

Honington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124702
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	315028
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Sally Fogden
Headteacher	Mrs Brenda Burridge
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Honington Bury St. Edmunds Suffolk IP31 1RE
Telephone number	01359269324
Fax number	01359269324

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The vast majority of pupils in this school are of White British heritage. Around two thirds are from service families and the proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than at the beginning of Reception or at the end of Year 4 is much higher than usually seen. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils who find learning difficult is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Due to good leadership and management and good teaching, the quality of education provided is good. The school's curriculum and pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are proud of and enjoy their school a great deal and attend regularly. Pupils particularly appreciate the efforts that staff make to ensure learning is interesting and fun. Behaviour is exemplary and attitudes to learning excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They sensitively consider the impact of what they say and do on others and think about those less fortunate than themselves. Members of the school council take their role seriously and are currently working to reduce energy use at the school, for example, urging people to turn off lights. By Year 4, pupils are mature and responsible and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They readily accept responsibility, and help others, especially Reception children. Parents regard the school highly. One parent captured the views of many when she wrote, 'We have always been pleased with their progress and know how much both our children have loved their time at the school.'

This year, Reception children entered the school with knowledge and skills above those expected nationally. They benefit from outstanding provision and many attain well above expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage. Standards in Year 2 are well above average. Pupils currently in Year 4 attained average standards in Year 2 and have made good progress since then and achieved well so that many are now attaining above expected levels. Pastoral care and academic guidance are good overall. In all classes, staff regularly assesses and carefully analyse each pupil's progress and the school directs extra help to those who are at risk of not doing their best. The learning needs of those who join the school in classes other than Reception are quickly assessed so that their education can continue with minimum interruption. Year 4 pupils show an impressive understanding of where and how to improve their work. However, this is not the case in all classes. When adults do not show pupils how to assess and improve particular aspects of their work or ask pupils to remember too many things, the rate of progress slows.

The headteacher and assistant headteacher provide very good direction for the work of the school. The school has a wide range of useful partnerships to ensure pupils develop well. For example, in order to promote continuity of learning, Year 4 pupils have been working in the English and mathematics books that will transfer with them to middle school. The school has improved well since its last inspection. For example, information and communication technology (ICT) is much better used to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring and evaluation are effective and the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and where improvements are needed and has good capacity to continue improving. However, ways of judging progress in priorities in the school's development plan are in some respects unclear. This limits the capacity of leaders and governors to evaluate fully the impact of the plan on the standards pupils achieve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Excellent teaching and leadership and management, characterised by high expectations, and an outstanding curriculum help children to make rapid progress in all areas of learning. Excellent individual induction arrangements enable children to settle quickly. They love exploring the fun activities staff plan and they learn very effectively. By the end of Reception, almost all

children reach expected standards and many exceed these. Higher attaining children write clearly and with much greater clarity and confidence than is typical of their age. There is a good balance of adult-guided activities and those chosen by themselves and children make impressive gains in confidence and independence. Staff regularly assess the progress of each individual, check that children try everything that is planned and intervene very effectively and sensitively to guide them. Many parents are right to be delighted with the excellent start their children make in Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all teachers regularly specify what a good piece of work should look like so that pupils see how to evaluate and improve particular aspects of their work.
- Provide specific criteria for success in the school's development plan to help leaders and governors more effectively evaluate progress in its key priorities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and make good progress overall and standards are rising. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards in Year 2 have risen to well above expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Rates of progress in Years 3 and 4 have improved and standards are above average and rising. Pupils also achieve well in subjects other than English and mathematics. Standards in ICT, singing, history and physical education (PE) are above expected levels. Pupils who find learning difficult respond well to the carefully tailored additional support provided by teachers and teaching assistants and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils make good progress because planning meets their needs and they are suitably challenged. Reading is given strong emphasis and taught very well. Daily practice in reading in school and at home, along with systematic teaching of letters and sounds helps pupils to enjoy and make very good progress in reading.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is given a high priority from Reception onwards and is outstanding throughout the school. Pupils benefit and appreciate the school's strong links with the church. They are easy to talk to, are polite and helpful and love school. Pupils show a good understanding of the need for a healthy diet and regular exercise. They act with exceptional consideration for their own safety and that of others. Pupils show a very good understanding and exceptional empathy and respect for life styles in other countries. Their understanding of the cultures and traditions of people from minority ethnic backgrounds who live in Britain is not as strong. Pupils' good progress in their development of basic skills and outstanding progress in their personal development prepare them well for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan lessons thoroughly so that they meet the learning needs of all pupils. In lessons, pupils are given frequent chances to speak to partners or in small groups. This helps them to

develop their speaking and listening skills, which, in turn, helps support their enjoyment of learning and progress in all subjects. Classrooms are stimulating and relationships are excellent, both of which encourage pupils to want to learn. When the class is working in groups, skilled teaching assistants make an important contribution to the good achievement of those who find learning difficult. However, teaching assistants are sometimes less effectively deployed when the teacher is teaching the full class. Homework is well organised.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school's curriculum is exceptionally rich and varied and is carefully modified to meet the learning needs of pupils of all abilities. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities which provide many opportunities for sport, exercise, and developing pupils' interests. Much attention is given to pupils' personal development and to good effect. Frequent links between subjects help pupils to develop key skills across subjects, particularly their skills in writing and in ICT. Pupils from Reception onwards very much enjoy and benefit from the excellent range of purposeful visits and visitors. These enhance the range and quality of experiences provided in all classrooms. As they grow older, pupils are encouraged to work more independently and this helps the more able pupils in particular to enjoy learning and to achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures for child protection and safeguarding pupils are thorough and effective. These are used well to help them grow in confidence and ensure they are happy and secure. Pupils' academic progress is carefully assessed and additional help is provided for those who are at risk of underachieving. Guidance for learning is not fully effective in all classes. In lessons where pupils are given insufficiently clear guidance on how to move on to the next stage, or when they are not shown exactly what is expected in their work, their progress slows.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and assistant headteacher work together very effectively and ensure the overall success of the school. Staff training and guidance is good and careful follow-up checks by the head and subject leaders ensure that staff adopt a consistent approach to such matters as how pupils' work is planned. The leadership of pupils' personal development is outstanding and this is evident in pupils' polite, confident and pleasant demeanour. The leadership of teaching and learning is good. The headteacher and assistant headteacher encourage other leaders to develop their leadership roles. Consequently, governors and subject leaders carry out their roles well. Governors have a clear view of the strengths of the school and where improvements are needed. However, ways of judging the impact of the school's development plan on pupils' achievement are sometimes not clear enough.

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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?	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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 disabilities make progress	2

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	1
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.

Annex A

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 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

11 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Honington C of E Primary School, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP31 1RE.

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school. A special thanks to those who met me at lunchtime on the first day of the inspection. I am pleased that you all enjoy school so much and attend so regularly. I thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. I think your school is a good school. It is run well and is giving you a good education. Reception children very quickly begin to learn to read, write and they behave very well indeed. Staff provide good teaching so that you make good progress. You are being well prepared for life at your next school. I am glad yours is such a happy and interesting school and that you and your parents are so pleased with it.

You clearly know how to act safely and how to think about the safety of others. You show that you have a very clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong. You also show great consideration for others and are very friendly to each other. You should be proud of your excellent behaviour and manners. Those of you who need extra support with learning make good progress because the school helps you learn. It was good to see your school assembly. I especially enjoyed hearing how well you all sing.

There are many things that your headteacher, staff and governors want to improve. They are keen to help your school to get even better! I agree with them that there are two important things that need doing first.

- All teachers should help you see exactly how to make your work better.
- Help those who run the school to see more clearly, how well the school is improving.

With very best wishes for the future

Mr Sadler

Lead inspector