

Thrumpton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122559
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	359273
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Terry Elston

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alastair Murray
Headteacher	Elaine Allen
Date of previous school inspection	9 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed all seven teachers and visited 18 lessons. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, the progress of boys compared with girls, curriculum planning documents, examples of the ways the school promotes community cohesion, evidence of lesson observations and information from questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 42 parents and carers. The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether boys are making sufficient progress.
- How well teachers use assessment to check on pupils' learning.
- The extent to which the curriculum promotes good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- The effectiveness of strategies used by leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school with very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is broadly average. The majority of these pupils have reading and writing difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. A private organisation runs care facilities before and after school on the premises. The school has recently gained the International School Award.

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?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils enjoy school, behave well and make satisfactory progress so that attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Attainment in both English and mathematics is improving steadily, but girls tend to make faster progress than boys. Many of them are quicker to get down to work, answer more of the teachers' questions and show greater levels of interest in the curriculum. Boys often make better progress when they are required to use their imagination, and use technology such as cameras and computers to explore topics. Pupils have a good awareness of how to live healthy lives and explain clearly why they choose the healthy options at lunchtime.

The school is successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They reflect deeply on issues such as poverty in developing countries, and help people who are less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for global and local charities. They take responsibility well for their school and community, and school councillors use funds wisely from selling healthy biscuits to improve play facilities.

While the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, it varies from class to class. A strength in many lessons is the way teachers always value pupils' contributions in class, and this gives them the confidence to tackle difficult work. Teachers explain new concepts well, and ask probing questions to make pupils think carefully. In a minority of lessons, however, learning is slower because the pace is not fast enough, progress is not being assessed well enough or the tasks do not meet the learning needs of the wide range of abilities in the class.

A wide range of popular clubs at lunchtime and after school enriches the curriculum and hones pupils' skills in areas such as sport and music. However, the curriculum is not sufficiently lively to engage boys in particular, and there are too few opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.

Parents and carers are right to feel adults care for their children well. One parent, typical of many, commented, 'It is a happy place to learn, and my child's confidence has come on leaps and bounds.' Pupils feel safe, know who to turn to if they have concerns and feel that the rules to encourage good behaviour are applied fairly.

The headteacher and other leaders and managers provide clear direction, and support staff well in their training. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, and is set to sustain this improvement. Its self-evaluation systems are based clearly on pupils' performance compared with local and national figures, and measures to improve attainment are generally effective. For example, action to rectify weaknesses in reading, starting in the Early Years Foundation Stage, was effective, and the benefits are starting to work their way through the school. The systems for evaluating the quality of

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teaching are in place, but lack the sharp focus to achieve the school's ambition to provide consistently good learning in all classes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2011, increase the proportion of good or better lessons by:
 - always checking on pupils' progress during lessons
 - ensuring that the work meets the needs of pupils of different ability in the class
 - maintaining a fast pace of learning throughout the lessons
 - leaders' and managers' evaluations of lessons showing teachers clearly how to improve the learning of all groups of pupils.
- Raise boys' attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - giving them more opportunities to use a wide range of resources that capture their interest
 - ensuring that they get down to work faster, maintain their concentration throughout lessons and answer the same amount of questions as girls.
- Improve the curricular provision by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to hone their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects
 - providing more effective links between subjects to make learning fun and motivate boys.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

At Key Stage 1, pupils are making good progress in their word-building skills. The regular teaching of the sounds letters make is helping them tackle difficult words, and attainment in both reading and writing is improving as a result. For example, Year 1 pupils did particularly well in a lesson about words beginning with 'ph' and many were able to write, 'Phillip saw a dolphin' with reasonable accuracy by the end. In numeracy lessons, their calculations are generally accurate, although few show a rapid recall of number facts. At Key Stage 2, most pupils read confidently and fluently, and more able pupils scan text quickly to gain information. Their writing is mostly accurate, but better in literacy lessons than in other subjects. It is a similar story in mathematics; pupils have a reasonable recall of number facts, but often struggle when asked to use their numeracy skills in subjects such as science or history.

In the vast majority of classes throughout the school, boys' attainment lags behind that of girls in both English and mathematics. This has generally been the pattern over recent years when test results at Year 2 and Year 6 showed girls attaining above national standards and boys a little below.

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Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily, and those who have been at this school from the start achieve well. They learn to research topics independently, and often achieve well in reading and writing because of the good teaching of word-building skills by teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils are proud of their school and say how much they enjoy lessons. Attendance rates are above average and pupils arrive on time. They have a good sense of right and wrong, and are very good at considering the impact of their actions on others. They have a sound knowledge of different faiths and cultures, and enjoy communicating with their partner school in Sri Lanka.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In many lessons, teachers make learning fun by giving pupils plenty of practical activities and opportunities to discuss their work with their 'talking partner'. In one of the best lessons, for example, the teacher acted out the part of a distraught baker after the Great Fire of London, and pupils gained a deep insight into the plight of people of that time as they did the same with their partner. Teachers show a good knowledge of subjects and explain new work clearly. Some very effective teaching was seen where teachers made it quite clear what learning was expected by the end by all groups of pupils, revisited these goals throughout the lesson and ensured that groups learned at a fast pace. However, in a minority of lessons, progress suffered when pupils lost track of what they were supposed

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to be learning, sat too long listening to the teacher or found the work too hard or too easy.

The teachers make detailed assessment of pupils' progress, and use this information well to identify those who are not making sufficient progress. They mark pupils' books diligently, but sometimes the comments do too little to help pupils improve.

The school is beginning to develop a curriculum that links subjects together in order to make learning more interesting and develop pupils' reading, writing and number skills. This is still at an early stage, however, and not all pupils have sufficient opportunities to read, write or use their numeracy skills in a wide range of subjects. The well planned personal, social and health education provision ensures that pupils gain a good awareness of health and safety issues and learn the importance of understanding others' feelings. Fruitful links with other schools in Kenya and Sri Lanka enrich the curriculum and have helped gain the International Schools Award.

Parents and carers appreciate the way all adults know their children so well, and are always there if any individual needs help. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from sensitive care, both from the school and from outside professionals, and they flourish as a result. The school provides good support to pupils with severe learning and physical difficulties that ensures they enjoy school and take a full part in all activities. Teaching assistants provide valuable support to individuals and groups of pupils, although occasionally they miss opportunities to assess pupils' understanding in whole class sessions.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school shows a commitment to providing equal opportunities for all pupils, and the leaders check regularly on the progress of groups by race, social background and gender. They have identified boys' underachievement, and recent improvements in the resources aimed at boys, together with individual teaching of reading skills, are starting to bear fruit. The headteacher works closely with other leaders and managers to drive school improvement and set ambitious targets. Priorities for the future are relevant to the school's needs and aimed clearly at raising standards. To raise the quality of teaching and learning, the leaders have created good opportunities for teachers to work in pairs, evaluate one another's lessons and consult pupils on how lessons could have been better. Teachers have found this valuable, and a good way of sharing expertise.

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The school has a good partnership with parents and carers, who feel well-informed about their children's progress. They feel welcome in school and appreciate the way staff canvass their views about the curriculum and the care of their children. Other partnerships, such as those with neighbouring schools and staff from national reading projects, benefit the school and enhance teachers' expertise.

The governing body has benefited from useful training, and is developing its skills in analysing data about pupils' progress. Governors visit the school often, and have gained a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses. They take safeguarding very seriously, and ensure all checks are made at appropriate times. Staff are vigilant, and undertake regular training to ensure pupils' well-being.

The school promotes community cohesion by using its links with schools and charities overseas and providing opportunities in the curriculum to help pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures. Pupils are involved in many local events that teach them how others live in the area. Links with contrasting schools, however, are limited and the leaders are right to have as a priority the creation of closer ties to local schools with a greater diversity of ethnic backgrounds.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision is satisfactory, and parents and carers are pleased with the start it gives their children. Children enter the school with skills typical of their ages apart from their language and social skills that are relatively weak. They make satisfactory progress, and leave the Reception class with skills similar to most children in all areas of learning. Their progress is recorded carefully and supplemented by useful photographic evidence.

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The good induction procedures and thorough attention to children's welfare mean that children settle quickly to school routines and feel safe. The teachers make lessons and play interesting, and provide a strong emphasis on developing children's language skills. Activities are mostly planned well for the different abilities in the class, but occasionally the most able children in the nursery group are not challenged sufficiently. The staff make satisfactory use of the outdoor area, although some opportunities are missed to enable children to learn and play outside the classroom. Children develop their creative talents well by imaginative use of the role play area and good opportunities to paint and bake unusual cakes. The classrooms are bright and stimulating, and children choose confidently from the wide range of activities provided.

Children behave well and soon learn the rules and expectations that prepare them for the future. The leaders have a clear understanding of how well the provision meets children's needs and what needs to be improved.

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

The number of responses to the questionnaire is lower than normally found in a primary school this size. Parents and carers' views are extremely positive. They are particularly appreciative of the way all staff know, and care for, their children so well. They value the way teachers make learning fun so that their children can hardly wait to get to school. They feel well-informed about their children's progress, and always feel welcome in school. They believe strongly that the school keeps improving. Parents and carers who bring their children here from other schools say how well they are helped to settle. These views reflect the inspection findings. A very small number of parents and carers feel that the school does not take notice of their views, but inspectors found no evidence to support this concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Thrumpton 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	67	13	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	69	12	29	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	55	16	38	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	48	18	43	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	52	17	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	60	15	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	71	11	26	1	2	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)	25	60	13	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	50	17	40	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	50	20	48	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	50	15	36	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	57	15	36	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	62	12	29	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. 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 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thrumpton Primary School, Retford, DN22 7AF

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work hard in lessons and play so happily outside. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed how much you like school. Your school is satisfactory, which means that while some things are good, others could be better.

This is what we found out about your school.

You behave well, listen carefully to your teachers and make satisfactory progress. You have a good knowledge of how to keep safe and live healthy lives. You think a lot about people in different countries who are poor, and you try to help them. You take responsibility well, and are kind to those who are upset. Your headteacher and other leaders are always looking for ways to make your school even better. You have an interesting range of activities provided for you, and you enjoy the many clubs at lunchtime and after school. Your teachers make learning fun, and are good at helping you when you find things difficult. All staff at the school take good care of you and keep you safe. The school makes sure your parents and carers know just how well you are working.

These are the improvements we want your school to make.

Make sure all your lessons are as good as the best ones.

Help boys do as well as girls. You boys can help by doing your best work in every lesson and trying to be the first to put your hands up to answer a question.

Give you more opportunities to practise your reading, writing and number skills in all subjects.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston

Lead inspector

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