

Moulton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124709
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359754
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Judith Dawson

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	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Mitchell
Headteacher	John Englebright
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed six lessons taught by five teachers and held meetings with pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's plans for development, the policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils and teachers' planning, assessments and tracking of pupils' progress. They also analysed 58 parental questionnaires.

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

- They explored the differences in the standards attained by boys and girls and evaluated the measures the school has taken to address them.
- They looked at the factors contributing to pupils' progress, especially their involvement in making decisions about their learning.
- They looked at the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage to confirm the strengths in planning for the marked difference in children's knowledge and skills on entry from year to year.

Information about the school

This smaller than average first school is due to become a full primary school by September 2012. The present Year 4 pupils will remain in school until the end of Key Stage 2. It serves a geographically large community including a few pupils from the local United States airbases. The number of pupils who leave or join the school other than in Reception is slightly below average. Almost all pupils are of White British or other White heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including statements of special educational needs is below average and fewer pupils than average are known to be eligible for free school meals. There is a significant gender imbalance in three of the five year groups. The school has Healthy Schools' status and holds the Activemark for high quality provision for physical education.

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 happy, busy school with a strong sense of community, securely rooted in its Christian values. Pupils enjoy a good education and are eager to learn, supported by the strong and effective team of adults that educate and care for them. The leadership team are continually seeking ways to develop the school further and the school has been successful in making good use of new systems for tracking pupils' progress to identify, and respond to, any underachievement. Any additional support is monitored regularly to ensure that it is effective. As a result, few pupils remain a cause for concern for long. The capacity for future improvement is good.

Pupils make good progress throughout the school, leaving Year 4 above, and often well above, age-related expectations. In Year 2 and Year 3 although girls' standards were well above average at the end of Year 2 in 2010, boys' attainment was below average for reading, writing and mathematics. The school has responded swiftly to this by providing additional support and adjusting the curriculum to engage boys; this has had some success. However, in some lessons in classes with large gender imbalance, girls dominate the whole-class teaching sessions and boys rarely contribute.

All pupils join in enthusiastically with the morning 'Wake and Shake' exercises and the wide range of sporting activities on offer. About half of them enjoy the extremely good school lunches and all know how to keep healthy. They are well-cared for in school and feel very safe. Although satisfactory overall, there are some omissions and generalisations in the school's written policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils that do not reflect the school's good practice. Pupils behave well and make a good contribution to the school and local community. They are taught well and their teachers have high expectations of them, but, most pupils few opportunities to plan or evaluate their learning so that they can take personal responsibility for extending and improving their work. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are well-taught within a stimulating environment, with a rich mix of activities to help them learn, so that they make good progress. Children however do not have as many opportunities as they could to choose what they want to learn next. In the rest of the school, adults give wise oral advice to help pupils improve and set pupils targets. This advice is rarely written in pupils' books to help them remember how to improve their work and see their progress over time. Pupils carry out their pastoral duties conscientiously and the school council makes thoughtful decisions about aspects of school life or charities to support. Most duties are generated by adults and pupils rarely have the opportunity to organise their contributions to the community

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themselves.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to raise pupils' achievement from good to outstanding:
 - involve them all in evaluating their performance so that they can set their own targets
 - while ensuring pupils extend their skills, provide opportunities for them to decide what they would like to learn about and how to organise their work
 - ensure they are given written advice about how to improve their work
 - in classes where there is a gender imbalance, develop strategies to give boys the motivation and confidence to contribute to whole-class discussions
 - encourage pupils to define and carry out their responsibilities around the school independently and organise some of their own rotas and meetings
 - involve children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in contributing to their records of achievements in school and at home and choosing what they would like to learn next

- Adjust the written policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils to reflect the school's good practice.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most pupils make better than expected progress. By the time they leave in Year 4, they have built on their above-average standards at the end of Key Stage 1, with almost all making more than the expected progress in English and mathematics. Pupils work hard in lessons, clearly enjoying their learning. They take a pride in their work and are eager to please. However, they rarely make their own decisions about how well they have done or how to improve their work. Although boys in Years 2 and 3 respond well to the additional support, most are reluctant to contribute to whole-class learning, leaving the answers and comments to the girls. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants meet their social needs as well as their academic challenges effectively.

Pupils are well-behaved, kind to each other and eager to please their teachers. There are very good relationships between adults and pupils. Adults make learning fun and there is a pleasing sense that adults and pupils alike are learning together. Although there has been some higher than usual absence recently due to influenza, attendance is good overall. The school's high-quality provision for sport and the arts ensure pupils achieve well across the curriculum. Pupils' strong spiritual, moral and social development permeates throughout the school. This, and their academic skills, prepare pupils well for their futures. Pupils have supported a range of charities and are guardians of the ancient Pack Horse Bridge in the village. Their sensible and mature attitudes indicate that they are well-placed to take greater responsibility for

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their work and in the day-to-day management of the school.

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 provides for pupils' academic and social needs well. Teachers and teaching assistants know each pupil very well and match tasks to his or her needs. Whole-class teaching sessions are brisk and lively. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and provide plenty of challenge for all abilities. Oral guidance is good, as is written guidance for the older pupils but helpful written advice is rare and comments are mainly praise.

The broad and interesting curriculum serves pupils well. Basic skills are taught systematically and teachers have made changes to the content of the English curriculum and the range of reading books to have greater appeal to the boys. The timetables are planned creatively to enable teachers, who share classes, to use their expertise to the benefit of pupils. The school makes very good use of a sports' coach to support its commitment to ensuring pupils have plenty of physical exercise. Pupils' lively and tuneful singing and good quality artwork demonstrate the breadth of the curriculum, which is also supported by a good range of visits, visitors and clubs. Links with local organisations, for example, the Newmarket stables, extend pupils' experiences and understanding of the equestrian world. Strong sporting links with other schools and visits to local places of interest such as Lackford Lakes and Colchester Castle provide a rich source of practical learning. However, pupils rarely have the opportunity to pursue their own interests or to extend their learning

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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independently.

Pupils are well-cared for. The good personal, social and health education curriculum, as well as the close links with the church and strong family ethos of the school ensure the pupils and their parents feel secure in school. Pupils are given strong moral and social values which result in good behaviour and a calm and happy learning environment. They are allocated duties and are encouraged to take these seriously. Practically, all procedures for keeping pupils safe are carried out conscientiously.

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?

The school continues to be well-led and managed. The long-standing headteacher has developed an effective balance over the years between maintaining the strengths of the school while seeking to improve further. Teachers have clear leadership roles although most of the monitoring of teaching is carried out by the headteacher. The governing body and school leaders have an astute understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and their plans for development reflect this. For example, the lack of effective systems for tracking pupils' progress was an issue at the time of the last inspection. New systems are in place, enabling the school to respond to any underachievement effectively. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and has demonstrated this by the swift measures to address the gender differences in pupils' standards.

The governing support the school well and monitor progress towards the school's plans for development. Several visit the school regularly and observe lessons or run additional activities for pupils. Good links with other agencies ensure pupils' needs are met. The special educational needs coordinator also works in the middle school, making transition for these pupils very easy.

Although procedures for safeguarding pupils are good in practical terms, the policies have not been sufficiently adapted to be specific to the school. Fire practices are carried out regularly but there is no log of the outcomes to make any improvements. However, the school meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. There are strong links with the local community and the school has plans, through a multi-national company, to establish links with a school in Vietnam. Pupils share the American festivals such as the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving with the families from

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the airbase. Assemblies often focus on world events and ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the lives and cultures of others across the world. Robust plans are in place to promote engagement with a contrasting school community, to further extend pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom.

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	3
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

Children have a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are effective induction procedures and links with local pre-school providers to ensure children settle confidently and happily. Children are well-cared for and there are strong links with home. As there have been cohorts who have started school with below the expected communication, language and literacy skills for their age, the school has opted to admit children a term earlier than in the past. This has helped children, especially those with summer term birthdays, to be better prepared for Year 1.

Children learn well and make good progress within a stimulating and very well planned environment. The class teacher is skilled in generating a love of learning and shares the excitement of each child's achievements. It is very clear that children's ideas and comments are valued and acted upon. All adults are good at extending learning and promoting good personal development. Children get on very well with adults and each other and most work and play cooperatively. The majority of the present cohort, with many more girls than boys, has knowledge and skills above age-related expectations across the areas of learning. Adults carefully record children's progress, making quick notes of skills gained and identifying what children need to learn next. These are followed up with adult-led individual or group teaching

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sessions. Individual records, or ‘learning journeys’ contain these and photographic evidence as well as some home achievements. However, children are not involved in contributing to them in school or at home. The teacher and teaching assistants ensure that there is a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities available and children have good access to the materials and tools they need to create their own models, mix their paints and write. An effective mix of adult-led and child - initiated activities, both inside and out, ensures that children learn effectively. During the inspection, children were delighting in their topic about cold places and were very knowledgeable about the types and habitats of polar wildlife.

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

All the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. They feel they are listened to and that the teaching is good. A few expressed some concern about their child’s progress. The inspection findings show that most pupils make good progress but that rapid progress is inhibited by a lack of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moulton 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 128 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	78	13	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	72	16	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	53	23	40	2	3	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	45	25	43	7	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	53	26	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	53	24	41	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	59	24	41	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)	29	50	25	43	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	52	27	47	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	60	23	40	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	48	30	52	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	78	12	21	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	69	18	31	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	36	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.



24 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moulton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Newmarket, CB8 8PR

Thank you all for your help and support during my recent visit to your school. I was pleased to see how happily you worked and played together. It is very clear that you enjoy school. A special thanks to those of you in the school council who shared your views with me.

You make good progress during your time in school. All teachers plan work that gives each of you the right amount of challenge to help you learn. I did notice that, in some lessons, the girls are very good at answering the questions while some of the boys rarely volunteered. I have asked your teachers to make sure that the boys contribute as well as the girls. To make outstanding progress I have asked that you take more responsibility for your learning by suggesting how you could improve your own work. I would like all your teachers to include more written advice when they mark your work so that you can remember what you need to do and set your own targets. I think you could also take more responsibility for deciding how you can help in the day-to-day jobs around the school. I have asked your teachers to help you get started.

You have lots of interesting things to learn about. I was very impressed with the 'wake and shake' and your excellent singing in assemblies. Well done. Your school is well-managed and adults take good care of you. There are one or two things that need to be done to improve the written policies and systems so that, when people like your parents and carers ask to see them, they are very clear about all the good ways the school cares for you and helps you to care for yourselves. I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Dawson
Lead inspector

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