



East Bergholt Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124729
Local Authority SUFFOLK
Inspection number 293092
Inspection dates 16–17 November 2006
Reporting inspector David Wynford-Jones

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		East Bergholt, Colchester
Age range of pupils	4–11		Essex CO7 6SW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01206 298202
Number on roll (school)	190	Fax number	01206 299369
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs N Fairchild
		Headteacher	Mrs J Seaborne
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 16–17 November 2006	Inspection number 293092
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an averaged size school. Attainment on entry is slightly above average. The proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals and also those with learning difficulties and disabilities are below the national averages. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school gained 'Eco School' status in 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It is well led and managed and has good capacity for further improvement. Timely action by the school has halted a recent decline in standards and as a result pupils are achieving well. Children make at least satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage so that they exceed the levels expected for their age. Detailed teacher assessments, confirmed by inspection findings show that standards are well above average by Year 6. The content of pupils' creative writing is good, but basic skills of grammar, handwriting, punctuation and spelling are not as well developed as they should be. The improvements in learning, particularly in mathematics, have been achieved by raising teacher and pupil expectations; emphasising the understanding and use of subject specific vocabulary; a greater focus on developing pupils' investigative skills, and more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. The themes taught in the science lessons reflect every day life, thus enabling pupils to see the relevance of their work.

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers throughout the school place great emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. They use information and communication technology (ICT), especially the electronic white boards, effectively in lessons. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and is giving them a good basis for the development of workplace skills that will support them successfully in later life. Good strategies are used successfully to support children's learning in the Reception and Year 1 classes. Teachers have skilfully adapted the curriculum to meet the needs of their children. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress and achieve the standards of which they are capable.

The improvements in teaching have resulted in pupils really enjoying their lessons. Consequently they have very positive attitudes towards school and their attendance is above average. Pupils' personal development is good, as is their spiritual, moral and cultural development. They behave well, know the differences between right and wrong and are knowledgeable about life in other countries. Pupils get on well with each other and are very sociable. Several pupils said 'we like coming to school and really enjoy learning about being healthy'.

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. The procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and fully comply with the latest government requirements. Pupils say they know what they have to do to improve their work; they feel safe, well cared for and want to take part in their lessons. The wide range of extra-curricular activities support and enhance the good curriculum.

Standards have been traditionally high at the school but fell in 2006. Through rigorous self-evaluation the school has successfully introduced changes to the way pupils are taught. As a result, standards have returned to their previous high levels. Nevertheless, not all lessons and assemblies start and finish promptly. This slippage limits the school in its ability to make the very best use of all opportunities to promote pupils' learning.

The school has a good reputation and enjoys the support of the parents and the local community.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards of pupils' writing by focussing more closely on the development of grammar, handwriting, punctuation, and spelling.
- Ensure that all lessons and assemblies start and finish on time so that no teaching and learning time is lost.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the Foundation Stage generally exceed the expected levels for children of this age. They achieve well particularly in their personal, mathematical and communication, language and literacy development. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently above average. In contrast, standards at the end of Year 6 declined and there was some underperformance by the more able pupils to the extent that in 2006 standards were lower than expected. In addition several pupils faced challenging personal circumstances and learning difficulties which impacted on national test results. The school has responded very effectively to halt this decline and throughout the school pupils are now making good progress. The indications are that standards in the current Year 6 in English, mathematics and science will be well above average by the end of the year. Nevertheless, standards in grammar, spelling, handwriting and punctuation are not as high as they should be given pupils starting points. Teachers are quick to identify pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and adopt a wide range of strategies to ensure these pupils and those who speak English as an Additional Language make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils like coming to school. They behave very well in lessons and in the playground. Instances of pupils being unkind towards each other are virtually non-existent. The majority of pupils work hard and are very caring and supportive towards each other. They are knowledgeable about the need to eat healthy foods and to take regular exercise. They contribute well to their community by raising money for projects and are very aware of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. The good relationships between the teachers and the pupils ensure that the pupils enjoy their learning and adopt a positive approach to their lessons. One Year 4 pupil said, 'I like to do hard sums'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good teaching is increasingly being reflected in the higher standards attained by pupils. The strategies adopted by teachers to encourage pupils to become more independent learners are having a positive effect in raising standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Teachers use questioning strategies effectively and encourage pupils to think successfully for themselves. Teachers have a good understanding of what pupils know and understand. They use their assessments well to match the work to pupils' needs and to track pupils' progress. Evaluation of assessment outcomes has enabled the school to identify the need to improve pupils' skills in relation to use grammar, spelling, handwriting and punctuation. Good quality marking throughout the school leads to pupils' better understanding of what they have to do to improve to achieve their individual challenging targets. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils but their time is not always used to best effect particularly when the teacher is teaching the whole class. Furthermore, lack of precise timekeeping in relation to the start and finish of lessons and assemblies culminates in the loss of a small but significant amount of teaching and learning time each term.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Teachers use opportunities effectively to link pupils' learning in different subjects. These opportunities help pupils to make good progress although writing skills are not sufficiently re-enforced in subjects other than English. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and provides well for all areas of children's learning. ICT is used well in many subjects to support pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy taking part in a good range of additional activities. These activities include computer, choir, football and gardening. Pupils' learning is also enhanced effectively through the school's use of visits to places of interest and visitors who share their knowledge and experiences with pupils. For example, an author worked successfully with pupils during the inspection and a recent visit by a film producer motivated pupils to take an interest in media studies. The teaching of French supports pupils' cultural development well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There are effective arrangements to ensure that pupils are safe and cared for well. Pupils value their relationships with teachers and other adults. One pupil described school as being, 'like a second home'. To this extent pupils are confident that they will receive help needed to resolve any difficulties they might face. The support provided for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is good. The school's procedures to track pupils' progress over longer periods of time and to identify their

subsequent learning needs are very good. Consequently, teachers are well informed about the progress that pupils are making. Teachers responded rapidly once the signs of declining standards were fully recognised and their actions have had a positive effect on progress made by pupils throughout the school. There is an effective school council which ensures the school listens and responds well to pupils' views.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's improvement. The current school development plan underpins the vision for improvement and is checked and measured well by members of the leadership team. It is based on a thorough, rigorous and accurate self-evaluation. This has highlighted the need to raise standards further in pupils' use of spelling, grammar and punctuation. The newly appointed deputy head is providing effective support and leadership. All teachers work together effectively to implement the changes agreed to the way the curriculum is taught. There are appropriate arrangements to check on the quality of teaching and to promote improvements. This has led to greater consistency in teaching and raised expectations as to what pupils can achieve. However, these arrangements have not drawn attention to the small but significant leakage of time due to late start and end times of lessons and assemblies. Governors provide good support and challenge. They work well with the headteacher to ensure the school uses its resources efficiently and provides good value for money. Parents are very supportive of the school and rightly believe that it is a good school.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	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	2
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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

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

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 November 2006

Dear Pupils

East Bergholt Church of England School, School Lane, East Bergholt, CO7 6SW

Thank you very much for making my colleague and myself so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our visit and talking to you. We thought that you were very friendly and polite. Looking at your books and talking with you helped us to find out a lot about your school.

We believe your school is a good school and does a lot of things well. Your headteacher and teachers work hard to make certain that you are safe and you are doing well in lessons. You have made a lot of progress recently and are taking more responsibility for finding things out for yourselves. You behave very well in your lessons and try hard. Well done.

We also think that your school could do even more to help you. We have asked your headteacher and teachers to help you improve your writing by making sure you use grammar and punctuation properly, spell words correctly and produce neat handwriting. We have also asked them to make certain that every bit of time during the school day is used well to help you to learn. We are sure that if this happens you will get an even better education.

Once again, thank you for making our visit so nice. It was really great being there when you won the football tournament!

Best wishes to all the pupils at East Bergholt Primary School.

David Wynford Jones

Lead inspector