

Great Tey Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115079
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	311817
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Brown

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	62
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	3
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Robert Deal
Headteacher	Mrs Deborah Crabb
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chrismund Way Great Tey Colchester Essex CO6 1AZ
Telephone number	01206210415

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2008
Inspection number	311817

Fax number

01206210415

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2008
Inspection number	311817

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average in size and draws pupils from a wide area. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion, fewer than 4%, are from other backgrounds and none speak English as a second language. Very few are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is lower than average and no pupils have a statement of special educational need. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) takes in children twice a year in the term following their fourth birthday, but because of the small numbers involved, they are taught alongside the Year 1 pupils. Children's attainment when they join the school varies from year to year but is broadly typical for their age.

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 now recovering well from a turbulent period in its history. All the teaching staff are new to the school in the past two years. The headteacher is also new to her post. Her determination and vision have meant that the success of the school has been sustained and that quality in all areas is now improving. The governors have played an important role in supporting the school during this time. The great majority of parents wholeheartedly approve of the work it does. In a comment that is typical of the parents' views one wrote; 'The school has a wonderful 'family' feel about it.'

Good quality personal development and well-being is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils agree that the slogan the school has adopted, 'Together everyone achieves more,' (TEAM) is more than just a slogan for them. They believe that they do form part of a team and that they have a genuine say in some of the decisions that are made about the school through the work of the school council and in the class discussions that take place. The pupil's high level of belief in and commitment to the school is reflected in the outstanding levels of attendance and surveys in which everyone says that pupils enjoy school tremendously. Whilst almost all aspects of pupils' personal development are good, their cultural development is limited. They have a good understanding of their own culture, but lack a good perspective on the wider world.

By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are usually above the national average. The results vary from year to year, according to the strengths and interests of the cohort. The lack of a clear trend applies equally to the performance of boys and girls. Their achievements vary across subjects and year groups according to their individual skills and interests. Overall, though, the pattern is of good achievement. Staff make good provision for those pupils who need extra support with their learning and those pupils who have particular gifts and talents are not only recognised, but get effective support in their development.

The day-to-day curriculum is good and pupil's learning is well supported by good quality teaching. There is a clear emphasis on developing literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills alongside developing a knowledge and understanding of other subjects. However, both pupils and staff enjoy the benefits of cross-curricular work when links are made across subjects. They acknowledge that when this works well it raises the quality of the learning and motivates the pupils to even higher levels of commitment. Staff recognise that greater consistency and rigour in applying this approach will benefit all subjects.

The strength of the leadership in sustaining and beginning to build upon the success of the school through very difficult circumstances is one indicator of the school's strong capacity to improve. The leadership knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. Staff and governors have already identified that they need to strengthen their work in promoting community cohesion. There is a good commitment to the village and local communities, but the wider, national and global perspective is not in place.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The small number of children in the Reception class join the school from a variety of pre-school settings. They are integrated with the pupils in Year 1 but they also have good opportunities to work as a separate group. Staff ensure children experience a good range of learning activities, both indoors and outside. Good quality assessment procedures allow the staff to track their

progress effectively and to plan activities which match their individual needs and rate of development. A newly introduced learning profile is already being well used. Information from the school's data indicates the trend over three years is for children to make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Most start with a level of skills and development broadly in line with that expected, but many are achieving better than expected levels by the time they move into Year 1. The leadership and management of the EYFS by the headteacher is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the provision that is made to promote community cohesion and expand pupil's cultural horizons.
- Build upon the current organisation of the curriculum to ensure that the best aspects of cross-curricular work become a regular feature.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From the time they start at the school to the time they leave pupils' achievements progress at a faster than usual rate. By the end of Year 2 teachers' assessments in reading, writing and mathematics show that the standards are above the national average and there are indications that the trend in results is improving. However, the variations from year to year and subject to subject make it difficult to determine a clear pattern. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, results in the national assessments for English, mathematics and science are above those normally found. Once again, variations between subjects and between the cohorts give no discernible trend. Nevertheless, staff monitor the outcomes carefully and, when science results declined in 2007, action was taken to improve learning in this area. As a result every child achieved the highest level in 2008.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall, although their cultural development is only satisfactory. This is because the school does not yet do enough to expand pupil's awareness of the diversity of British society, or give them sufficient opportunities to develop an understanding of life in other countries. Behaviour in the school is good. The staff effectively teach pupils right from wrong and a host of other important social skills. They have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and a balanced diet. They feel safe and have a good awareness of road and water safety. Pupils are keen to come to school because they say that everybody gets on extremely well together and they enjoy lessons. Even though attendance is excellent, the staff still monitor this aspect carefully. Pupils make a good contribution to school and village life, taking on responsibilities such as school council work with pride. As a result, together with their good basic skills in English, mathematics and ICT, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress across the school because teachers plan effectively to meet all needs. The school has a clear policy to ensure that all teachers incorporate work that will

challenge the gifted and more able children as well as targeting support for those who find learning difficult. Lesson objectives are clear and shared with pupils at the start of lessons and recapped at the end. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to provide good support for the very few individuals who need extra help to develop their skills and understanding. Teachers are skilled at assessing and tracking pupil's progress. They have established a system of target setting which pupils know and understand well. However, the targets are safe rather than challenging and, therefore, do not always stretch or stimulate them to high levels of achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is good provision for teaching the essential literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Teachers are in the process of developing the curriculum to incorporate more cross-curricular work. In a very successful lesson for Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils were creating charcoal portraits related to their history topic on the Second World War. In doing so, they made good use of their mathematical knowledge of shape to plan the basic layout of their sketches. They were enthused by the tasks and said they believed that this way of working led to them learning more effectively. Staff acknowledge that there is still a lot more to do to fully incorporate cross-curricular working in to the core of daily work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils correctly believe that the care, guidance and support they receive are good. They are proud to be at the school, speaking enthusiastically about how their work is valued, praised and developed by the staff. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively and their work gives great support to individual pupils' development. Very careful attention is paid to pupil welfare. Child protection procedures are well established and rigorously maintained. The good quality systems to check academic progress are effective at preventing pupils from falling behind, but are not used as successfully to consistently promote the higher levels of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, staff and governors have a clear and accurate picture of the school's development. Staff morale is good, a direct result of the effective teamwork across the school. Everyone is hardworking and committed to the school's success. These positive attitudes and good relationships allow the headteacher to work with staff to review what works well and what needs to be improved to move the school forward. The governors are effective in supporting and promoting the school, acting as a critical friend and overseeing the developments whilst checking progress. They have successfully helped the school to get back on track. They accept that during the very difficult period for the school over the last two years that they have not asked the school to focus on its duty to promote the national and global aspects of community cohesion, although they rightly point out the success of the school in involving, serving and promoting its local community.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Tey C of E VC Primary School, Colchester CO6 1AZ

Thank you for being so friendly when I visited you. I would like to explain what I found when I spent time in your lessons and talked with you and your teachers.

I really enjoyed my time in your school. I was very impressed with how polite and thoughtful you are. I think that the TEAM theme along with your ten key words are great ideas. I could see how the staff use these to help you develop your excellent manners and thoughtful attitudes. I was delighted to hear how you enjoy coming to school, and when I checked, I found that the already good level of attendance improved even further last year and it is now excellent. Well done!

I think that you go to a good school. It is clearly working well and many of your parents wrote to me to tell me this too. A number of things really impressed me. One was the way in which your teachers have been able to improve the standards you achieve in science when they realised that they had started to decline. Another is the way your teachers encourage you to play an active role in making decisions about what is happening at the school.

I could see that your teachers and teaching assistants work really hard to help you to learn and that they have some great ideas to help you. However, I would still like them to do more to broaden your cultural understanding. They do a good job of involving you in the life of the village but I would like them to make more links with other groups and schools in this country and elsewhere in the world. I also want them to think about how they organise your work to see if they can make all your lessons as exciting and effective as the best ones. Several of you told me that you know that you learn most and enjoy the lessons best when the work you do is not just about one subject but covers a range of different ideas and aspects.

Thank you once again for your warm welcome, and all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Roger Brown

Lead inspector