

Gretton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121823
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380333
Inspection dates	15–16 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Jenny Batelen

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phil Bromhall
Headteacher	Jane Dooley
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in nine lessons, taught by six teachers. They held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school development plan, safeguarding and welfare arrangements and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors also analysed questionnaires from staff, pupils and 40 parents and carers.

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

- Inspectors looked at the consistency of teaching and learning across the school and how this contributes to good achievement for all pupils.
- They explored how involved pupils are in making decisions about their learning and their school.
- Inspectors considered how the senior leaders and the governing body monitor and review the progress of the work of the school.
- They investigated how the school works with parents and carers in order to involve them in the life of the school.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school, and most pupils come from the village of Gretton and its immediate vicinity. Most pupils are White British. A very small number of pupils are from a range of other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, and most of these pupils have a range of moderate learning needs. The proportion of pupils with statements of educational need is above average and includes pupils with specific learning difficulties. Pupils throughout the school are organised in mixed-age classes, except in Year 3. There has been a significant change of staff since the previous inspection. The school has achieved National Healthy School status.

Chirpy Chicks Nursery is located on the same site but not managed by the governing body and, therefore, inspected separately.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to this good school and their behaviour is excellent. They care about, and support, each other in lessons and around the school. The school gives outstanding care to pupils and is tenacious in ensuring that high quality support is in place to ensure positive outcomes for all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This care and support extends to families who may be facing difficult circumstances.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and take the message home as noted by parents and carers. Pupils lead activities at playtime ensuring that younger pupils are active and having fun. This is representative of pupils' strong contribution to the life of the school and also to the local community. Excellent links and partnerships with a range of organisations have a significant impact on pupils' well-being and progress. For example, the Forest School programme, provided in conjunction with an external partner, enables pupils to make outstanding progress in developing their skills of independent learning and their investigative abilities.

Thorough induction procedures ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a happy and confident start to school. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, their attainment is above average. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good and there are some examples of outstanding progress. This is because of the careful tracking of each pupil's progress and planned, targeted interventions that are put in place to support the specific learning needs of individuals and of groups of pupils.

Teaching and learning are consistently good across the school and there are examples of outstanding practice. Consequently, most pupils achieve well. Marking in both English and mathematics includes positive comments related to the learning objective and next steps guidance to further improve the work. Pupils are able to decide for themselves if they have succeeded in their task. Clear individual targets are set for pupils, who understand what they must do to meet these targets. In outstanding lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully and actively engaged in lessons. Sometimes, in lessons that are good, a few pupils are not sure what to do because teachers do not ensure that all understand the tasks, or check that all are sufficiently engaged in the group activities. Hence, these pupils make slower progress than others in these lessons.

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The headteacher works closely with the staff and there are clear mentoring opportunities to develop staff skills, particularly of those new to the profession. There are robust systems for evaluating the achievements and effectiveness of the school which involves all staff and the governing body. As a result there is a clear understanding of the strengths and challenges the school faces. There are clear and accurate priorities for improvement based on further raising attainment and progress. The school has a good capacity to improve.

A large majority of parents and carers are very positive about the school. It 'offers an excellent education in every respect' and the 'staff seem very committed to their pupils' are representative of positive comments from parents and carers. They feel that the school keeps their children safe and pupils say they feel safe and know that if they have any worries or concerns the teachers will 'sort it out' as one pupil said. The school has many ways of communicating with parents and carers and other stakeholders but a small minority are concerned that their views and suggestions are not given sufficient attention. Because so many staff are new, the relationships with parents and carers are not fully enough established to allay their concerns and to assist them more fully to support their children's education. As a result also, some parents and carers are not making use of the opportunities provided to engage more actively in the work of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in English and mathematics further by embedding high quality classroom practice across the school so that more of the good teaching becomes outstanding by:
 - making sure that teachers in all lessons check that all pupils understand the tasks and know what they are expected to do
 - ensuring that all teachers monitor levels of pupil engagement and intervene quickly if any pupils are not taking an active enough part in their work.
- Build on existing communication systems in order to develop stronger partnerships with parents and carers so that more of them are positive about the school, and more effectively engaged in its work and their children's education.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Careful planning and innovative styles of teaching ensure that all pupils make good progress throughout the school. This was apparent in a Year 5/6 lesson when pupils were learning to express and explore their ideas through eye-witness reports. As members of the 'Ministry of Defence' they planned questions to ask of eye-witnesses of a city bombing during World War 2. They used a well-practised routine for exploring their senses and thoughts, worked in pairs,

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shared ideas in groups and also collected ideas from others like ‘magpies’. There was urgency in the task driven by footage played of the aftermath of the bombing. Pupils’ enthusiasm and confidence in their task resulted in perceptive questions and the use of high level language.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well-supported to understand tasks and to be involved in the whole class work. Higher-attaining pupils respond well to the challenges presented to them.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and say that they have no concern about bullying and that if they have a worry about anything they can use the class ‘Worry Box’. The award of National Healthy School Status is a reflection of the way pupils are helped to lead a healthy lifestyle. The strong contribution that pupils make to the life of the school and the wider community was demonstrated when members of the Eco Council led an assembly in preparation for ‘Switch Off’ week, with a power point presentation sharing ideas of what could be done and awarding stickers to remind pupils and staff. Pupils are involved in decision making about school through the democratically elected school council and are involved in decisions about the local area, such as the design of the local Multi Use Games area.

Pupils reflect thoughtfully on current themes and their own work and there are spaces in the school grounds where they are able to remember a former pupil and a parent who have died. Pupils develop good understanding about other cultures and faiths through curriculum experiences and visitors. Good attendance coupled with well-developed basic literacy and numeracy skills mean that pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education.

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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will	2

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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contribute to their future economic well-being	
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and use pupils' interests and enthusiasms to plan effective and challenging lessons that address the needs of all pupils, taking into consideration the different year groups represented in the class. This, along with effective questioning ensures that pupils are able to learn and make good progress. Strong cross-curricular links are made in all lessons and planning responds to pupils' interests, especially in the focused TASC (Think, Active, Contexts, Social) and enterprise weeks. Information and communication technology is used confidently in all classes and in a range of subjects. Other adults in the classroom are well-deployed and very effective in the support given to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Relationships between all in the class are strong and supportive. In some lessons, not all pupils are kept sufficiently engaged and a few make slower progress.

The curriculum is planned in themes and ensures that all the necessary skills are developed. Imaginative experiences ensure that pupils are motivated and excited by their learning. Some pupils in Year 3 were able to develop their skills in using metaphors by acting out their thoughts and feelings about different settings presented in photographs. There is a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including residential trips and clubs. Many of the latter are run by a small group of very supportive parents and carers. These further enhance pupils' development and well-being.

Transition arrangements for pupils leaving the school are based on the very strong links between the schools and as a result pupils speak very positively of looking forward to the move. Excellent use is made of outside agencies for the benefit of all pupils but especially for those who may be vulnerable. As a result, these pupils make good progress. Exceptionally clear systems for, and rigorous monitoring of, behaviour and attendance lead to excellent behaviour and good attendance.

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	1

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and governing body have worked effectively to create a skilled and dynamic team of staff in order to improve outcomes for all pupils. While they have ensured that teaching is consistently good, and that at least some is outstanding, the best practice has not yet been fully embedded across the school to secure a greater proportion of outstanding teaching and learning. Nonetheless, senior leaders work effectively alongside the headteacher to embed the ambition and drive to make the school even better. Equality of opportunity is well promoted and any form of discrimination is not tolerated. Well-developed tracking systems are used to check the progress of individuals and different groups to ensure there are no significant differences or gaps in learning. Staff work closely together, value the mentoring they receive and the opportunities to share ideas with their colleagues. Teaching and learning is rigorously monitored through observations, learning walks, book trawls and pupil progress meetings.

Members of the governing body are skilled and, with the training they undergo, share effectively in the identification of priorities for improvement and evaluating the progress made. They provide good challenge and support. Thorough records, policies and risk assessments coupled with rigorous evaluation of procedures ensure pupils are well safeguarded. The governing body recognise, with the headteacher, that there are some parents and carers who are not confident that the school is doing its best for their children. They have already addressed some concerns raised in a recent survey of parent and carer views.

The school provides many opportunities for parents and carers to understand the work of the school. Information evenings are in place to inform parents and carers about areas of the curriculum that will support them to help their children; however not all parents and carers avail themselves of these opportunities. There are a small minority that express concerns about different aspects of the school. A radical change in staffing has meant that relationships with parents are not established enough to allay these concerns or work with parents to address their concerns.

Very strong links with local schools and partnerships enable the school to provide activities that greatly enrich the curriculum, such as Forest School and expert drama teaching. These have a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The drama work with younger pupils who have speech and language needs has resulted in striking progress in their communication skills. Strong links with the village church enhance the opportunities for developing spiritual awareness. A member of staff takes a leading role in sharing her skills with other schools as an advanced skills teacher and networking partnerships enrich and enhance all staff skills and understanding.

The school has a clear understanding of its religious, ethnic and social context. Curriculum experiences help pupils develop a global understanding, supported by a village link with Goa. There are opportunities to understand the differences between themselves and others in the United Kingdom. However, the school recognises the

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need to deepen this understanding through more first hand experiences for pupils of those from backgrounds different to their own.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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

The good leadership of the newly appointed co-ordinator to the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children are happy, safe and make good progress. The close proximity of the on-site nursery means that children have regular access to the Early Years Foundation Stage space in the term before they start school. As a result, children settle quickly into their new routines and parents and carers are highly appreciative of this. Children work and play well together as was demonstrated by a group using the interactive whiteboard to count the number of a range of items. They shared the pen and made sure that each child had their turn. The classroom and the outside areas are welcoming environments with all areas of development represented. Learning outside is a regular feature of the planning, but is not yet used as freely by children as possible. Weekly trips to a nearby forest for Forest School activities give children the chance to explore, be active and make good use of all their senses as was shown when looking for pieces of the rainbow that the dragon had broken with his fire!

Teaching is good and all adults understand the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage well. Activities include a range of adult-led and child-initiated tasks. Probing questions help develop children’s thinking. Frequent and ongoing assessment informs future planning. As a result, children enter Key Stage 1 very well prepared for their next steps in learning. The profile folders provide a comprehensive commentary on each child’s progress using annotated photographs and samples of work. These are shared with parents and carers and information from home on the

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'well done' board is often included.

Children participate fully in the life of the school. They are helped to lead a healthy lifestyle with plenty of activities and the choice of healthy snacks. They are encouraged to be independent and take on classroom monitor roles. They behave very well.

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 proportion of questionnaires returned is in line with the average response for primary schools. A large majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school and particularly praise the way the school keeps their children safe and helps them to adopt a healthy lifestyle. A small minority of parents and carers feel that their concerns and suggestions are not listened to and have concerns about the way the school is led and managed and how well behaviour is managed. Inspectors found that the school works hard to listen and respond to parents and carers and to involve them in the life of the school, but there is more to do given the school's current context and changes in staffing. Inspection evidence also showed that the school is well led and managed with pupils' well-being at the heart of what it does. Behaviour was judged to be outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gretton 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 109 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	60	13	33	3	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	53	19	48	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	16	40	19	48	5	13	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	50	15	38	5	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	53	16	40	2	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	19	48	15	38	5	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	43	21	53	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	30	16	40	5	13	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	13	33	25	63	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	23	22	55	7	18	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	25	16	40	11	28	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	25	15	38	9	23	4	10
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	13	33	22	55	3	8	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



17 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gretton Primary School, Gretton, NN17 3DB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. Thank you also to those of you who returned questionnaires about your school. We enjoyed joining in your lessons, assembly and Forest School and talking to you.

Yours is a good school and, as a result, you make good progress in your learning. There are many good things about your school.

- Your behaviour is excellent and you help each other, and you have a good knowledge and understanding about how to keep yourselves safe.
- You understand exceptionally well how to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- You listen carefully to your teachers and work hard in your lessons.
- All the adults in the school care a lot about you and make sure that you are given high quality support and guidance for your personal or individual needs.
- You have lots of opportunities to contribute to the life of the school and to village life.
- The adults who manage and run your school work hard to make sure you have the best opportunities to achieve well.

There are two things we have asked the school to do to make it even better. These are:

- to further improve the standards you reach and progress you make in English and mathematics by making sure that your teachers always make sure you all know exactly what to do and check you are all working hard
- to encourage all your parents and carers to be involved in school life and understand exactly how well you are doing and how they can help you.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and making sure you know what to do and how to make your work even better

Yours sincerely

Jenny Batelen
Lead inspector

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