

Cockshutt CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123470
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	359440
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2010
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Dickin
Headteacher	Heather Dawson
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed eight lessons taught by four teachers and met with pupils, staff, governors and parents. They observed the school's work, looked at the school's records, policies and assessments and scrutinised 17 parental questionnaires.

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

- whether teaching is consistent enough to promote good progress
- if the latest national assessments support the school's judgement that attainment and progress have recently improved
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in improving outcomes for all pupils.

Information about the school

Cockshutt Church of England Primary School is much smaller than average. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities fluctuates each year and is currently close to the national average. The largest group of these pupils has moderate learning difficulties. The school holds a number of awards, including Artsmark Gold and the International Schools award.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Cockshutt Church of England Primary School is a good and improving school. Most parents and carers find the staff caring and thoughtful. Those whose children have recently entered the school compliment its welcoming atmosphere. One typical comment was, 'I feel my daughter has had the best start for her school years at Cockshutt and beyond.' Pupils like school too, commenting favourably about how well they get on with their teachers and one another, and the quality of care.

The school has a number of excellent features. For example, it maximises the benefits of its small size by providing an excellent level of personal care and academic support to each pupil. Simultaneously, it recognises the possible pitfalls of its size and acts vigorously to overcome these by, for example, developing outstandingly good partnerships, locally, nationally and internationally. The school's links with the local area and wider world promote community cohesion outstandingly well.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms, is excellent and the school is a warm and welcoming environment, as newcomers attest. Pupils show a very good understanding of issues facing their home area and have contributed their views to the local debate on issues such as the local authority's discussion of which villages should become local 'hubs'.

Children benefit from excellent provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make a great start to their schooling, reaching attainment levels well above average by the end of the Reception Year. Good teaching, that is well-planned and focused on learning, ensures good progress across the school. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average. However, the starting points of these older pupils were low. Their attainment represents good progress and achievement during their time in school. The meticulous attention paid to the needs of each pupil ensures excellent equality of opportunity and great consistency in achievement, including of pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

The curriculum provides exciting learning opportunities. It has great strengths in the arts and international links, and plays a significant part in engaging pupils' interest. Most lessons are very active but sometimes the pace can slow and, at the end of sessions, teachers do not always recapitulate properly on what has been learned.

The headteacher and her close-knit team have a 'can-do' approach that is infectious. All staff agree about what is best for the pupils and work harmoniously to achieve their goals. As a result, the school's performance in important areas has improved, notably its care for pupils and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leaders, managers and the governing body have an accurate understanding of the school and share an ambition

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and drive for improvement. This translates into practical, relevant improvement plans that provide a good template for future developments. The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2011, promote the best practice in teaching to:
 - ensure that all elements of lessons have strong pace, promoting more rapid progress
 - plan and deliver closing sessions to lessons that allow pupils to reflect on and consolidate what they have gained and to understand the next steps in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Small groups of pupils in each year group lead to fluctuations in attainment, depending particularly on the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in each year. Nevertheless, latest assessment data confirms a pattern of improvement, particularly in Key Stage 1 where there has been consistently effective teaching. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards have slowly improved but attainment remains broadly average. However, these pupils started Year 1 with below average attainment. Relatively recent improvements in the curriculum and, particularly, the Early Years Foundation Stage have yet to work through to produce markedly higher standards by the end of Year 6.

Progress in lessons is good. Pupils enjoy learning and are very responsive to the challenges set by teachers. Work is carefully planned to offer support for those who need it and to keep all pupils at full stretch as they learn. Teaching assistants play an important role in supporting pupils with moderate learning difficulties so that they progress as well as their peers. A good English lesson with older pupils enthused everyone so pupils were able, through varied activities, to grasp the nuances of character in 'The BFG'. Given pupils' starting points, which have risen in recent years because of improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the consistent inclusivity of the school ensures that the achievement of all groups of pupils is good.

Pupils, parents and carers testify that the school is a safe place for pupils to grow and learn. Pupils' excellent behaviour and positive relationships contribute to a very safe environment. The pupils have good relationships and are very caring of each other, exemplified by the buddying system whereby each older pupil looks after and supports a partner from the younger classes. Attendance is steadily improving and is high.

A good diet, including healthy break-time snacks and good opportunities for exercise, boosted by after-school clubs in popular sports, ensures pupils appreciate the factors that promote healthy lifestyles. Pupils take full advantage of the good opportunities provided by the health council, eco council and school council to take responsibility and make their views heard. Close governor involvement in these forums ensures that

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discussions are invariably quickly acted upon.

Pupils display excellent cultural development and appreciate cultural diversity across the world. Pupils' social development is very good, it is regularly emphasised in assemblies and is a fundamental part of the school's welcoming ethos.

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	3
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is being continuously developed and has gained national recognition in awards from Artsmark and, more recently, from the British Council with its International Schools' award. These confirm that the school provides a wide range of stimulating experiences that obviate the potential rural isolation inherent in the school's geographical position. Subjects are linked together creatively to ensure both complete coverage and interesting experiences for pupils. Information and communication technology (ICT) is extensively used in association with other subjects, especially to promote pupils undertaking research. Enrichment activities, including numerous trips and popular after-schools clubs, provide additional stimuli.

Lessons are characterised by close collaboration between pupils and staff and a good

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

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focus on learning. Excellent behaviour ensures that interruptions to smooth progress in the classroom are few and far between. Careful planning and a good understanding of each pupil's needs, mean pupils receive the correct degree of challenge and support most of the time. Adults in classrooms collaborate skilfully to ensure equality of opportunity for all. Pupils' books are very well marked so they understand what they have done right and those areas that they need to focus on to raise their standards. Targets are set and regularly checked so that most pupils understand their next steps. There are some inconsistencies in teaching and learning. Teachers' expectations are generally high but the pace of some lessons can flag. Long tasks without breaks and a lack of rigorous deadlines mean that the work rate of even the most willing pupils can diminish as the lesson progresses. Most pupils understand their learning objectives but closing sessions in many lessons are too short to check if these have been met and to consolidate what has been learnt. Improved, more detailed assessment provides valuable information on each pupil's progress and informs carefully written individualised learning plans that ensure that very few pupils fall behind.

The school works closely with pupils, families and outside agencies to secure the well-being of all pupils and to make sure none are disadvantaged in their learning and development. Those pupils with moderate learning difficulties are integrated into all aspects of school life, assisted by the excellent support they receive from capable, well-trained teaching assistants. Pupils speak gratefully of how they enjoy and benefit from sessions designed to improve their literacy and other skills and to boost their self-esteem. They are very confident that, whatever their problems, they will receive effective support. The school is highly inclusive and has a very good reputation for helping pupils in challenging circumstances.

Before- and after-school clubs are well led and managed and appropriately supervised by well-qualified staff who pay careful attention to pupils' safety and well-being. Pupils are happy to attend and get on well with all the adults. Their appetites are satisfied with generally healthy food and they are sometimes reluctant to leave because they are enjoying themselves so much.

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 her cohesive staff team well, embedding ambition and sharing a commitment to providing the best for all pupils and improving the school. She has

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placed her philosophy of inclusion at the centre of the school, and this is widely shared by staff so pupils' equality of opportunity is outstanding. Regular monitoring provides leaders and managers with a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development, and forms the basis for its well-judged plans for the future. These are practical working documents, plainly expressed and subject to a rolling review programme and relevant modification as appropriate. Variations in teaching are known and being addressed, although recent changes in staff mean that some inconsistencies, especially in the pace of learning, remain.

The governing body is supportive and clear about its strategic direction. It has a good understanding of the school, informed by its commitment to obtaining the views of stakeholders like pupils and parents. It uses this information particularly well to ensure the safety and well-being of staff and pupils. Safeguarding is good and staff are well trained in this area. The school adopts safe practices across all aspects of its activities, working in close partnership with the local authority. Child protection and risk assessment policies and practices are subject to regular review, although there is relatively little involvement of pupils and parents in the latter.

Parents and carers are well informed about school activities and their children's progress. Good information is available on the school website, through parents' forums and support sessions and via contacts at the start and end of the day, when staff are always available to chat informally. Parents raise valuable additional funds to support worthwhile activities, such as educational trips. Outstanding partnerships enhance what the school provides. The school is a local leader in a number of significant initiatives, such as developing global links. Partnerships positively improve provision in a number of areas such as ICT, sport and support for gifted and talented pupils. Strong links with local nurseries and the nearby secondary school have brought numerous benefits, especially to the school's curriculum.

The school is fully committed to making an exceptional contribution towards community cohesion. It understands its local context intimately and its work is highly beneficial to cohesion in the local community. The school is at the heart of village life. Numerous links with schools in contrasting environments, both in the United Kingdom and many areas of the wider world, are having an extremely positive impact on pupils' burgeoning global understanding.

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	2

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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

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has considerably improved in recent years. With extended accommodation, inside and out, better equipment and outstanding teaching, children's attainment when they finish the Reception Year is now regularly well above the national average. All children meet the expected early learning goals and many exceed these. Given that their starting points are similar to expectations for 4 year-olds, this represents excellent progress and achievement. Numerous well-planned opportunities for children quickly develop their confidence and independence. In their first weeks at school, a group of children set about putting on 'a show' with great gusto, dressing up, dancing to music and taking one another's photographs. At the same time another group of children worked with a teaching assistant to peel and cook the potatoes they had previously dug up from the school plot. Others rushed to put out an imaginary fire in an outside hut, dressed as emergency workers. Adults were in close attendance at all times, ensuring all went smoothly and making the most of every possible opportunity to help children learn. Children behave very well. They are very independent and take responsibility for chores like tidying up as a matter of course.

Adults show considerable expertise in meeting the requirements of young children and carefully model good behaviour. Comprehensive ongoing assessment ensures all staff are well aware of each child's level of development and needs. Thorough record-keeping helps track progress and identify where extra assistance may be required, although parents do not have regular opportunities to contribute to these records or to enjoy seeing details of their child's development. Sessions are purposeful and very well planned to maximise the potential of adult-led sessions by delivering them when children are at their freshest. Planning ensures children benefit from the correct balance of outdoor, indoor, adult-led and child-initiated activities. Flexible planning enables children to follow their own interests as they develop during the day.

Excellent leadership uses the talents of all adults to run the Early Years Foundation Stage most effectively. All staff take great care to ensure children's safety, whatever they are doing. Parents are welcomed into the classroom at the start and end of each day and effective informal communication helps children settle quickly into school life. Improving partnerships with local private nurseries have benefitted all parties and ensured minimal disturbance when children transfer to Cockshutt.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Most parents support the school and its work and parental questionnaires indicate high satisfaction with many aspects. For example, a very large majority are happy with their child's experience at the school. However, nearly a quarter express concern over the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Pupils' behaviour during the inspection was excellent and inspectors found that the way school deals with the rare infractions is very good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cockshutt Church of England 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 17 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 58 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	7	41	10	59	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	59	7	41	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	5	29	9	53	2	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	35	9	53	2	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	47	9	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	41	8	47	1	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	47	8	47	0	0	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)	7	41	8	47	0	0	1	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	41	8	47	2	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	41	6	35	3	18	1	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	24	8	47	2	12	1	6
The school is led and managed effectively	8	47	6	35	1	6	1	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	47	7	41	1	6	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



23 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cockshutt CofE Primary School, Ellesmere, SY12 0JE

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when the inspectors recently visited your school. It was good to hear your opinions and to find that you agree with us that Cockshutt is a good school. Some things are excellent, such as the way you are all so well cared for and the outstanding work being done in the Reception class. We would also like to congratulate you on your excellent behaviour. Well done!

We hope all of you can keep up such super behaviour because it helps classrooms run so well. Your teachers plan lessons very carefully, and this helps you make good progress. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is similar to the average for the country and your achievement is good. We were pleased to hear how much those of you who have had extra help at school really appreciate it. This good work means nobody falls behind in their studies.

The headteacher and staff work very well together to improve the school and things are certainly getting better. For example, the links the school has with other schools in this country and abroad are now excellent. In order to improve we have asked the school to concentrate on:

- making sure that the pace of lessons is high so you do not lose energy and interest
- finishing lessons with a session that reminds all of you of what you have learned and tells everyone what is coming up next.

Once again, thanks for all your help. It was good to meet you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead inspector

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