

Ringsfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124741
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	340643
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Mary Summers

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C Mehew
Headteacher	Mrs V Rutterford
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2007
School address	School Road Ringsfield Beccles
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. The inspector observed seven lessons, including two teachers and one nursery nurse who was responsible for the Nursery class. The inspector met with a governor, members of staff and pupils, looked at a range of school policies and plans, and records of pupils' progress. She analysed the questionnaires returned by staff and pupils and the 23 questionnaires submitted by parents and carers.

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

- pupils' achievement in mathematics
- children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in the mixed-age class
- how well the school promotes community cohesion outside its immediate locality
- the quality of assessment and how well it is used to help teachers plan for pupils with different needs.

Information about the school

Pupils travel from a wide area to attend this very small school. Currently, most pupils start in the Nursery and remain until they reach the end of Year 4 when they transfer to the local middle school. There are three classes in the school - a Nursery, a Reception/Key Stage 1 class and a Key Stage 2 class. Numbers in each cohort vary considerably from year to year. The vast majority of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion who are identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The school is federated with another local primary school and they share a headteacher. The school holds an Active Playground award from the local schools' sports partnership.

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

This is a good school where pupils are known as individuals and receive outstanding levels of support and encouragement. As a result, they grow into confident young learners who respect one another's views and opinions. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and has a considerable impact on their learning. They are well motivated and enjoy coming to school, as their high levels of attendance show. They feel extremely safe and well cared for. One pupil noted: 'It's a very friendly place. There's nothing to be scared about. The young ones are looked after and teachers deal with any problems very quickly.'

Pupils' achievement is good. Children's skills vary considerably when they enter the Nursery but overall, are typical for their age. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4, their attainment is above average. Progress is good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs progress as well as their peers. Last year the school identified that pupils were not making enough progress in writing. This has been addressed successfully this year by the introduction of a new literacy scheme which has increased pupils' opportunities to write at length. Recent analysis of data has shown that progress in mathematics has not been as good as in reading and writing. While pupils' progress is assessed regularly, this information is not consistently used to ensure that lessons in mathematics fully challenge pupils of different abilities.

Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers have extremely positive relationships with pupils. They maintain pupils' attention and interest well by presenting lively and stimulating lessons, often using technology to make learning fun. Pupils enjoy the wide range of experiences offered through the curriculum. For example, in a history lesson preparing them for a visit to Southwold, Year 1 and 2 pupils watched a short video clip about the seaside 100 years ago. They discussed the similarities and differences between the clothing worn and the activities people enjoyed then and today. They thoroughly enjoyed performing Punch and Judy shows in the puppet theatre and painting pictures of themselves wearing old fashioned bathing costumes. Pupils benefit greatly from the excellent levels of care and support they receive. The school is quick to identify pupils who are experiencing difficulties and seeks prompt support and advice from outside agencies. Assessment procedures have been strengthened this year but pupils are not yet involved enough in setting their own targets for improvement and assessing their own learning.

The headteacher provides a very strong drive for the school's work which ensures that it continues to improve. Careful monitoring and analysis of performance mean that she has a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully improved provision in the Nursery so that it is now excellent and has

raised pupils' achievement in writing so that it is above average. These improvements, together with the decisive leadership of the headteacher and strong support from staff, governors, parents and carers, mean that the school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics by ensuring that assessment information is used consistently to plan activities that meet the different needs and abilities of pupils.
- Involve pupils more effectively in their learning by encouraging them to set their own targets and assess their own progress during lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are very keen to learn and apply themselves well in lessons. They work well individually, in pairs and in small groups. In a history lesson in Years 3 and 4, for example, the pupils worked together to decide on the reliability of different forms of historical evidence. They shared their opinions thoughtfully and listened to one another's points of view. With the teacher's expert questioning, they were able to understand why certain forms of evidence, for example, diaries and letters, provided more reliable evidence than books and films. Girls and boys achieve well and thoroughly enjoy learning. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties make especially good progress when they are supported by teaching assistants. They are encouraged to take a full part in lessons, often rehearsing their answers with assistants before offering their contributions.

The school's work to gain the Active Playground award has helped pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles, which most adopt. Many enjoy the nutritious school lunches and packed lunches usually contain healthy options. Regular swimming and physical education lessons help to increase their fitness levels. Pupils make a good contribution to their own school community, through their work as class councillors and road safety officers. They play an active role in the local community, presenting concerts and assemblies for parents and friends. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and a developing understanding of different faiths and cultures.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

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	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

A wide range of activities is organised to make learning fun for pupils. Visits and visitors to the school add real excitement to pupils' learning. A recent visit to Benacre Woods enabled pupils to go pond-dipping to examine different creatures as part of their work on 'Minibeasts'. When they returned to school, they wrote sensitive poems about their feelings. 'Hurt no living thing,' wrote one Year 2 pupil, 'not ladybird nor pond skater, gliding across the water on long legs.' Information and communication technology is a strong feature of the school's work, with older pupils confident to use the 'learning platform' to exchange messages with friends and teachers and to express their views on school issues. The school is careful to teach pupils how to use the internet safely.

Pupils have many different opportunities to use their basic literacy skills in meaningful ways in different subjects. Year 3 and 4 pupils wrote reports of their visit to the local church as part of their religious education studies and accounts of their investigations into solids and liquids in their science work.

Pupils with moderate learning difficulties receive good teaching and high levels of care and attention. Their needs are carefully assessed and individual programmes implemented to help them learn successfully. Excellent links with external support agencies ensure that specialist advice can be gained as and when necessary to help pupils and families.

Teachers use a variety of strategies to maintain pupils' attention successfully, such as questioning, paired discussion and effective use of interactive whiteboards. Teachers always make it clear to pupils what they are going to be learning during the lesson and what they have to do to achieve success and this is an effective way of harnessing their

motivation and enthusiasm. However, there are opportunities missed to motivate pupils still further by involving them in setting their own targets and reviewing their learning in lessons.

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 provides a firm steer to the school's work, embedding ambition successfully amongst staff and driving improvement well. Her 'can do' approach generates an extremely positive ethos around the school. Other senior staff approach their management duties very diligently and are improving their monitoring skills well.

There are clear procedures to ensure that pupils are safe in school. Safeguarding policies are good and regularly reviewed to ensure their effectiveness. Staff are trained effectively in safeguarding and new staff checked carefully to ensure their suitability. The governing body play a key role in the monitoring process, visiting regularly to learn about different aspects of the school's work. Their visits are linked with different areas of school improvement so they can check how well plans are progressing.

Staff promote equality of opportunity extremely well, analysing information about pupils' progress to ensure that all are achieving well. Racist incidents are extremely rare but leaders tackle them promptly if they do occur.

Partnerships with parents and carers are extremely effective in helping them to become active partners in their children's education and development. Parents and carers value the approachability of staff and the promptness in which any concerns are addressed. The strong support shown by parents and carers was evident during the inspection when a large number turned up to accompany their children on the annual sponsored walk.

Excellent links with the federated school have proved extremely beneficial in developing assessment procedures and aspects of the curriculum. A partnership with a school in east London has been extremely productive in promoting community cohesion outside the immediate locality. Links with a school overseas are developing, to help pupils learn about cultures and communities further afield.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy an excellent start to their education when they begin in the Nursery. It is little wonder that its reputation is growing in the area and that places are vastly oversubscribed. Children quickly settle in and take full advantage of all the exciting opportunities organised for them to develop in different aspects of their learning. Although the outdoor area is small, it is used very imaginatively to provide an extension to classroom activities. Children move freely between the areas, always under the careful supervision of the adult in charge. For example, during the week of the inspection, the children were following the theme of 'pirates'. They drew treasure maps indoors, then went off independently into the outdoor area to make a pirate ship from wooden blocks and follow their maps to find the 'treasure'. They learned how to cooperate, to share ideas and equipment and developed their physical skills as well as their creative talents.

Very well organised induction procedures ensure that children are well known to staff even before they start in Nursery and that parents and carers are secure about procedures and expectations. Children's individual needs are identified quickly and carefully tailored programmes implemented to help them all make excellent progress. Very productive links have developed with the local toddler group which uses the premises once a week in the afternoon. This is helping further to cement the strong relationships between the school and community.

Children transfer into the Reception/Key Stage 1 class in the September of the academic year in which they become five years old. They transfer with excellent personal and social skills, able to take a full part in activities within the class. An extra adult supports the teacher with activities for Reception children and this ensures that they can access

independent learning activities and also benefit from good teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills. They make good progress in all aspects of their learning and development.

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

The response to the questionnaire was higher than is usually the case. Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were extremely positive about the school's work. All agreed that the school was well led and managed and that their children enjoyed school. They were very happy that the school dealt effectively with unacceptable behaviour and that they were given good information about how to support their children at home. The inspector agreed with all their positive views. A small minority of parents and carers was concerned that they were not kept well informed about their children's progress. The inspector was satisfied that parents and carers receive regular reports and that the headteacher and teachers are always available to meet with parents to address any queries or concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ringsfield 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 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 48 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	83	4	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	83	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	78	3	13	2	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	78	4	17	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	83	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	74	6	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	78	4	17	1	4	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)	16	70	4	17	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	74	5	22	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	70	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	70	4	17	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	83	4	17	0	0	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.



24 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ringsfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Beccles, NR34 8NZ

Thank you so much for welcoming me recently and telling me your opinions about your school. Your views, along with everything else that I saw, helped me form a clear view about how well your school works. You go to a good school and these are some of the important things I found out about it.

All the adults take really good care of you and keep you safe in school.

You understand what it means to be healthy, and many of you enjoy the nutritious school lunches and maintain good levels of fitness.

You look after each other extremely well.

Your behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school.

You attend regularly and punctually so that you do not miss important parts of your learning.

The teaching is good and helps you to make good progress.

The children in the Nursery get an excellent start to their education.

The adults work hard to organise lots of activities to make learning fun.

I have asked your headteacher and teachers to make sure that activities in mathematics lessons are set at the right levels for different pupils so that you all make good progress.

I have also asked them to involve you more in setting your own targets for improvement and in assessing your own progress.

You can all play your part in helping your school become even better by making sure you continue to work hard, behave well and attend school every day.

Yours sincerely

Mary Summers

Lead inspector

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