

Fressingfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124731
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359757
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Nichola Perry

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Lewis
Headteacher	Stephen Rutter
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Four teachers were observed in 10 sessions. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the special needs co-ordinator, other staff, the Chair and Vice-chair of the Governing Body, and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books and displays, and at documentation, including the school development plan, assessments, records of pupils' progress, teachers' planning and safeguarding and welfare arrangements. Inspectors scrutinised 81 parents' and carers' questionnaires, 17 staff questionnaires and 65 pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Do all leaders have a sufficiently well-developed understanding of self-evaluation processes and are these sufficiently rigorous to provide an accurate judgement about the school's performance in key areas?
- Is leadership sufficiently focused on learning and progress for all pupils, to ensure that they are making progress in line with their starting points?
- What is the effect of the school's work on developing pupils' awareness and understanding of life in the wider world, beyond their own community?

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average primary school comprising three classes and a newly formed Early Years Foundation Stage unit. It serves the rural villages of Fressingfield, Weybread and Metfield. The school population is very stable. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is extremely low. The proportions of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities and those with statements of special educational needs are also very low when compared to those found nationally. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.

Because the school is small, it is part of a pyramid of six small, local primary schools and the local high school which collaborate on a number of projects designed to give pupils opportunities to work together before moving to high school. These include activity days involving a range of sporting, artistic and musical initiatives which culminate in a residential visit for all Year 6 pupils. The school has been awarded Activemark and Financial Management Standards in Schools.

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

Fressingfield is a good school. The leadership of the school ensures a good quality of education for all its pupils. High quality care, guidance and support contribute strongly to pupils' outstanding behaviour, contribution to the community and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All groups of pupils are highly valued and treated with great respect as individuals. Effective links with parents, carers and the excellent partnership with the church, other schools and agencies also contribute to this. Pupils' show very positive attitudes to learning so that there is a happy and purposeful atmosphere evident in all aspects of school life. The strong partnership which exists between the school and pupils' parents and carers is evident in the way they relate to staff on a day-to-day basis. They are very pleased with what the school offers their children.

Attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. The good teaching and the well-enriched curriculum encourage pupils to be positive learners. As a result, most pupils make good progress and achieve well from their starting points. Additional adult support also contributes to pupils' good learning. However, progress has been uneven across the school leading to a decline in attainment by the end of Year 2 in recent years, so that the good start children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage has not always been effectively built on. Although current work in Years 1 and 2 shows improvement, it is too soon to see the impact of this in assessments at the end of Year 2. Adults use questioning well to challenge pupils and help them to develop their thinking and ideas. Ongoing feedback in lessons and marking are effective in informing pupils how well they are doing and motivating them to try their best. Across the school, assessment is generally accurate and is being used to plan activities which focus more precisely on pupils' individual needs. However, senior leaders are not able to monitor attainment and progress as closely as they should because data are not currently maintained in a format which provides a clear and easily accessible overview of progress over time.

Relationships are excellent. Pupils are unanimous that they greatly enjoy coming to school, evidenced in the high level of attendance. They think that their teachers are kind and help them to learn. Pupils learn how to be polite and show respect for others. They get on well with each other and are extremely accepting of, and thoughtful towards, those less fortunate than or different from themselves. The inclusive nature of the school has ensured that there have been no exclusions in recent years and incidents of racism or bullying are extremely rare. Pupils demonstrate good appreciation of how to keep safe and why they need a balanced diet and regular exercise. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent because all aspects are given high priority through the school.

Senior leaders work well together as a team. They are developing their roles effectively, are focused on raising achievement and are contributing well to ongoing improvement within their specific areas of responsibility. Governors are knowledgeable, very supportive

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of the aims of the school and provide a good level of challenge to the school's performance. Continuing improvement since the previous inspection has been achieved as a result of accurate self-evaluation and development planning, which focuses on key priorities to move the school forward. Together with the entire school community's determination to get better, this demonstrates that the school is well placed to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by the end of Year 2 so that the good start pupils make in the Early Years Foundation Stage is built on consistently by:
 - ensuring that expectations of what pupils in Years 1 and 2 should learn are sufficiently high, so that they make better progress year on year.
- Improve the leaders' ability to track pupils' progress across the school by:
 - ensuring that existing assessment data provide a clearer overview of pupils' progress year on year
 - devising a system for providing a more accurate picture of attainment on entry to the school and progress made in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good overall. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress so that attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average. Good teaching and higher expectations of what pupils should be achieving in Years 1 and 2 is now leading to improvement. Effective assessment and focused interventions are having a positive impact on pupils' learning and attainment, most notably in writing and in problem-solving. Throughout the school, effective provision helps pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, to make good progress. Individual pupils' needs are quickly identified and a range of interventions, including one-to one tuition, put in place to ensure pupils can achieve as well as they can. Individuals and groups of pupils are very well supported in lessons. Pupils who enter the school part-way through the academic year settle extremely quickly and learn well as a result of very effective arrangements and support.

In lessons, pupils show great pride when they, or others, achieve well. They work well together and are keen to learn. In an effective art lesson involving the whole of Key Stage 2, pupils were enthralled to share the excellent results of their work based on the study and evaluation of the use of figures in works of art. Opportunities to compare and contrast different styles in art and to share and comment on examples of pupils' own work excited them, so that they were highly motivated to start their own work. This style of teaching brings learning alive and helps pupils to develop their thinking and investigative skills, which raises their self-esteem about their learning.

Pupils contribute to the community very well. They participate in many local festivals and identify and contribute to both national and international charities annually. For example, through sponsorship for swimming, they raised a huge amount of money for disaster relief in Haiti. Pupils enjoy additional responsibilities around the school and are very confident when dealing with adults or visitors. Enterprise awareness is being developed well.

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Members of the school council decided to carry out a power-efficiency survey throughout the school which resulted in saving money within the school budget. The school council provides a forum for pupils to share their views and this is helping them to gain adult skills of stating their preferred options and learning about democracy in a community. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding about religions, faiths and cultures different from their own, both within the United Kingdom and in the wider world.

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	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	1

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is effective and uses imaginative teaching styles, along with astute questioning and regular reference to pupils' learning targets. This motivates and challenges pupils so that they learn well. The curriculum is having a positive impact, for example, on the progress pupils are making in their writing. Increasingly, pupils are successfully being encouraged to see themselves as writers through strong emphasis on speaking and listening, and the development of literacy skills across other subjects. This, along with good opportunities for engaging in learning which is relevant to their own experiences, is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and development. Frequent use of a themed approach means that opportunities for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative skills are now well embedded in planning. A good example of this was a topic session based on the sound made by a huge range of untuned instruments. This was very well linked to some writing and, later, to some problem-solving

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through practical mathematics, involving sorting and different methods of recording outcomes. The wide range of additional activities, provided within the school and through use of the wider community, enhances pupils' learning and contributes strongly to their enjoyment of school. Displays of art work around the school are delightful and reflect good teaching and the high priority placed on art. The school also plays a leading role in organising joint sporting activities for schools in the wider cluster and these are greatly enjoyed by pupils.

Pupils' pastoral needs are extremely well met from the day they start school. Very effective induction arrangements ensure pupils' settle quickly and happily. Work with pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is extremely effective and well embedded into the work of the school. Pupils are unanimous that their teachers are kind, help them to learn and listen to any worries they may have. They are completely secure in their belief that action will be taken to ensure their well-being. Parents and carers are very confident that the school will listen and help them to support their children's social, emotional and learning needs. The school makes excellent use of external professional agencies to support pupils' needs, ensuring no pupil is disadvantaged. Very good links with local secondary schools mean that pupils feel confident and well supported when changing schools, even when they may be the only pupil from the school.

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 has created an environment where pupils flourish. The entire school community is dedicated to helping pupils achieve their full potential in all aspects of their social, emotional and academic development. Development planning focuses well on improving pupils' learning. Progress is now more carefully tracked by teachers so that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn. Tracking progress at whole school level is less effective because there is no formalised system in place. Monitoring of teaching and the regular use of external support ensure that teachers are well-trained and supported in new initiatives so that they develop their skills quickly. For example, a recent initiative within the local pyramid of schools has contributed strongly to improvements in writing across the school. Governance is good. Through the effective leadership of the Chair, the governing body continues to develop its role in challenging the school's performance while being supportive and forward thinking. Governors ensure that good practice in safeguarding, child protection procedures and training requirements is the norm and that systematic records of staffing checks are maintained. Leaders ensure wide-reaching links within the local community. Pupils learn about diversity through involvement in a wide range of celebrations from different faiths, such as Eid and Diwali, as well as those within

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Christianity, so that they show good awareness of the multi-cultural nature of the United Kingdom. Learning of French is well established and international language days are a regular feature. Contact is being sought with a school in northern France to develop this further. This is a positive move towards helping pupils develop their awareness of the wider world.

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
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers are very pleased with the good start their children make in the newly formed Early Years Foundation Stage unit. Children enter school with levels of knowledge and understanding, in all areas of learning, which are broadly in line with expectations. They quickly become confident, independent and happy learners and make good progress. Behaviour is excellent because staff have very high expectations of children and help them take responsibility for their own actions. There is excellent support for children who find learning difficult or who have significant emotional needs. A good balance exists between adult-led activities and those the children choose for themselves. Adults use questions astutely without limiting children's creativity. The strong focus on speaking, listening and role play ensures children rapidly build on their good social skills. Good teaching and support place strong emphasis on learning through practical activities, so that basic skills are developed effectively. Activities, including those in the new outdoor area, provide good opportunities for children to make decisions about their own learning and development, as well as building their thinking and imaginative skills. Activities enthuse and challenge all children, including those who find learning difficult.

Thorough and accurate assessment ensures adults have good knowledge of each

- child's stage of development. However, the system of recording assessment data is not providing an overview of progress and attainment across the Early Years

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Foundation Stage. Nevertheless, leadership is good. Staff work closely together, teaching is well monitored and planning is effective. Adults support children's welfare consistently well so that personal development is very good and provides a strong base for their future learning.

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

Just over half of parents and carers returned the questionnaire, a high response. They have high levels of satisfaction with the school and the overwhelming majority are positive about all aspects. Inspection findings support parents' and carers' many positive views. A number of questionnaires raised concern about communication from the school. This was particularly the case regarding recent changes made to the Nursery and Reception classes. These concerns were explored with the headteacher and Chair of Governors who accept that improvement is required in this respect. The school has identified the issue and action is already being taken to bring about change.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fressingfield 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 129 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	62	29	36	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	64	28	35	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	40	41	51	7	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	41	43	53	5	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	52	36	44	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	36	45	56	6	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	43	43	53	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)	41	51	28	35	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	36	45	56	4	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	28	41	51	11	14	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	36	37	46	10	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	44	38	47	6	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	58	32	40	2	2	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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



14 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fressingfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Eye, IP21 5PR

Thank you very much for helping us find out about your school when we visited. We really enjoyed talking to you and watching you working and playing. You

- go to a good school that is a really happy and friendly place to attend every day. We
- were so pleased to hear how much you all enjoy coming to school and how good your attendance is. There are lots of good things about your school.

You all try hard and most of you make good progress in your work.

You thoroughly enjoy school and behave really well.

All the adults care about you and support you extremely well. They listen to you

- so that you feel very safe in school.

Your school gets on very well with your parents, carers and other people

- who can help you learn.

Your headteacher and senior teachers have good ideas about how to improve your school.

We have asked your headteacher and the other teachers to look at how they

- can make things even better. The most important things are as follows:
- make sure that those of you in Years 1 and 2 work even harder so that you make lots of progress in all your lessons
- make sure that all the information your teachers have about your work is all kept together so that your headteacher can see how well you are doing every year
- write down how well you are doing when you start in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit and how much progress you have made by the time you go into Year 1.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nichola Perry

Lead Inspector

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