

# Boxford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124691
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	315021
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth Frith

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>	3-9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Diane Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Robert Giles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Stone Street Boxford Sudbury Suffolk CO10 5NP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01787210332
<b>Fax number</b>	01787211662

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the monitoring and evaluation of achievement and standards from entry to school to Year 4, recent work on improving writing, and the quality of pupils' pastoral care and academic guidance. She gathered evidence from the school's self-evaluation form, lesson observations, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, pupils' work, information that the school keeps on how well pupils are doing, the school development plan and an analysis of the parents' questionnaire responses. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is situated in rural Suffolk and serves the village of Boxford and several others nearby. It is broadly average in size. Pupils come from mainly favourable socio-economic backgrounds and the percentage eligible for free school meals is below average. The majority of children attend some form of pre-school education before starting in either the Nursery or Reception. Attainment on entry is above that usually seen in children of this age for their personal, social and emotional development so they are well prepared for their learning. In other areas, children's attainment is broadly average. The percentage of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion that have a statement of special educational need. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

The school has received the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the National Healthy Schools Award and the sports Activemark in recognition of its work.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and do particularly well. Excellent leadership and management are focused clearly on promoting pupils' personal development and raising standards. This results in a stimulating curriculum, first-rate care, guidance and support, and excellent achievement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision for the school with an aim to encourage well-rounded and independent thinking children who love learning. They are supported well by a strong team of staff who share this vision and are fully committed to the school and local community. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well.

The vast majority of parents are very positive about the school, as the following typical comment indicates. 'I have always found the level of teaching exceptional at Boxford and could not have asked for a better start for my children.' A few expressed concerns about mixed-age classes but evidence from the inspection suggests that pupils are challenged well, according to their age and ability. Pupils are proud of their school and are eager to be there, as the high attendance rate indicates. They are very positive about many aspects of the school, from using computers to learning to swim in the school's pool. Pupils are excited by their learning and say, 'Teachers are good because they make the lessons fun and help us.'

Gains in learning are usually outstanding and never less than good because teaching is frequently excellent and pupils respond very well. Nearly all children exceed the levels expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1 because provision and teaching in the Foundation Stage is excellent. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been at least significantly above average for several years. Sometimes standards are exceptionally high, as in 2007. Pupils continue to achieve very well in Years 3 and 4 so that by the time they leave school they are working at levels much higher than those expected for their age. Last year, pupils exceeded the challenging targets set. Evidence provided by the school, and work in lessons and in pupils' books, show that all groups of pupils are progressing exceptionally well and are on course to meet their targets.

Staff are not complacent and continually look for ways to improve their practice in order to raise standards. The result of their recent successful work is seen in the dramatic improvement in pupils' writing. This has been achieved through a range of strategies that give pupils much clearer guidance on how they can improve their writing, and activities which fully engage their interests. The rise in the quality of boys' writing has been particularly pleasing. From entry to Nursery or Reception, children are encouraged to write through a range of 'play' activities and this is built on successfully by involving the older pupils when deciding what successful and interesting writing looks like and how it can be achieved.

A key feature of the successful teaching is the way in which staff use a range of teaching styles and activities which match well to the preferred learning styles in each class. Their use of questioning is very effective in developing pupils' thinking and assessing their understanding. Teachers have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to learn and share this with them so pupils are very clear about what is expected of them and how they can improve their work. Care, guidance and support are excellent. Because the work is matched well to their abilities, pupils feel confident and able to succeed. Those who need additional help with their learning frequently do better than similar pupils nationally, because of the excellent support given by teachers and teaching assistants. Staff are aware of the need to become more familiar with

evaluating the evidence provided by the new system for regularly checking how well pupils are doing, so that they have a clearer understanding of the impact of their work on pupils' progress from entry to Year 4.

A key feature of the school's curriculum is the way in which it engenders excitement and enjoyment in learning. Exceptionally good links between subjects and the focus on developing pupils' skills through a curriculum that encourages individual creativity makes learning easier and more relevant. The particularly good focus on developing pupils' self-esteem and awareness of their actions on others results in excellent behaviour and helps to create a harmonious community. Pupils make a very positive contribution to the school and wider community and show this through their consideration for others, whether it be by becoming members of the school council, acting as buddies or raising funds for charities. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives through eating a balanced diet and taking part in plenty of physical activities. The school supports this very well by providing a range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and staff are continuing to improve provision so that pupils have a better understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society. Pupils are cared for exceptionally well and prepared particularly well for the next stage of their education and beyond.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children's development is impressive in both the Nursery and Reception. Gains in learning are often excellent. Children settle easily because links between home, school and pre-school settings are good, expectations are clear and routines helpful. Adults in charge have exceptionally high aspirations. Teachers' high quality planning, together with an excellent understanding of how young children learn ensure that children thoroughly enjoy their learning and are suitably challenged. In Nursery, they develop a good understanding of number through their confident use of an interactive whiteboard that develops their independence well. In Reception, their mathematical skills and understanding are developed further through an excellent daily session of outside activities. The development of the garden and the activities provided for those in Reception show exemplary practice of how young children learn through outside play. A particularly good balance of work is achieved between children developing their independent skills by working unaided and with them working under the close direction of an adult.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Consolidate the implementation of the recently introduced system to track pupils' progress so that staff can more easily evaluate how well pupils are doing and can maintain consistently high standards from year to year.

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**Annex A**

## 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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<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>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

15 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Boxford Church of England V C Primary School Boxford, Sudbury CO10 5NP

You may remember that I recently visited your school to talk to you about what you do and what you learn. Thank you for making me feel so welcome. You and your parents said that you go to a very good school and I agree with you. I think Boxford Primary is excellent. I really enjoyed my visit and if you read on further you will see some of the things I found out.

- You all try very hard and make excellent progress. By the time you leave school in Year 4 you are working at levels much higher than I sometimes see in children of this age.
- You thoroughly enjoy school and you arrive regularly and on time.
- You behave exceptionally well, get on with each other and make good friends.
- You really enjoy your lessons and the range of activities that are provided like using the climbing wall and swimming pool.
- You contribute a great deal to the school and wider community. Thank you to those of you who met with me after lunch. You represented the views of others very well.
- I was very pleased that you feel well cared for and know who to go to if you have a problem.
- Staff are all very keen to do the best they can for you. Teaching is exceptionally good and just as they look after you very well, you too are polite and considerate to others.

Mr Giles manages and leads the school very well and staff and governors give him lots of help. They have agreed that they will focus on seeing how well you are doing by using a new computer program that records the standards you achieve and the progress you make. This will help them to see what more they can do to improve the school and the standards you achieve. I know you will respond well to their efforts by continuing to try hard and do your best.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Frith

Lead inspector