

Monks Eleigh Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124708
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	340631
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Dawson

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Appropriate authority	Governing body
Chair	Alison Russell
Headteacher	Jane Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Six hours were spent looking at learning, including observing five lessons altogether, taken by two teachers and a student teacher supported by the headteacher. The inspector held discussions with groups of pupils, governors and school staff. She observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, teachers' planning and a range of the school's documentation, including: policies and systems for safeguarding pupils; the monitoring of teaching; and plans for development. The inspector also analysed 23 parental questionnaires and staff and pupils' views of the school.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work looking in detail at the following:

- whether the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress enable teachers to identify and respond to any underachievement
- the progress of children and pupils in each year group within the mixed aged classes
- the impact of the present leadership, especially in the monitoring of teaching and learning on improving pupils' progress following a dip in standards.

Information about the school

This very small primary school serves pupils from Monks Eleigh and other local villages. All pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is less than average and no pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2009 and also achieved Healthy Schools status and the Active Sportsmark in the same year.

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

This is a good school with a happy and welcoming environment. Staff feel valued and pupils are helped to develop into mature and responsible individuals. There have been significant improvements in many aspects of the school's work since the last inspection. There are flexible systems for meeting pupils' needs, both academically and socially, through individual support and by enabling pupils to work with other classes for some subjects. These, and improved teaching, ensure almost all pupils achieve well. All teachers have a range of responsibilities and work with the headteacher to set priorities for improvement. They have a good understanding of how to improve their practice and the work of the school because teaching and learning are monitored rigorously. Governors support and oversee the work of the school well. The inclusive and effective leadership, an ethos of continuous improvement and the significant improvements since the last inspection, ensure that the potential for future improvement is good.

The very small cohorts mean children's knowledge and skills on entry vary each year but overall they meet and often exceed age-related expectations. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4, most have above average skills in English and mathematics for their age and some are working at well above average levels, within those expected of eleven-year-olds, especially in English. This is because all teachers ensure that they teach the basic skills pupils need thoroughly and consistently. There are also many opportunities for pupils to use these skills across the relevant and interesting curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe and are unanimous in their praise for the care the school provides. The school council is effective. Pupils are eager to help others less fortunate and have democratically elected to send the money they had collected for playground equipment to the Haiti appeal. As a Year 1 pupil said when he made the suggestion, 'We can wait a bit longer for another bike, but these people need the money now.'

All teachers question pupils well, to test their understanding and extend their learning. Tasks are adjusted to meet the needs of the range of ages and abilities in each class. Teachers give pupils good advice when they mark their writing. All pupils have targets for improvement shared with parents. However, pupils rarely assess their own work to decide for themselves what they need to do to improve. This limits opportunities for them to take responsibility for their learning and to set personal challenges. Teachers do not make the most of pupils' very responsible attitudes in carrying out their many tasks around the school to extend their learning. Written advice for mathematics is limited. The good oral advice given in lessons is not

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reflected in pupils' books and they cannot see how they have improved over time. Although communication, language and literacy, and mathematical skills are taught well in the Reception class, there is not enough rigour in guiding children towards extending their skills through independent activities. Children are not involved in planning their activities or evaluating their learning. There is no expectation that children will rise to the teacher's challenges.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Guide pupils towards achieving all they are capable of by:
 - involving them in evaluating and improving their work and setting their own targets
 - applying the helpful advice given in pupils' English books to their mathematics work so that they know how they have improved and what they need to master next.

- Ensure that the activities for independent learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage are clearly focused on extending children's skills across all areas of learning by:
 - encouraging children to plan what they will do and have a clear purpose for their activities
 - setting children specific challenges to encourage their participation in completing them and evaluating how well they have been achieved
 - fine-tune activities so that they specifically help children progress towards new learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Standards were above average in the national assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2008 and 2009, a significant improvement on the below average levels in previous years, although few attained the higher levels in writing. The school's tracking of individual pupil's progress shows that, for English, pupils' progress continues to be good in Years 3 and 4. A whole school focus on improving writing has resulted in many pupils across the school now working at higher levels than expected for their age. Pupils use their skills effectively in lessons to produce good quality fiction and non-fiction text. They take a pride in their work and most are eager to respond to their teachers' questions.

The teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure pupils' systematically acquire the basic skills they need. In a lesson during the inspection, pupils were asked to help each other to make their sentences more interesting. This drew pupils' attention to the quality of vocabulary as well as accurate secretarial skills. Pupils found this task challenging as they are not used to evaluating their own or their peers' work. Mathematics lessons often start with a lively song to consolidate mathematical facts and pupils gain skills systematically. However, pupils' progress in mathematics is satisfactory overall as they receive less written guidance about how to improve.

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Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn as well as their peers because of good support and well-planned programmes to help them achieve their targets.

Pupils’ enjoyment of learning is reflected in the high quality journals that almost all complete during the summer holidays. In some, it is clear that they carry on improving their writing skills while completing these. Their accounts of visits are varied and interesting, well-illustrated with artefacts, photographs, drawings, diagrams and maps and a tribute to the effective partnerships between the school and home. Pupils of all ages have many responsibilities in school, from refreshing drinks at lunchtime to ensuring the school saves energy. All, including pupils, staff, parents and toddlers join in the ‘Wake and Shake’ session on the playground. This is a lively exercise session to music, providing a good start to the day. Pupils support national charities although most of these are chosen by the staff and they have few personal responsibilities to the community outside school. They behave well, although there are occasional incidences of inappropriate behaviour, which adults address effectively. Pupils respect each other, are aspirational for their futures and rarely miss school. These attributes make them well-placed to succeed in their later lives.

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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school serves its pupils well. All staff have a good understanding of the social and educational needs of individual pupils. Individual programmes, including daily

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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support for the very few pupils with specific needs, ensure that all pupils have access to effective learning. The curriculum was adjusted to meet the needs of the very few boys in a class to ensure that they are motivated to learn. There are good systems for tracking pupils' progress, enabling teachers to plan their lessons to meet the needs of the range of abilities. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make effective use of the interactive whiteboards and other resources to support learning. Lessons are lively and relevant, often using the themes of each half term as a focus for developing skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 joined the Reception children to do a bird count for the Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB). This involved making use of their tallying skills. The school makes full use of external providers to supplement learning opportunities for music and physical education. This good provision has enabled the school to be successful in gaining the Active Sportsmark and Healthy Schools status. The trek down to the village hall eats into the time available for physical education and the school has set up a charity with the village to build a combined school and village hall in the school grounds.

Pupils are well-cared for. Parents are unanimous in their praise of the school's systems for keeping their children safe and responding to their worries and needs. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and systems for promoting good attendance and behaviour are effective. Pupils help to draw up behaviour codes and issues relating to their personal and social development receive good coverage within the curriculum. The school is, rightly, aware that pupils do not fully understand the dangers of using the internet.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

When the headteacher joined the school, she rapidly established a sense of purpose and a clear direction for the future. To this end, the school enrolled in the Basic Skills Quality Mark scheme and set a deadline for achieving the award. The deadline was met as the staff worked together to improve pupils' learning. The monitoring of teaching and learning and rigorous application to addressing the issues identified in the last inspection report have turned the school around. Local advisors and colleagues have supported the school well. The headteacher has ensured that the governors have been fully informed and involved in school improvement. Staff have received training to support their professional development. Teachers are appreciative of the fact that their strengths have been recognised and they have responsibility for supporting each other and, increasingly, colleagues in other

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schools, in their areas of expertise. Where there have been inadequacies, these have been addressed.

Links with parents and carers are strong and have a significant impact on pupils' learning. The school has an open door policy and several parents regularly support pupils in the classroom. They are kept well informed about events in school and their children's progress. The active Parent, Teachers' and Friends' Association has raised substantial sums to support the many and varied extra-curricular activities. The school actively promotes community cohesion through the curriculum. Visits to London, for example, help pupils experience contrasting lifestyles. The school is in the process of pairing with a large school in Ipswich with a significant number of pupils from different social and ethnic backgrounds. There are strong links with local churches, reflecting the school's Christian ethos. Pupils' safety is paramount. The necessary checks for adults working with pupils are carried out rigorously, as is all relevant training for safeguarding pupils. Above all, adults are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for the school community. As a result, pupils with emotional challenges or learning difficulties are developing confidence and an eagerness to learn.

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	2
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

There is no pre-school provision in the village and the school staff visit children at home before they start school. They visit playgroups in other villages and make good use of the providers' assessments to gain a view of children's skills on entry to school. As a result, children settle into school quickly and work and play confidently together. The teacher ensures that they develop the communication, language and literacy and mathematical skills they need well and children learn quickly. They are

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encouraged to be independent and to take good care of the attractive and stimulating inside and outdoor environment. Social skills are promoted well and children generally work and play amicably alongside each other. There is a good balance between adult led and independent activities and it is very clear that children enjoy school. Many of the wide range of activities for children to choose from are linked to the theme being studied. However, children are not given enough direction to make the best use of these facilities.

In a lesson observed during the inspection, as part of their topic on houses and homes, children were asked to design a water feature, following a class discussion. While children outside with the teaching assistant worked at this task well, play for others was not sufficiently structured to promote their development in the six areas of learning either independently or in groups. This meant that opportunities for discussion and cooperation were missed. Children’s progress is tracked regularly and the teacher identifies their next steps, focusing on these during adult-led sessions. This ensures that children make steady progress from their starting points, meeting, or exceeding age-related expectations by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school and the outcomes for their children. A very small minority of parents disagreed that the school helped them to support their child’s learning or met his or her needs, specifically because of the mixed aged classes. The inspector found that the school meets pupils’ needs accurately and flexibly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Monks Eleigh 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 inspector received 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 34 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	96	1	4	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	61	9	39	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	57	9	39	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	78	4	17	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	78	5	22	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)	12	52	9	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	64	7	32	1	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	74	6	26	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	74	6	26	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	83	4	17	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	83	4	17	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.

29 January 2010

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Monks Eleigh Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Ipswich IP7 7JH

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when I visited your school. I was very impressed with the way you all carried out your duties, how well you behaved and how hard you worked in your lessons. I was also amazed at how well you performed your 'Wake and Shake' dance. Your teachers did pretty well too! A special thanks to the school council who shared your views.

You told me that your school takes good care of you and that you have lots of interesting things to learn about. I agree. Your teachers are very good at asking you questions in your lessons to make you think. They also give you wise advice when they mark your English books. I have asked them to do the same for you in mathematics. I would like you to take more responsibility for deciding for yourselves how good your work is, how you could make it better and by setting yourselves challenging targets. You already achieve well but I know that you would like to do even better, as you are so ambitious for the future.

Those of you in the Reception class settle in well and enjoy all the activities on offer. The grown-ups make sure that they teach you the skills they need to read, write and develop your mathematical skills. I have asked teachers to make sure that you carry on learning new things during your activity sessions. I would like you to plan what you will do and to make sure that, when your teacher gives you a challenge, you rise to it. You can then share what you have done by telling your teachers and each other what you have achieved.

You have a good school. Your headteacher, teachers and governors make sure that you are well cared for and receive a good education. There are very good links between your school and home. I really enjoyed looking at your holiday projects, which are very good indeed. I wish you all the best for the future. Good luck with the project for the new hall. It would be good to be able to do 'Wake and Shake' in bad weather.

Yours sincerely

Judith Dawson
Lead inspector

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