

# Discovery Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	135196
<b>Local authority</b>	Peterborough
<b>Inspection number</b>	381831
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Lynne Blakelock

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	430
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maria Crutchfield
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Hampson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2009
<b>School address</b>	Mountsteven Avenue Walton Peterborough PE4 6HX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 772230
<b>Fax number</b>	01733 701820
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	20–21 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	381831



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock

Additional inspector

Timothy Nelson

Additional inspector

Sally Lane

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 teachers in 25 lessons, over approximately 13 hours. They held meetings with senior and middle leaders, with groups of pupils and with members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at its development planning, data about the achievement of all groups of pupils and samples of their work. They analysed the 92 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

## Information about the school

This is a very large school compared to others of its type. It continues to grow and in September 2011 became three-form entry. A well-above-average number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language. Eighteen languages are represented in the school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. A higher proportion of pupils than average join or leave partway through their primary education.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which determine the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Recently, the school has achieved the full International Schools Award, Eco-School Award and Arts Mark Gold. It works in partnership with the Voyager cluster of schools.

The school is undergoing major refurbishment and building work in order to extend facilities, both in and outdoors.

**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>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has several good aspects. Children in Reception achieve well. Pupils’ behaviour and safety and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. The school provides a happy, motivational and inclusive environment, through nurturing and valuing all pupils. It is not good because staff at all levels do not yet make rigorous use of monitoring information and progress data to ensure consistently good teaching, and thus improve the rate of pupils’ progress.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Some good and outstanding teaching was observed during the inspection. The main factor restricting progress is that the data about the levels at which pupils work are not used consistently and carefully enough to provide activities that accurately match their levels. The pace of learning varies, and pupils are not always given enough time to practise the skills they have learnt.
- Pupils behave well within a secure and very safe environment. The school celebrates its cultural diversity and respects the faiths, beliefs and lifestyles of the pupils and staff. As a result pupils play and learn harmoniously.
- Leadership and management, including the leadership of teaching, are satisfactory. Performance management goals reflect the improvements that are needed in classroom practices to accelerate progress. The headteacher has been effective in assembling a team of senior and middle leaders whose roles match closely the school’s priorities, although their assessments of teaching quality are sometimes overgenerous and they are not all sufficiently skilled in data analysis.

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- Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Accelerate progress and raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics through Key Stages 1 and 2, by making sure that:
  - teaching is consistently good and uses data about the levels at which pupils work to set accurately challenging tasks for all abilities
  - learning moves forward at a consistently brisk pace
  - pupils have ample time to practise and apply the skills that they have learnt.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management at all levels and drive improvement more uniformly by ensuring that:
  - senior and middle leaders have a fully accurate understanding of the quality of teaching throughout the school
  - all middle leaders understand what data about pupils' achievement is telling them.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Many children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of knowledge and skills, especially in communication, language and literacy, that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning and development. They develop skills and confidence in working independently, and also in groups. Many are able to organise themselves and their learning. Through well-planned activities, they come to understand the needs of others and their responsibilities, such as caring for the animals. Daily, systematic teaching of letters and sounds promotes children's communication skills well. They are making good progress in forming letters and some pupils are writing simple sentences accurately.

Through Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress because teaching is satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' reading, writing and mathematics levels are average. However in an excellent lesson, a group of Year 1 pupils showed outstanding understanding of the nature of two and three digit numbers. Faced with a problem-solving exercise, they demonstrated their ability to make informed decisions about the right and wrong numbers. Pupils are starting Year 3 with growing skills in reading and writing. Staff are making more use, for example, of models and images to secure pupils' learning in mathematics. Standards are average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.

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There are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils, including those who join the school late. Pupils at the early stages of learning English make rapid progress when they first join the school, particularly in their literacy skills. During the inspection, pupils entitled to support due to their specific special educational needs made good progress in reading words and counting. While the inspection team queried the proportion of pupils on the special needs register, the school is clear that they have individual learning needs rather than just falling behind in a particular aspect of learning. Boys' progress has not previously consistently matched that of the girls, but the gap has narrowed considerably.

While most of the parents and carers and the pupils who returned the questionnaires felt that achievement is good, inspection evidence demonstrated that it is satisfactory overall.

### **Quality of teaching**

Most pupils and parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said that teaching is good. The inspectors found that almost half of the teaching observed was no better than satisfactory. As a result pupils' progress is satisfactory.

Classrooms and corridors are full of examples of pupils' learning, providing a vibrant environment. There are other common strengths. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and teachers make the purpose of learning clear. In a number of lessons observed, pupils were motivated by interesting and varied activities. In Reception, for example, in learning that centred on 'Hanna's hen', the children practised counting numbers and writing them accurately. Candles on a cake, spots on biscuits and counting activities using a tablet computer helped the children to secure good progress in their counting and formation of numbers.

However, some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching restrict progress to satisfactory. Planning does not always take closely enough into account the levels at which pupils are working, and as a result work can be too hard or too easy. The pace is sometimes too slow, resulting in insufficient urgency in pupils' learning. Pupils greatly enjoy chances to practise what they have learnt for themselves and in many lessons they are given this opportunity, but the balance of time between teaching and learning is not always conducive to this.

The school has worked hard to make marking helpful to pupils across the school. There is some excellent practice, which gives pupils very specific advice about the next steps in learning. In a mathematics lesson, the teacher assessed pupils' understanding as the lesson proceeded to ensure that they were ready to move on, and used effective questioning to accelerate their progress. Sometimes opportunities to check pupils' understanding in lessons are missed.

A strength in some lessons is the weaving in of opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. There was evidence of real

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joy and concern in the reaction of children in Reception to the birth of the chicks and the need to keep them warm.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The school has clear expectations of pupils' behaviour. From the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards, pupils behave well. They learn the importance of sharing, and working as a team. This is best shown in the welcome that pupils give to the children who join school late. They help them to settle in and assist them as they learn to speak English. Inspection evidence shows that behaviour has been consistently good in lessons and at playtime over a prolonged period. The very large majority of parents and carers, and pupils, agree.

Pupils enjoy school. They are proud to be entrusted with responsibilities, such as being mini-mentors in the playground. Pupils from different cultures are delighted to be selected each week to be 'Language Ambassadors' and to tell other pupils in assembly about their beliefs and practices.

Pupils and their parents and carers say that the school keeps them exceptionally safe. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils say that there is very little of any kind, and that it is dealt with effectively. A relevant programme of learning alerts pupils to a range of possible dangers and how to deal with them. It incorporates, for example, cyber and racist bullying.

Attendance is average over recent years. The school works determinedly to promote improved attendance.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher provides a clear structure and focus to school development planning, which is wholly appropriate to the needs of the school. At the same time, she continues to oversee successfully the large building programme. Every member of staff is seen as vital in the 'big picture' and all are accountable for their performance. They form an ambitious and cohesive unit.

Regular monitoring and evaluation takes place. From this, a number of strategies have been implemented, such as the effective 'Reading Recovery' and 'number count' schemes. These carefully chosen initiatives are giving pupils an increasingly secure foundation in reading, writing and numeracy. Evaluation of the quality of teaching is overgenerous although during the inspection, there was agreement between inspectors and the school on the quality of teaching observed. Middle leaders are moving forward confidently in overseeing their areas of responsibility. They know that their understanding of data is not yet comprehensive, and that their full impact has yet to work through. Their realism is important in the school's ability to continue improving.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved its tracking of the progress of all

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groups of pupils. More meaningful links across subjects are enabling pupils to refine their literacy skills and to transfer them to a variety of situations. Together with a range of strategies already in place, this shows the school's capacity to move further forward. The governing body contributes to this through the questions it asks about the information provided by the school, and its understanding of the ways it can strengthen its impact. The governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements, through regular reviewing of the school's procedures.

Satisfactory equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination are demonstrated in the satisfactory progress of all groups of pupils and the opportunities for them all to develop a broad range of academic and personal skills for the future. The satisfactory and improving curriculum makes an increasing contribution to both. In good or better lessons, improvements in pupils' literacy levels are facilitated by imaginative stimuli which engage pupils' interest, and tasks that are well matched to pupils' abilities. Enrichment of learning is good, with a wide range of after-school activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through planned events, using pupils' experiences and through the ethos of the school.

The breakfast club gives pupils a happy and nutritious start to the day's learning. Links with a range of external organisations offer specialist support, including for pupils whose circumstance may make them vulnerable. Partnerships with other schools provide additional learning opportunities for pupils and enable the headteacher to exchange information, share practices and keep abreast of issues. Good links between home and school are forged in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are a growing number of opportunities throughout the school for parents and carers to attend workshops so that they can support their children's learning.



## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	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 2010 to 31 August 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.
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.**



22 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Discovery Primary School, Peterborough, PE4 6HX**

During our recent visit, we enjoyed meeting you, talking to you and watching you learning. Thank you for making us feel very welcome, for being so polite and for sharing your thoughts about your school with us. We have taken them into account in making our judgements.

Your school is satisfactory, which means that it has some strengths and some areas to improve. You behave well and your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The inspectors judged that you feel very safe and are all valued by the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because teaching is good. Through the rest of the school, there is some good and outstanding teaching but it is not consistently good enough to quicken your progress, so it remains satisfactory.

The headteacher and the staff are always working hard to improve the school and are very keen to help move it further forward. They have already made some improvements. They have much more information about the levels at which you work and they are making learning more interesting for you, through themes and lots of practical tasks. I have asked them to make sure that the work you are given in lessons is at just the right level to help you make consistently good progress. I have also asked them to make sure that there is a brisk pace to learning and that you are given plenty of time to practise what you have learnt. All leaders and managers are going to check the quality of teaching very regularly and work out what the information they collect about your progress is showing.

I know that you enjoy school and will want to help your teachers to make these improvements. You can do this by working as hard as possible and by attending school every day that you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Blakelock  
Lead inspector

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