

# Ashwicken Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	121135
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	380176
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	John Mason

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	94
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sharon Barrett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Collison
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	East Winch Road Ashwicken PE32 1LY
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	3–4 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380176



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## Introduction

Inspection team

John Mason

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Eight lessons were observed and all four teachers who regularly teach on the days the inspection took place were seen teaching at least once. Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders and governors. Discussions were held with pupils, formally and informally, and a group of pupils from Years 1 and 2 was heard reading. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at the school's monitoring of teaching and learning, minutes of the governing body, school development planning, the most recent review of provision by the local authority, a range of policies and documents relating to the care and safety of pupils. The 67 parental questionnaires received were analysed.

## Information about the school

Ashwicken Church of England VA Primary School is much smaller than most primary schools. It serves three local villages and the south-western fringes of the town of King's Lynn. Very few pupils transfer to or from the school after the Reception class. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic groups and there are very few pupils for whom English is not their first language. The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average, but the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.

Provision includes the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. The school holds the Eco School Green Flag and Healthy Schools awards.

In September 2011, as part of local authority re-organisation of schools, the school moved from being a first school (ages 4 to 8) to a primary school, with Key Stage 2 pupils being phased in over a three year period. Currently, the oldest pupils in the school are in Year 4.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is particularly adept in engaging pupils to take responsibility for the well-being of one another and of the environment. However, it is not outstanding overall, because pupils' achievement, while good, is not improving rapidly enough.
- Pupils achieve well. In assessments at the end of Year 2 and in pupils' final terms, levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are above average and have remained broadly unchanged in recent years.
- The consistently good teaching is characterised by excellent, supportive relationships in class. The use of stimulating resources, including information and communication technologies, engages pupils well in their learning. Group targets provide guidance to pupils working at different levels, but pupils have no personalised targets and few are able to explain their targets for improvement readily. The level of challenge for more-able pupils is inconsistent. Teaching assistants support individuals and groups well, but are not always used effectively during whole-class work.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Particularly through the Eco School initiatives, pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities and commit themselves to routines, for example in feeding the chickens, which help them develop into dependable young people. They have an excellent understanding of safe working practices, show respect and support for one another and acquire excellent skills for learning, such as patience, persistence and concentration.
- The school is well led and managed. Governors are actively involved in the school development planning. The outstanding curriculum makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, the monitoring of the performance of teachers has not focused enough on increasing the rate of pupils' progress. Notice of changes in school

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routines and information to parents and carers about what and how pupils learn in class are inconsistently communicated.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate at which pupils progress and improve the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring that pupils are better able to articulate personalised targets for the improvement of their work
  - ensuring greater and more consistent challenge to extend learning for the most-able pupils
  - placing a stronger emphasis on how well pupils are learning when monitoring teaching
  - deploying teaching assistants more inventively in lessons.
- Give parents and carers better notice of changes in school routines and provide more detailed information about what and how pupils are learning in class.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils enter the Reception class with skills expected for children of their age. They make rapid progress in the Reception year, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. This provides them with excellent dispositions to learning which stand them in good stead in later years. Outcomes also indicate strong progress in their literacy and numeracy skills acquisition.

During Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4, above average attainment is consolidated through consistently good teaching. The oldest pupils, in Year 4, are making good progress. They gain good insights into how to write persuasively, as seen in the drafting and editing their writing to make a convincing and often well-argued case for the destination of their school trip. They enjoy expanding and consolidating their descriptive vocabulary by acting out their jungle poems. In mathematics, pupils in Year 4 demonstrated their understanding of the relationship between fractions and decimals with growing security, using information and communication technology effectively to support them in their learning. The impact of booster sessions is ensuring that attainment in mathematics for lower-attaining pupils and overall is steadily improving. By the end of Year 2 and by the time they leave school, standards in reading are above average, with secure skills in phonics and good attention to expression.

The achievement of boys has improved since the last inspection and, except where boys in some cohorts have been heavily weighted by pupils with statements of

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special educational needs, there is now no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress from their various starting points, due to the high level of care and support they receive, not only from adults but also from their peers. Their attainment is above national levels for pupils receiving additional support. The very few pupils for whom English is an additional language acquire English quickly and are also doing well.

A sizeable majority of parents and carers responding to the questionnaires felt that their children were making good progress and developing skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics well.

### **Quality of teaching**

Consistently good teaching across all age groups ensures that all pupils make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are well developed, especially through the topics linked to Eco School status. The effective and systematic teaching of phonics and early literacy successfully promotes pupils' good progress in reading and writing. Good use of resources, increasingly making effective use of a wide range of new technologies, engage pupils in their learning, for example in using digital recording devices to enhance analysis of dramatic presentations in the Years 3 and 4 class. In the Reception class, activities such as baking elicited excellent descriptive vocabulary from the children and united groups of pupils in understanding the importance of sequencing actions in order to produce satisfying outcomes. Good planning and the practically-focused curriculum have a strong impact on pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development by promoting excellent collaborative skills and a strong sense of discovery in their learning .

Tasks are mostly well matched to ability, although the provision for more-able pupils does not consistently challenge them to reach their full potential. Questioning and other ways of gaining feedback on how well pupils are learning are effectively used to help teachers adapt the pace of lesson. Teaching assistants provide excellent support to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to ensure their full inclusion in learning, and support groups well in class. However, they are not always fully utilised in class, for example in their involvement in story telling or in leading more groups in the teaching of phonics.

Marking is regular, with supportive comments to aid improvement. Group targets are well used to give direction to work for groups of pupils working at different levels in class. However, pupils do not have more personalised targets and find the group targets and success criteria difficult to articulate when they are not on display in class. This limits pupils' ability to become more independent and rapid learners.

A sizeable majority of parents and carers agree with their children that they are well taught and that teachers manage pupils' behaviour in class well.

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## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour over time and around the school is, in the most part, exemplary. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to a safe and positive environment, especially through their willingness and commitment to engage in the many opportunities for them to take responsibility. Through the many community projects arising from Eco School initiatives, such as the need for regular commitment to composting, feeding the chickens, recycling or energy saving, they understand the importance of routines in daily life and in learning. They reflect very well on their learning and articulate this with vigour in prayers in assembly. They support one another very well, the play mediators being shining examples as they strive to ensure play is always happy and harmonious. Pupils show high levels of respect not only for those who do well, such as the choir club when performing in assembly, but also for those less fortunate than themselves. As a result, bullying is extremely rare. Pupils, nonetheless, understand well how bullying can take different forms, including awareness of risks from cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying, and know to report incidents either to staff or to play mediators.

Pupils have excellent dispositions to learning. They are keen to do well in class and if, occasionally, the pace of a lesson should slacken, they remain well focused and responsive to the demands of the lesson. During wet breaks, they eagerly and sensibly access a whole range of games and activities which enhance their learning, with little or no prompting from supervising adults. Attendance is above average and there has been no recourse to exclude any pupils in recent years. Punctuality to school and to lessons is good, with no persistent latecomers.

Parents, carers and pupils express strong agreement that children feel safe and that they are well looked after. A small minority of parents and carers express some concern about the behaviour out of class of a very few pupils, who the school manages skilfully to ensure that any upset is minimised.

## **Leadership and management**

The school is well led and managed. All staff take responsibility for different areas and work very well as a team. Governance has improved significantly since the previous inspection, with much greater involvement of the governing body in the work and development of the school, particularly in its support for expanding to full primary status. Information and communication technology, an area for development at the time of the previous inspection, is now used well in class by teachers and pupils alike, thanks in large part to the high quality technical support and advice provided by governors. The stimulating curriculum promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to outstanding effect. Pupils gain greatly from the sense of discovery, the teamwork, the decision-making and respect for all living things that underpins the ecologically-focused topics of the curriculum. Assemblies and personal, social and health education strongly reinforce these messages. Parents and carers speak very highly of the healthy schools initiatives, such as 'Walk to School' which is proving a useful opportunities for families and home to bond better with the school.

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The school has a good grasp of its strengths and its areas for development. The monitoring of the performance of teachers is enhanced by observations by governors which focus closely on school development priorities and, together, these identify effective points for staff development. However, the monitoring of teaching lacks a strong enough focus on how well pupils are learning in lessons and over time. In turn, school development planning to raise attainment lacks sharpness in this regard.

The school tackles discriminations and promotes equal opportunities very well. The links with external agencies to support vulnerable children and those with special educational needs are very effective. Safeguarding meets current government requirements and gives no cause for concern. In the most part, the school engages very well with parents and carers. They, too, are strongly involved in the Eco School initiatives. Most parents and carers concur that the school is well led and managed, but a small minority express concern that the quality of communication between school and home can be erratic, both in terms of notice of changes to routines and how and what pupils are taught. The school has consolidated good progress and above average attainment since the previous inspection and addressed the recommendations of that report effectively. It has a good capacity to improve further.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



8 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ashwicken Church of England Primary School, Ashwicken, PE32 1LY**

Thank you very much for being so welcoming when I came to visit the school recently. I very much enjoyed talking to you, hearing you read and seeing how much you enjoy your work at school. Thank you, too, to your parents and carers and to those of you who completed the questionnaires. The responses were very helpful.

I came to the conclusion that Ashwicken Primary is a good school, where you make good progress in your learning. You are consistently well taught in all classes. Your work in English and mathematics is above average. You and your parents and carers said that you feel very safe in school because adults care for you very well. I was very impressed by the way you show good teamwork in so many aspects of school life: in your learning, in your Eco School projects, in supporting one another. This, together with the outstanding politeness and respect you show, led me to agree with the school that your behaviour, understanding of keeping safe and attitudes to learning are all outstanding.

Your school is well led and managed. However, to help you to make more rapid progress and to further improve teaching, I have asked the headteacher to do the following things.

- Ensure that your targets are better matched to the next steps each of you individually must take to improve and be better understood by you all.
- Make sure that more-able pupils are always given work and guidance that enables them to do the very best they can.
- Use the teaching assistants in a more active way in whole-class activities.

You will certainly be able to help in this by staying as keen to learn as ever. I have also asked the headteacher to pay greater attention to how you can learn better when she talks to teachers after she visits your lessons, and to make sure that no confusion occurs when the school provides information to your parents and carers.

Yours sincerely

John Mason  
Lead inspector

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