

Fressingfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124731
Local Authority	SUFFOLK LA
Inspection number	315035
Inspection date	7 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Ruth Frith

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 on roll	
School	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Mary Lewis
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Rutter
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2003
School address	Stradbroke Road Fressingfield Eye Suffolk IP21 5PR
Telephone number	01379 586393
Fax number	01379 588214

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small, four-class school with a nursery, which serves the villages of Fressingfield, Metfield and Weybread. Pupils come from families representing a range of socio-economic backgrounds and the percentage receiving free school meals is well below average. Children enter school with attainment that is broadly similar to that seen nationally for children of this age. The percentage of pupils who find learning difficult is below that usually seen and two pupils have a statement of special educational need. Almost all pupils are of from a White British background and speak English as their first language.

The school has received the Active Mark in recognition of its work.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and attendance is very high. Pupils' personal development is outstanding and results in excellent behaviour. The warm and friendly atmosphere, together with good teaching, helps pupils to achieve well so that by the time they leave school, standards are generally above average. Parents show by their comments that they are pleased with what the school offers. 'My daughter is flourishing ... this is down to the fantastic teaching and patience of staff.' 'Fressingfield is a nurturing and supportive school and I believe my children are lucky to attend' and 'I feel we are part of a strong, friendly and successful team.'

Throughout the school, the good relationships between staff and pupils create an enjoyable atmosphere for learning. Teaching is good because lessons are interesting and the work set generally matches pupils' abilities. Consequently, pupils gain confidence and self-esteem, as they feel able to succeed. Pupils who find learning difficult receive good support and more capable pupils are usually appropriately challenged. A recent successful focus on writing is improving overall standards in English and the impact of work to develop pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics is also encouraging. The curriculum is stimulating. Links between subjects, such as art and literacy, have a significant impact on motivating pupils and developing their attitudes and learning.

The successful personal, social and health education programme ensures that pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. Pupils respect others, respond well to staff expectations and follow routines. This helps to create a harmonious atmosphere in school. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community and beyond. Care, guidance and support are excellent. Pupils feel well looked after and ask for help if they need it. They know how to improve their work by responding to teachers' marking, their targets and guidance in lessons. Pupils' very good social skills and their progress in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) help prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Effective leadership, management and governance result in the school providing good value for money. The good self-evaluation procedures have helped the school community to reflect on how well they are doing and judgements match well with the inspection's findings. Good systems are in place to raise standards. Senior managers are currently reviewing the way pupils' progress is tracked and challenging targets set. Currently, expectations are not always sufficiently high. Consequently, above average standards are not sustained over time, particularly at Key Stage 2. Good improvements since the last inspection, together with good leadership from the headteacher, the commitment of staff and governors, and support from parents indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle very quickly in the Nursery and make an excellent start because expectations are high and routines helpful. Good arrangements between the Nursery and Reception ensure a smooth transition and good progress throughout. Good planning and organisation result in a range of interesting activities that stimulate children's interests and encourage them to enjoy learning. Staff gain a good understanding of what children know and achieve through regular

observations and assessments. They clearly understand how young children learn and use this knowledge well to ensure a good balance of activities where children either work under their close direction or independently. Whereas accommodation and resources in the Nursery regularly support good learning outside the classroom, this is not the case for pupils in Reception. However, the school recognises this as an area for development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the accommodation and resources for children in Reception to encourage more opportunities for learning outside.
- Embed yet higher expectations through developing the way pupils' progress is monitored and evaluated and use this information to set challenging targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities, including those who find learning difficult, achieve well and make good progress. This prepares them well for their future economic well-being. Pupils make good progress in the Nursery and Reception so that by the time they enter Year 1 most reach the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning and sometimes standards are above. Continued good progress in Key Stage 1 results in pupils typically reaching above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the Year 2 national assessments. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to achieve well but standards have fluctuated. The 2007 national test results show an improvement on the previous two years with Year 6 pupils reaching above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics and science. The school met its targets with over half of the pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in English and over a third in mathematics. Currently, pupils in Years 2 and 6 are working at levels above those expected for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' attendance is well above average and almost all work responsibly, productively and with enjoyment throughout the day. They quickly understand what is right and what is wrong, and their considerate and courteous behaviour contributes much to a climate in which all can thrive. Their positive dispositions and attitudes include exemplary behaviour and contribute to the effective roles they adopt in school. They enthusiastically help in class and participate in school improvement through the school council. Most of the pupils have an exceptionally clear and growing understanding about their health and the parts played in it by diet and physical activity. They also have a strong awareness of factors affecting their personal safety; act responsibly and cautiously in play, look after each other and know where to find help if needed. They show great interest and take part in many of the activities available to them, including seasonal events in the village community, contributions to fundraising for charitable causes and activities to improve the environment. They acquire good knowledge and adopt positive attitudes regarding wider national and global cultural traditions. Pupils develop a good spiritual awareness, particularly through assemblies, English, art and music. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Planning is good so that learning builds systematically over time and ensures pupils progress well. Teachers have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to learn, and share this with them. Consequently, pupils feel able to attempt the work because they are clear about what they must do. Typically, the work is matched well to pupils' abilities and they respond well to the challenges set. However, now and again, a few higher attaining pupils find the work too easy, as it is not sufficiently challenging for them. ICT is generally used well as a teaching aid. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Assessment arrangements are good and improving well. In the best lessons, staff make reference to targets and the lesson objectives, which help to focus pupils' work and ensure a good pace of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum includes a modern foreign language and a distinctive contribution from art. Provision for literacy and numeracy is good and staff recognise the need for ICT to become more firmly embedded throughout pupils' day-to-day work. The school's planning ensures that pupils in mixed-age classes have fresh work each year. The effective personal, social and health education programme and sports and physical education activities result in pupils' excellent understanding of how to stay safe and lead healthy lives. Pupils who have difficulty in learning are supported by well-chosen additional activities to help them maintain concentration during the day or to 'catch-up.' Provision is well organised, effective and particularly successful in helping learners who have behavioural difficulties. Popular clubs, visits, visitors and activities help pupils to develop new interests and extend skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff are highly dedicated to the pupils' welfare and have a strong commitment to including pupils in all aspects of school life. They provide outstanding care, guidance and support through close day-to-day supervision and good advice. Absences and any rare misbehaviour are managed very well. Daily routines contribute particularly well to pupils' understanding of factors affecting their health and personal safety. The staff rapidly identify pupils who find learning difficult and make very good use of external expertise where needed to ensure that these individuals make good progress. Matters of health and safety receive close attention. The school has robust arrangements for child protection and for vetting adults who work with the pupils. As most parents believe, the school provides a secure environment in which their children can thrive. Academic guidance is strong so that pupils have a clear understanding of their targets and know what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a strong lead to colleagues who work as an effective team to support his vision and the school's values. He gives clear direction to school improvement and effective

systems are in place to check how well the school is doing and identify what it could do better. These have been instrumental in the good improvement made since the last inspection. Within this small school, staff successfully take on a variety of responsibilities which ensure continual development, for example, through their subject leadership and management. These have helped to begin to raise pupils' standards and achievement. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's effectiveness by keeping a check on how pupils are doing by asking questions about standards and achievement but acknowledge the need to improve their monitoring and evaluation roles further.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A**Leadership and management**

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

10 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fressingfield C of E Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Eye, Suffolk IP21 5PR

You may remember that your school was inspected recently. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for talking to us about what you do and learn. We agree with you and think that Fressingfield is a good school.

Here is what we found out.

- You work hard and make good progress. Your writing and the way you solve problems in mathematics is getting better.
- You really enjoy school and behave exceptionally well because you are interested in the work.
- You have a particularly good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy.
- Nearly all of you come to school regularly and on time. Well done!
- You get on well with each other and make good friends. You feel safe in school.
- All staff work well as a team and teaching is good.

Mr Rutter manages the school well and staff and governors give him lots of help. They have all agreed to focus on two things to make the school even better. They will provide better resources for the Reception children to learn outside the classroom. They will also improve the way they check how well you are doing so that your targets are challenging and you work as hard as you can. We know you will respond well to their efforts.

We left your school confident that it will continue to improve and wish you all well.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Frith

Additional inspector