

East Bergholt Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124729
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	340639
Inspection dates	25–26 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Christopher Moodie

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Fairchild
Headteacher	Lee Abbott
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2006
School address	School Lane East Bergholt Suffolk
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Most of the time was spent looking at learning; 14 lessons were observed. Meetings and discussions were held with staff, senior leaders, pupils, and three governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including school improvement plans, attainment and tracking data, and safeguarding information. A total of 68 parental questionnaires were received and scrutinised, along with 117 from pupils and 22 from staff.

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

- The attainment of pupils in mathematics
- The impact of the revised curriculum on standards across the school

Information about the school

In this smaller than average school the overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Below average numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Since the last inspection a new head teacher has been appointed and there has been a significant turnover of staff. The school holds the International Schools Award, Healthy School's status, Creative Partnerships Change School and an Eco School Bronze award.

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

Under the ambitious leadership of the head teacher, the school has improved in significant areas since the previous inspection. From starting points that are broadly average, pupils make good progress and leave the school in Year 6 with attainment that is above the national average. Learning in English is stronger than mathematics and science.

An innovative and exciting curriculum motivates and interests pupils and provides them with good opportunities to develop independent learning skills. Teachers plan imaginative lessons that promote the application of essential basic skills in a range of subjects. Cross curricular work in literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) are very well established. However, the school has not been as successful in embedding mathematics throughout the curriculum in the same way. Where mathematics activities are offered, some pupils are unclear how long they need to spend on them and whether they should work independently or as part of a group. Teaching is good overall, and there is none that is inadequate. Where outstanding teaching is observed, the lesson is managed exceptionally well and all pupils make rapid progress. The use of assessment to support learning is satisfactory. Whilst some teachers guide pupils very clearly to their next step, others mark work without indicating how it can be improved. Basic errors in punctuation, grammar and spelling are not corrected often enough for pupils to understand where their own errors lie. Additional adults are well deployed and have a significant impact on pupil progress and welfare. Pupils experience an outstanding level of care and support in an environment in which they are all personally known and valued. Partnerships with outside agencies are well used to support learning.

Pupils behave well in classrooms and at playtimes. They cooperate with one another and enjoy their time at school. They are appreciative of one another's efforts and contributions and are generous in their praise of their peers. In Key Stage 2, a small number of pupils spend too much time talking and this slows their progress. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that the staff will help them if they have problems. The school is a central part of its local community, and is overwhelmingly supported by parents and carers - almost all value the high quality information that the school provides for them about their children. As one parent stated, 'this school isn't just part of its community, it is the community'.

School leaders and the governing body have a cohesive view of the direction that the school is taking, and regard recent improvements as the start of 'the journey' that will lead the school to better outcomes for pupils. Self evaluation is largely accurate, although the school has modestly underestimated the quality of some aspects of its

work. The combination of an effective leadership team and a determined and aspirational governing body provides the school with a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge in cross curricular work
 - improving the pace of learning for individual pupils in Key Stage 2 by defining more clearly how long a task should take and how pupils should undertake it.
- Use assessment information to match work closely to the needs of individual pupils by:
 - consistently identifying basic errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling and promoting improvement in these basic skills
 - providing pupils with clear guidance for improvement so that they understand exactly what to do to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

As a result of improvements made to the quality of teaching and the curriculum, attainment in English has risen in recent years. In 2009, attainment was significantly above average in this area. Attainment in mathematics has not improved to the same extent, and the school recognises that this is an area for development. Analysis of current work and school data indicates that standards are above average in all subjects at the end of Key Stage 2. Boys performed very well in 2009, but this has not been sustained and there is now little difference in between girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of carefully targeted interventions and well matched work. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress and acquire important learning skills. They are capable of making informed choices about what work they need to do by the time that they leave Year 2. For example, pupils assess their own work and discuss with one another how long it will take them to complete it. Attendance is above average, punctuality is good, and pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons.

Almost all pupils feel safe in school, and are aware of how to keep themselves and their friends safe. An 'e-safety' day in school during the inspection increased their understanding of the potential dangers posed by the internet. Playtimes are friendly and fun, with older pupils mixing well with the younger ones and assuming the role of 'playtime buddies' very effectively. Very large numbers of pupils take advantage of the wide range of sporting opportunities provided by the school. At lunchtime, this exceptionally positive approach to a healthy life style continues as many pupils make well informed choices about the food they eat. Many of them are also able to explain why some foods are healthier than others. As one girl said, 'a chocolate bar is okay if

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

you only eat one a day and get lots of exercise, but the fruit is much better for you'. Pupils have a very strong voice in decisions relating to their learning and well-being, and take on responsibilities very seriously across the school. Pupils are openly proud of their school and are keen that it plays a role in its local community. They are also aware of the needs of others and independently raise money for charities in the UK and abroad. During the inspection Year 5 pupils organised a cake sale for the victims of the Haitian earthquake, baking many of the cakes themselves and counting the proceeds. In every class pupils provide a warm welcome and are extremely polite to one another and to adults. Where pupils are provided with independent choices over their work, the majority make sensible choices. A small number however, take the opportunity to reduce the amount of work that they need to do and opt for work that they find easy. Pupil questionnaires revealed that some consider behaviour to be an issue for the school, but this was not substantiated by any pupil interviews or direct observation. The well established international partnership supports a growing awareness of cultural diversity amongst pupils, who speak with confidence about their friends in Uganda. Pupils are respectful of other people's cultures and values, and can debate viewpoints other than their own. They are curious and keen to understand ethical issues and think deeply about their own and other's experiences. An assembly led by the local Rector was very well received and prompted pupils to talk about the issues raised at playtime.

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	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2

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

The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**1****How effective is the provision?**

The school's innovative approach to the curriculum has had a significant and positive impact on pupils. Lessons are organised in a way which allows them to choose their own route through their learning, making decisions about the order in which they will complete the required tasks. During this time, teachers work with groups of pupils to improve their learning according to their needs. This approach allows teaching time to be maximised, and encourages pupils to develop important independent learning skills. Teaching assistants support pupils well within this structure, working in a variety of ways to promote basic skills and to embed positive attitudes. Some teachers have developed the new approach very successfully, and this promotes a strong learning ethos in which all pupils progress well. In these lessons, good organisation and clear expectations mean that all pupils know exactly what is expected. For example, in Year 2, exceptionally clear communications between the teacher and the class led to every pupil knowing exactly what to do, for how long, and whether they should be talking or working on their own. Pupils thrive on their independence, and are reluctant to stop work for playtime. In lessons where this approach is at an earlier stage of implementation, a small number of pupils are unsure how they should approach a task or activity, and as such some time is wasted on talking. The new curriculum is very creative and offers many enriching opportunities for pupils to acquire skills and knowledge. For example, in Year 3 pupils are working with an artist to create a digital animation sequence of an insect that they have invented. This powerful combination of art, ICT and science enables pupils to attain outstanding levels of understanding in all three subject areas. Such partnerships are an important feature of the curriculum's successes; the school is constantly seeking new ways to motivate pupils. Teachers mark pupils' work, but the information arising from this does not sufficiently inform future planning in all classes.

The school provides a very caring environment for pupils from the moment that they start. Home visits are undertaken for new pupils, and this level of attention continues as pupils move through the school. Transition guidance at the end of Year 6 is good, and pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. Vulnerable pupils are very well supported, and the school works closely with outside agencies to act in their best interests. All staff have qualifications in basic first aid, and some have undertaken advanced paediatric training.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2

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

The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1
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How effective are leadership and management?

The head teacher provides very clear direction for school improvement. Capably supported by an effective deputy head teacher, he has brought about considerable change since his appointment in 2007. The product of these changes is a harmonious school in which pupils learn happily and are keen to make good progress. The most radical of the changes, in which the curriculum has been overhauled, has already resulted in strong improvement in English. The school is now focusing on mathematics and pupils' current work and the school's data indicate that attainment is beginning to rise. School leaders are proactive and successful in identifying groups of pupils, who are in danger of under-achieving and providing support and intervention to prevent this happening. All staff are keen to work to the school's aims and aspirations, and this helps to create a positive learning community. Parents and carers are also very supportive of the school's approach and are looking forward to more improvements in the future. This is largely due to the very high quality and frequency of communications between school and home. The school works very hard to promote an outstanding level of community cohesion, having a strong sense of their own context and the needs of the pupils in the school. The school's safeguarding arrangements are fully compliant, and child protection has a very high profile within the school. The governing body complies with all statutory requirements and is well organised. Challenge and support are provided in equal measure and difficult decisions regarding the school's finances have been taken with a secure strategic view on the future. The school provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
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	2
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 enter the school with skills that are broadly in line with age related expectations. They make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage because teaching effectively uses assessment information to target specific areas of need, such as writing and reading. Children's personal development and social skills are good, and the positive and warm relationships between staff and children encourage mutual trust and confidence. Pupils feel safe in the reception class, and know that their views are listened to and valued. Leaders provide good opportunities for children to comment on their work and their interests. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities and good use is made of the outdoor areas. This allows children to learn to make their own choices, and supports growing independence. The foundation stage leader is ambitious for the development of the school site and has recently overseen the erection of a 'poly tunnel' by parent volunteers. This provides excellent opportunities for children to expand their current allotments, and continue to grow and harvest their own food. Assessment information is being used effectively to track children's progress and carefully plan their next steps. Children are well looked-after in a safe and nurturing environment, where their needs are the priority for all staff. Parents and carers are welcomed and supported, aided by very good use of the home-school diary.

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 and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and all that it does. Inspectors spoke to several parents at assemblies and events and all comments were extremely positive about every aspect of their child's education.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at East Bergholt 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 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 186 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	78	14	21	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	53	78	13	19	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	63	23	34	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	57	23	34	5	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	62	23	34	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	56	27	40	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	66	22	32	1	1	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)	26	38	34	50	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	59	23	34	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	41	30	44	4	6	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	47	27	40	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	53	31	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	65	22	32	2	3	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



Monday 1 March 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of East Bergholt Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Suffolk, CO7 6SW

I would like to thank you for your warm welcome during the recent inspection. Throughout our visit we were impressed by how keen you were to tell us all about your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons, playtimes and assemblies. You helped us to find out about the things that your school does well, and what it needs to do in order to help you to improve your work.

Your school is a very happy place in which teachers and support staff take exceptionally good care of you. You make good progress because you work hard and your teachers provide you with interesting work to do. The new curriculum is very popular and has helped you to be more independent in your lessons. A small number of you still find it hard to make the right choices about which work to choose, and go for the easy option. We have asked your teachers to support these pupils so that they know how long a task should take and how to go about completing it. We have also asked the school to improve mathematics so that it matches the high standards that you set in your English work. We saw some of you thinking carefully about how to improve your work, and believe that some of your teachers can help you by telling you more clearly how to do better.

You behave very well in lessons and around the school. We were surprised to see that some of you thought that behaviour was not very good in your questionnaires. We did not see or hear any evidence of this, and found you to be cooperative, helpful and very friendly.

You can help your own improvement by continuing to work hard and thinking really carefully about what it is that you need to do to make your work better. I wish you all the very best of luck in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

Chris Moodie

Lead inspector

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