

Exton and Greetham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120178
Local Authority	Rutland
Inspection number	358713
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Hitchcox
Headteacher	Kathy Whitehead
Date of previous school inspection	14 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. Ten lessons were observed and three teachers seen together with their teaching assistants. Meetings were held with staff, representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at information about pupils' progress, evidence of monitoring, the school development plan, a variety of policies and safeguarding documentation. In addition, the questionnaires returned by 21 parents and carers were analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at a number of key questions.

- Has the work to achieve more consistent progress in Key Stage 2 been successful?
- How well are teaching and the curriculum adapted to meet the needs of the mixed-age groupings?
- What is the quality of the contribution that coordinators make to the drive for improvement?

Information about the school

This rural village school is much smaller than average and serves the local and wider area. The proportion entering or leaving at other than the usual times is much higher than usual. Almost all pupils are of White British backgrounds. Of the small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, none is at an early stage of speaking English. More pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals than is usual. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with statements of special educational needs are above the national average. These needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, or severe learning difficulties. There are three classes. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a very small group taught alongside Years 1 and 2. The school holds several awards for its provision including the International Schools Award and the Eco Schools silver award. Before- and after-school care is run by other providers and was not part of this inspection.

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 that has improved its effectiveness since the previous inspection. A number of key aspects lead to pupils' good personal development, enjoyment and behaviour, and their improved progress and achievement.

The positive ethos ensures that pupils are caring and respectful individuals who are able to learn in an inclusive, welcoming and encouraging environment.

The family-feel, generated by the small overall number of pupils and the mixed-age groupings, helps pupils develop socially and to interact and learn harmoniously.

The curriculum is vibrant and creative. The themed planning helps pupils to relate their learning to everyday life. It encourages group activities and so promotes pupils' social skills and confidence and sustains their keen interest.

Music pervades the school throughout the day. The award of Sing-Up Gold is testament to the quality and interest in singing. Other aspects of the school's provision are recognised through the International Schools Award and the Eco Schools silver award, which make a positive impact on pupils' understanding of the world and their contribution to the community.

Improvements to the quality of teaching and the good contribution of the teaching assistants have meant that progress is now consistent across the school. This includes the progress of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, progress for most pupils is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and through the school. Attainment in Key Stage 2 is rising and is broadly average.

Pupils say they enjoy their lessons. These are carefully tailored to meet the needs of the wide age-range in the class. Just occasionally, teachers spend too long on whole-class sessions, recapping work already learned and explaining the next steps. This restricts the time less-able pupils have to receive additional adult support, and for the more-able to work on their more challenging tasks. Sometimes, the teacher too readily provides the answer rather than helping pupils to find out for themselves.

While provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and underpins the good progress evident, child-chosen activities inside and outside are not always linked well enough to the teacher-led sessions. This means opportunities are sometimes missed for children to embed learning gained in the teacher-led sessions.

Pupils' good outcomes reflect a strong drive for improvement promoted by the school's leaders and the governing body, and taken up by the whole staff team. Coordinators provide strong support. Accurate self-evaluation of performance has led the team to devise clear priorities for tackling the few remaining weaknesses.

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The strong teamwork evident, and the key enhancements already made to pupils' progress, teaching and the curriculum, clearly demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move attainment up to above average by July 2012, by:
 - ensuring that all lessons have an appropriate balance of whole-class and individual or group work tailored to pupils' specific needs
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves, for instance through book-based and computer research.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensure that most activities planned and prepared for children to choose themselves, inside and outside, are linked to the teacher-led sessions.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most pupils make good progress and achieve well from their widely differing starting points which are often below those expected when they first start at the school. Improvements to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have resulted in equivalent progress for this group. This is also the case for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Careful monitoring and additional help when required for those who join the school's roll later than others ensures that these pupils, too, make good progress. Attainment by Year 6 is broadly average overall. Along with average attendance, this prepares pupils adequately for their next school.

Pupils' happy faces in class confirm that they enjoy their learning very much. They quickly settle down to lessons at the start of the school day. They are keen to produce their best work and show good attitudes to learning. The pupils respond enthusiastically to cultural and sporting opportunities, which have led to school awards for music and some individuals' selection for county sports teams.

Pupils feel safe at school and their parents agree. Pupils' knowledge of how to keep safe in different situations, such as on the roads and using the internet, is good. They adopt good healthy eating practices. One pupil summed this up by saying, 'Too much of any one food can be bad for you - you need to eat a balance of different foods so you have proteins, sugars and vitamins'. Pupils eagerly take on responsibility and make a good contribution to school life. The Eco Committee helps to improve sustainability and instills in fellow pupils a careful regard for the earth's resources. Pupils enjoy beneficial links with the local church as well as involvement in local produce and craft shows, where a governors' trophy is awarded. Pupils' cultural understanding is well developed overall, through some strong elements in the creative curriculum and the school's work on community cohesion. However, their understanding of the diversity in Great Britain today is not as strong.

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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	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

Well organised teaching, a curriculum that inspires learning and caring support are evident in pupils' good progress and achievement. Teachers successfully rise to the challenge of ensuring that the work they set is well matched to the wide range of ability and ages in the three classes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Their individual learning plans identify good, subject-specific targets. Pupils and staff work together with parents and carers to ensure these targets are met. In the best lessons, but not all, the teacher-led session is short and each group is set different but challenging activities that are well tailored to their needs. Additional challenge is given through high quality verbal feedback or by modifying the task as the lesson proceeds to ensure individual pupils are not waiting for others to finish. Pupils often work in pairs so that they can support each other's learning. Learning targets on the wall and pupils' individualised targets are used regularly to promote learning. Consequently, pupils have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve. A Reception-age child, working on freely-chosen activities outside, was heard to say 'I'm going to work on one of my targets now.' Although relevant books and computers for research are available, some opportunities for pupils to use them for finding things out are missed.

The curriculum is well organised and has a strong creative focus which links subjects together in an interesting and varied manner. Information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy are promoted well. Visits out, visitors to school and popular clubs

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such as judo and singing are much enjoyed. Good discussions and activities that focus on developing pupils' personal and emotional skills have a good impact on their personal development.

Pupils value the fact that they are known as individuals. Adults keep a vigilant eye on their daily needs, quickly attending to any upsets. As a result, pupils behave well and make good academic progress. Nurturing care ensures that pupils who enter the school later than at the normal time are helped to feel at home quickly. Efforts to improve attendance have been successful in almost all cases and the school takes care to provide work for pupils who are absent for any length of time. Transition to secondary school is well managed. Pupils settle in well and the receiving staff are well-informed about pupils' individual needs.

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 strong and sustained leadership and management of the headteacher and other staff have had a good impact on provision and outcomes. For example, the improvements in teaching are due to regular monitoring of lessons that provides teachers with clear pointers for improvement which they then act upon. Adults promote equality of opportunity well, checking to see that pupils, no matter what their background or needs, make good progress. Discrimination in any form is extremely rare but appropriate procedures are in place to tackle this if need be.

Good partnerships with parents and carers exist at many levels. The school gives them plenty of help to support their children's learning at home through homework and information about the curriculum. Parents' and carers' views are regularly sought and promptly acted upon. Well-established partnerships with external organisations are strong. They are widening pupils' sporting and cultural experiences and enabling them to develop their social skills. Partnerships catering for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are also strong. These have a good impact on pupils' health and well-being and help them overcome any barriers to learning.

Governance is good. The governing body ensures the school offers good value for money by providing good challenge and support. Governors have an insightful understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance are robust. This ensures governors have a full picture of the school's work and play an active part in deciding upon future priorities. Safeguarding procedures are well implemented. Staff are thoroughly trained in safeguarding and good steps are taken to minimise any risk to pupils on- or off-site. Meticulous checks are made to ensure

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staff are suitable for working with children. Thoughtful work to promote community cohesion has resulted in pupils' good understanding of the local community. Plans are thorough and the action taken is having a very positive impact on pupils' personal development. Global links are good, for instance, with a school in Pakistan. Governors are now working with the school to develop even more ways to help pupils have a better understanding of the society in which they will live.

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

Children make good progress in their learning from their widely differing starting points which are often below age-related expectations. They improve their skills and knowledge well across all areas of learning. Most reach and some exceed the early learning goals at the end of the Reception Year. Children's behaviour is good and positive relationships help them to feel confident and safe. They make sensible choices about what to eat and drink, know how to keep themselves safe, for example, on outside visits, when playing on wheeled toys or when using scissors. Good teaching and well-planned activities, some of which children choose for themselves, ensure they are interested and able to use their imagination well. However, too few of the child-chosen activities are linked to the teacher-led sessions and because of this, children are not always given enough opportunities to practice and therefore embed this learning. Attention to children's welfare is good. The indoor environment is stimulating and well-resourced which promotes learning and personal development well. The assessment procedures ensure that staff know the children very well and meet individual needs expertly. Children's good outcomes, as found in the last inspection, and the ongoing development in the Early Years Foundation Stage, demonstrate the leaders' continuing and successful drive for improvement.

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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

The response to the questionnaire was higher than usual. Most parents and carers are very happy with the school. Nine out of ten responses were fully in agreement with all the questionnaire statements. Several comments were similar to this one and reflect the inspection findings: 'I feel the school has improved greatly since the last Ofsted inspection.' A very small minority of parents indicated concern about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and feels the school does not take account of their concerns and suggestions. During the inspection nothing but good behaviour and good behaviour management were seen in lessons and around the school. Records showed that the school takes appropriate account of any reported concerns and suggestions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Exton and Greetham Church of England 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 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 45 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	38	12	57	1	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	67	7	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	10	48	11	52	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	29	15	71	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	7	33	13	62	1	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	38	12	57	1	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	43	12	57	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)	4	19	16	76	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	29	15	71	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	19	15	71	2	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	19	15	71	2	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	33	13	62	1	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	48	11	52	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



19 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Exton and Greetham Church of England Primary School, Oakham, LE15 8AY

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. Special thanks are due to those who showed me around and to the group who gave up part of their lunchtime to chat to me. Yours is a good school that has improved since the last inspection.

You know quite a lot about how to live a healthy lifestyle and you told me how much you enjoy school and your lessons, and the way you work together on projects such as 'Pirates'. You certainly enjoy your singing - and so did I! There have been improvements in the progress you make in your learning, especially for the older children. This means that, by the time you leave, you are reaching about the same standards as other children of your age.

Importantly, you like being part of a small school in which everyone gets on well and cares for each other.

Every school has some things that could be improved. Most of your lessons are good but in some lessons you sit listening to the teacher for a long time and are not getting on with your own learning. I have asked your headteacher and staff to make sure you have enough time in each lesson to get on with tasks that are just right for you. This will help you make even faster progress and reach higher standards. I have also asked that you are given more opportunities to find things out for yourselves in books and on the internet. This will help prepare you better for your future lives.

For the little ones, I have asked that the activities children choose for themselves, inside and outside, are planned to fit more closely with the work the children have just been learning with the teacher.

There are many things for you to be pleased about in such a small school. You can help now by carrying on with working hard and enjoying school as much as you say you do now.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane

Lead inspector

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