

Hopton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124703
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	340630
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Jackie Cousins

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	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Buckley
Headteacher	Helen Harding
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and observed all four teachers who were teaching during the inspection. They held meetings with the headteacher, governors, senior leadership team, special educational needs coordinator, middle leaders and staff. They talked to two groups of pupils from Years 1 to 4, including some from the school council. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at some documentation including the safeguarding policy and risk assessments. An analysis was made of school data on pupils' attainment and progress, and inspectors looked at pupils' work in books and on display. A scrutiny of 40 parents' questionnaires and some from pupils and staff was carried out.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how consistently boys' attainment is monitored in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how effectively leaders monitor the progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 especially boys in writing
- how well subject leaders monitor pupils' attainment and progress in Years 3 and 4 particularly for more able pupils
- how successfully the school uses feedback to pupils to increase their rate of progress, especially in writing
- how effectively the school's leadership is working to develop pupils' understanding of multi-cultural issues in the United Kingdom (UK).

Information about the school

Hopton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is situated near Diss. It is smaller than an average sized primary school. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. No pupils speak English as their second language or are refugees or asylum seekers. The school attained Healthy School status in 2008 and Sports Activemark in 2009. A playgroup operates close to the school but it is not managed by school governors and so it was inspected separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Hopton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a good school. It has outstanding features. The school offers pupils extremely high quality care and guidance from staff. This means that pupils are treated as unique individuals. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are included extremely successfully into learning whether they start at the school in Reception or any other year group. This is because the school's leadership and staff engage with parents outstandingly well. One parent summed their thoughts up when they wrote, 'The pastoral care at the school is superb and all staff are friendly and welcoming to parents and pupils.' This ensures that pupils get on very well together and their behaviour is excellent. They have positive attitudes to learning and say they enjoy many school activities and projects. For example, one pupil said, 'Science and maths are fun.' Pupils' attainment is above average and they achieve well from their starting points. This is due to the fact that teaching is good. Teachers use a good balance of practical exploration and adult-led learning activities. Occasionally, the objectives for learning are rather broad and so different groups of pupils do not know specifically what skills they are expected to use in each lesson. Pupils do not always have effective opportunities to discuss what they have learnt successfully in each lesson.

The school's leadership places an extremely high level of importance on promoting community cohesion. School leaders are involved very astutely in developing provision in the village for the young and older people. A plan is in place to enhance recreation resources for young and older residents. Pupils contribute excellently to the community locally and on a world wide basis. They learn very successfully about people in other countries because the internet is used thoughtfully, for example, older pupils email students in Japan and find out effectively about their cultural differences. Older pupils have written a script and started to make a film about life in an English school which will be shared with students in Japan. Pupils are very aware of the effects of climate change on the world. Global issues such as trading fairly with other countries have been explored carefully by pupils due to very thoughtful leadership from staff.

Outstanding leadership from the headteacher and her team are very astutely driving improvements. The headteacher's leadership inspires others to work together very thoughtfully. Staff and governors are very proud to be part of the school. Pupils' progress meetings have recently been introduced but records are not kept which allow staff to evaluate the impact on pupils' learning of the strategies they use to support pupils' learning. Boys' and girls' attainment is not always analysed in each year group in detail. This means that occasionally leaders are not totally clear about which groups of pupils are underachieving. School data show that there are sometimes bigger gaps between the attainment of boys and girls than is so nationally, especially in writing.

Inspection evidence shows that this is not the case in the school's current work, but the school does not analyse the progress by gender on a year group basis and so could not spot such differences quickly enough. Considerable improvements since the last inspection include the fact that pupils' attainment in Year 4 has risen and outcomes for pupils are outstanding. Self-evaluation is used well by senior and middle leaders and so the school is in a good position to improve in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- – Improve the consistency of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring all lessons contain effective sharing and use of highly specific objectives for learning so that all groups of pupils are fully challenged
 - giving pupils high quality opportunities to discuss how they have been successful in their learning and what they could do to improve
 - evaluating more closely the impact of the extra support or challenge given to those pupils who need it
 - analysing boys' and girls' attainment even more thoroughly over a three year period.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

From their average levels of skills on entry to Year 1 pupils make good progress. As a result, attainment is above expectations by Year 4 in English, mathematics and science. Teachers' assessments in March 2010 showed that already three out of ten Year 4 pupils were working at above expected levels of skill in English and mathematics. Observations of lessons and an analysis of pupils' books show that nearly all Year 4 are now working at expected levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys' and girls' standards in writing have improved significantly this year because personal targets are used effectively. Teachers' assessments from 2009 show that Year 2 pupils' attainment is above average in reading and mathematics. Observations of lessons demonstrate that pupils' standards of writing are in line with expectations. Boys' and girls' attainment is similarly good. Attainment has risen considerably over the last three years. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is monitored carefully and so they achieve well. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are provided for well and so they progress successfully.

Pupils contribute to the community outstandingly well. For example, they recently performed May Day celebrations very effectively including Maypole dancing for parents and local people. Pupils value everyone thoughtfully including people who are less fortunate than them and last Christmas they successfully collected well loved toys to give to others. Their spiritual development is outstanding. For instance, at Easter pupils very reflectively wrote their hopes and dreams on a pebble and placed them together in the church. Pupils' multi-cultural awareness is developed effectively through projects which study the beliefs of Sikhs and Muslims who live in the UK or abroad. Pupils feel

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extremely safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe successfully. For example, they are clear what to do to keep themselves safe whilst using the internet. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles outstandingly well. All pupils take part in daily ten minute physical exercise activities as well as two sessions where they learn to play basketball or tennis. They are knowledgeable about foods which are better for them and those which should not be eaten too often. For instance, they are very clear about the dangers of eating too much salt. Pupils concentrate extremely well in lessons because staff work diligently to make lessons fun. They are outstandingly well prepared for the next stage of education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Good quality teaching and learning ensure pupils achieve well. During the inspection, the most successful teaching used effective methods so that pupils learnt how to organise their work carefully. This meant that pupils developed their basic skills well. In one good session seen, questioning was used very effectively and so pupils learnt to explain their thinking clearly. Paired discussion times allowed pupils to explore their

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

ideas rigorously about whether children should be limited in what they eat at school. This meant that when they started to write they were clear about how to use persuasive words to support their argument. Teachers mostly use their knowledge of pupils' prior learning effectively when planning for their next steps. Occasionally, lesson planning does not always ensure different groups of pupils are effectively identified to work at higher levels of skill.

A high emphasis is given to the promotion of language, literacy and numeracy skills in the good curriculum. The pupils improve their knowledge and understanding of the world thoughtfully through investigative tasks. The curriculum is effectively enriched, for example, by the teaching of French and the violin. The pupils very much enjoy all the super projects planned for them and the special event days. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils greatly value all the exciting art topics they do using famous artists. They really enjoy the extra activities offered for sports and music. Pupils learn well about Christian and other beliefs in assemblies and religious education sessions due to the fact that these are well planned. Provision for the gifted and talented pupils is developing appropriately.

An exceptionally welcoming and happy atmosphere is clearly visible throughout the school. Pupils receive exceedingly high levels of care from staff and so relationships are very positive. From the moment pupils start at school their pastoral needs are met excellently. For example, breakfast club ensures pupils have a healthy meal before they start their school day. Those from minority ethnic groups are supported very effectively and so they are successfully integrated into school life. Vulnerable pupils are identified outstandingly well and they are assisted to make good progress in their personal and academic studies. The school works extremely carefully with other agencies to increase pupils' well-being. Its work with families is deeply embedded and ensures they can access the support they need. Teaching assistants work very skilfully to support all pupils and especially those with additional needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads the school with immense professionalism and enthusiasm and is ably supported by a highly committed team of staff. One parent summed up his or her thoughts by saying, 'I have always been very happy with the school and particularly the headteacher who I believe is the heart of the school for its pupils and staff.' School

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

development planning is thorough and sets clear direction for future improvements in the quality of education. Pupils have equal opportunities to learn because the school works extremely carefully to remove any discrimination or obstacles to learning. This is because staff work astutely to meet pupils' individual needs. The school does not analyse fully the effectiveness of teaching on progress made by different groups such as those who would benefit from further challenge.

Governance is outstanding and supports the school very effectively. Governors work extremely well with staff and challenge the school thoughtfully. They are involved highly successfully in planning for the future. Governors have a systematic approach to collecting the views of pupils and parents. They make sure child protection and health and safety matters are dealt with very carefully. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements well. All staff receive regular training in child protection and thorough records are kept of the checks completed on staff. Risk assessments are carried out regularly but they do not always include input from pupils and parents.

The school works outstandingly well to unite the school and wider community. For example, pupils successfully perform plays for people in the local community. The school has evaluated all aspects of community cohesion rigorously and is developing further links to deepen pupils' understanding of how to compare and contrast different cultures from first-hand experiences. The governors effectively surveyed local people to find out what they felt was needed in the village. School staff, governors and local people have several thoughtful ideas and plans to improve facilities in the village.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle into school life quickly because staff gather information effectively from parents and carers. Learning journals are used successfully to record the skills and knowledge children have mastered. Children achieve well in their Reception Year. The children make good progress from their starting points, which are slightly below expectations. This means that standards are broadly at the expected level by the start of Year 1. The children develop their basic skills effectively because staff use resources well. In a good lesson seen children learnt to write effectively because the teacher showed them carefully how to create imaginative sentences. This allowed children to learn the importance of adding descriptive words to their writing about stars. Children learn to use their senses successfully when they experiment with different materials to see what effect water has on them.

The children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent because all adults ensure that the welfare of each individual is supported very methodically. Children are encouraged to be independent successfully and behave outstandingly well. An even balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning is offered because routines are thoughtfully established. The leadership of this stage of education is good. It does not evaluate progress and attainment over a three year period fully and so it is not totally clear about whether boys' attainment is significantly different to that of girls in particular areas of learning. Outside learning is somewhat restricted because there is no all-weather cover.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents expressed a very high level of satisfaction with their children's progress at school, the quality of teaching and ways children are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles. Parents strongly agreed that their child is safe in school. A few parents said they would like more information about how to support their child's learning and the school is already looking into this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hopton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 79 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	58	14	34	3	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	62	15	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	44	20	50	1	3	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	45	20	50	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	45	21	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	45	18	45	4	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	40	23	57	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	30	21	52	2	5	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	38	21	52	4	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	35	21	53	2	5	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	35	22	55	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	40	20	49	3	8	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	58	14	34	3	8	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hopton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Hopton, IP22 2QY

Thank you for helping us to find out about your school. We enjoyed watching lessons and talking to some of you. You attend a happy and friendly school. Positive things about your school include:

- you make good progress in your work
- you behave outstandingly well in school
- your headteacher and senior teachers have very good ideas about ways to improve the school
- teaching is good and the staff work hard to make sessions interesting
- an excellent partnership is in place between the school, your parents, carers and agencies
- staff care and support you outstandingly well and listen to you thoughtfully and so you feel really safe in school.

We have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The most important matters are to:

- make sure staff explain to you more fully what skills you could use in lessons and discuss your successes in detail so that you reach even higher levels of knowledge and understanding
- ensure staff watch over your progress in key areas of learning even more carefully.

Continue to listen carefully to staff comments, come to school everyday and enjoy all the wonderful things you are learning at Hopton Church of England VC Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Cousins

Lead inspector

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