although a few of the school's assessments of its own performance are too generous. Nevertheless, the school knows what it does well and uses findings of evaluation effectively to identify the most pressing priorities for improvement. Good use has also been made of local authority advisers and initiatives to help bring about improvements. All staff are increasingly involved in the process of evaluation and development planning. Staff are aware that there is still work to be done to raise achievement in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and to improve the curriculum for Reception. Governors are committed,

supportive and well informed about the school's performance. Strong leadership, good teamwork and the recent improvements demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

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

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

**Annex A**

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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**Annex B**

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

21 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Margaretting Church of England VC Primary School, Penny's Lane, Margaretting, Ingatestone, Essex, CM4 0HA

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed the visit and would like to tell you what I have found. There has been good improvement to the school recently. Margaretting is a good school.

These things are strengths of the school.

- You enjoy school and take part in activities with enthusiasm.
- The school has a positive and friendly atmosphere.
- Teaching is mainly good which is why you are learning well.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in reading.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now making good progress English, mathematics and science.
- A good range of learning activities and clubs are provided.
- Your behaviour is good and you get on very well with others.
- The school is well led by the headteacher and other staff.
- You show care and respect for other pupils and adults.
- Staff know you well; they take good care of you and give you good support.
- Your parents are pleased with the care and education provided.

These areas the school has been asked to improve.

- Some of you in Year 1 and 2 could make more progress in writing and mathematics.
- Sometimes your teachers could challenge you more and ensure that the lesson moves on more quickly.
- A wider range of learning activities could be offered for the children in Reception.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts

Lead Inspector