

Great Doddington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121821
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380331
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

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	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Griffith
Headteacher	Jan Nesbitt
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons including a small teaching group withdrawn from class, observing a total of eight teachers. They also made shorter visits to classes to look at displays and observe individual pupils and groups at work. They met parents and carers informally during the inspection and held meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, and management, curriculum and safeguarding documentation. In addition, inspectors took account of responses to questionnaires from 74 parents and carers, 19 staff and 56 pupils.

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

- How rapidly is progress in English improving to match that seen in mathematics, especially for more-able pupils?
- Are the quality of teaching and use of assessment consistently effective throughout the school?
- How rigorous and effective are leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, in monitoring the work of the school to ensure that attainment is improved consistently?

Information about the school

Great Doddington is a smaller than average primary school serving the village and immediate local area. The majority of pupils are White British. Fewer pupils than average are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is smaller than that found nationally and a few of these pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who are supported at 'school action plus' or have a statement of special educational needs is average, but fewer pupils than found nationally are supported at 'school action'. The school holds the Active Mark and Healthy School status.

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

Great Doddington provides a good quality of education. Pupils are well taught, show an enthusiastic approach to learning and, as a result, make good progress. They enjoy school, as indicated by above average attendance. One pupil summed this up in saying, 'The teachers care about you and listen to your point of view. We work hard and do interesting work in lessons.' A significant feature of the school is the good care, guidance and support provided for pupils. Safeguarding arrangements are good, pupils know how to keep safe, and they have a good understanding of what is involved in leading a healthy life.

Children enter Reception with skills and abilities that are below the levels expected nationally, but settle quickly into the Reception class and make good gains in their learning. Good progress continues in Key Stages 1 and 2, and by the end of Year 6 attainment is average overall and rising. Progress in English, especially writing, is improving to match that in mathematics because the curriculum is adapted well to provide interesting writing experiences that capture pupils' imagination. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully through the school, but the resulting information is not used consistently in all classes to plan tasks that provide good challenge for all groups, especially the more-able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are assessed accurately and they receive well-targeted learning support.

Under the energetic direction of the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, priorities for improvement have been accurately identified and there is a shared commitment to continue to raise attainment and improve the school further. The members of the governing body have improved their skills rapidly and share monitoring responsibilities with senior staff. They offer full challenge and are now active partners in driving the school forward. Links with parents and carers are satisfactory. They are kept soundly informed about their children's progress, but they receive only limited information about what their children are learning in class and insufficient guidance to help them support learning at home in both literacy and numeracy. Development points from the previous inspection have been resolved well. Strong partnerships with external advisors and other local schools are used very effectively to support and extend provision. Sustained good-quality teaching and the setting of clear and ambitious targets mean that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in English and mathematics by ensuring that assessment information is used effectively in all classes to provide challenging tasks for all ability groups, especially the more-able pupils.
- Improve the range of curriculum information available for parents and carers and extend the guidance given to them to help support their child’s learning at home.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are attentive and want to do well. The successful focus on improving writing is well integrated into lessons. For example, in a literacy lesson pupils in Year 5 were very excited by the task of preparing a commercial for their chosen product. They selected persuasive language to attract customers and revised their work in groups to help achieve the best sales possible. The work challenged all groups well and they made good progress. A focus on problem-solving is improving attainment in mathematics. In a Year 6 lesson pupils were fascinated and worked hard on problems related to recognising and extending number squares. Problems were grouped in sets and pupils were encouraged to select for themselves those questions that challenged and extended them. They did this with enthusiasm and made good progress as a result. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities contribute well to lessons because work is adapted carefully for them. They receive good support and this fosters their independence and confidence.

Relationships at every level are good. Pupils treat adults and each other with respect and are caring and supportive. They have a clear perception of right and wrong and agree their own class codes. A recent focus on behaviour, led by the school council, has resulted in a weekly prize for good behaviour which is awarded by the councillors. Pupils show pride in their regular monitor responsibilities as well as their work on the eco committee and well-respected school council. Pupils understand clearly about being safe, including safe use of the internet. Healthy School status and the Active Mark award demonstrate pupils’ good awareness of what is important for a healthy lifestyle. Pupils’ spiritual, moral and social development is good, and their cultural development is satisfactory and improving. Active links have been established with a school in Ghana and with Nepal. Pupils’ enjoyment of learning, average and improving attainment and good personal development ensure they are well placed to move to the next stage of their education and beyond.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

2

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

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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Lessons have good pace and questioning is used well by teachers to assess pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. The school marking policy is used effectively so pupils receive both praise and guidance on how to improve pieces of work. Assessment of pupils' progress is rigorous and any underachievement is identified quickly so that well-targeted support can be provided. However, sometimes the same work is given to the whole class or does not match pupils' ability closely, and this slows progress. Pupils are encouraged to assess how well they are learning and individual targets in literacy and numeracy, which pupils say they find helpful, are used effectively in all classes. Teaching support staff are deployed well and this ensures all pupils, especially those who find learning difficult, receive good support and make good progress from their individual starting points.

The school's strategies to improve literacy and numeracy are used well by teachers and are proving successful in improving progress. The linking of curriculum subjects to provide interesting themes for pupils creates good opportunities to extend their skills in literacy and information and communication technology, although opportunities are sometimes missed to extend pupils' numeracy skills. Out-of-school clubs enrich pupils' learning experiences out of lessons and include a good range of sports activities as well as crafts such as lace-making. Visits and visitors are used well to enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils visited the Saxon Tower to augment their work on the Saxons. Pupils show great confidence in the staff who care for them, and so they confide their worries. Transition arrangements at all stages are sensitively organised and the good care provided by the school is extended through the prudent use of a wide range of external support agencies and services.

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

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

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 headteacher provides clear and ambitious leadership which supports and unites staff well. Senior leaders and managers share fully with the headteacher the close monitoring of all areas of the school's work. Careful assessment of the strengths and areas of development for the school has led to the successful integration of a range of important improvements. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning underpins good teaching across the school and ambitious targets are set for further improvements. The governing body has a secure committee structure and offers good challenge and support to the school in equal measure.

Parents and carers receive an annual report on their children's progress, which is augmented with termly consultation or open evenings. Their views are canvassed regularly and they receive frequent newsletters. However, not enough information is provided for parents and carers about the curriculum, especially in providing guidance to help them support their children's learning at home.

Strong partnerships with local schools, local authority advisers and support services are used well to promote pupils' progress and well-being. Pupils are known and valued as individuals and the school is free from discrimination. The school promotes equal opportunities well, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers. The safeguarding of pupils' welfare is good and supported by clear policies that are efficiently integrated into the school. All staff receive regular update training to ensure they are alert to all safeguarding matters. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils are helped to develop a good appreciation of their own community, and are taking steps to extend pupils' appreciation of their future role as national and global citizens, particularly in extending their awareness of the richness and diversity of other faiths and cultures.

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

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

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	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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly and their confidence and independence are developed well because of the good care they receive. All areas of learning are covered through a range of exciting and well-resourced activities. Children play well together and enjoy developing their own activities. For example, the theme of winter and homes was combined well in the igloo role play area. One child in the igloo explained excitedly, ‘I’m living in a freezing house made of ice. There are no windows to let more ice in.’ Well-focused teaching sessions engage children well and all staff are skilled in subtly intervening in children’s independent games to help extend their ideas and encourage their speaking skills.

Children enter Reception with skills and abilities that are particularly limited in writing. There is a careful focus on developing writing skills through guiding children to blend letters and sounds to recognise and begin to write words. Enjoyable tasks also encourage children to develop their understanding of numbers. Despite well-planned activities contributing to children’s good progress, skills in writing remain a weakness when children enter Year 1. Reception is led well and staff work as a close and efficient team. They have managed the temporary loss of the outdoor learning area during building work well through efficient use of the main playground at appropriate times. Staff monitor children’s development carefully both informally, while they are playing, and in more structured learning sessions. Good links between school and home mean that parents and carers are kept fully involved in their children’s development.

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

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Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was higher than average and the majority were positive. In particular, all felt that their children are kept safe, and the vast majority were pleased that their children enjoy school, and are helped to have a healthy lifestyle. A minority of parents and carers were concerned about other aspects of the school's work, especially the information they receive from the school about their children's progress and how they can help support their children's learning at home. Inspection evidence indicates that the quality and quantity of information about the curriculum are limited, although parents and carers receive sound information about the progress their children are making and teaching staff are also available at the end of each day to meet informally with them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Doddington 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 123 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	54	33	45	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	62	28	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	33	45	23	31	16	22	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	42	27	36	10	14	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	39	53	21	28	12	16	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	33	45	19	26	17	23	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	42	38	51	3	4	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)	30	41	27	36	5	7	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	34	46	23	31	12	16	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	46	21	28	10	14	5	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	45	25	34	8	11	5	7
The school is led and managed effectively	41	55	15	20	10	14	7	9
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	37	50	26	35	10	14	1	1

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 8 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.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Doddington Primary School, Wellingborough, NN29 7TR

Thank you for being so helpful and polite to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. We were impressed with how sensibly you are dealing with the temporary changes in the school because of the building works, especially Year 1 who have their classroom in the hall. We were also very lucky to see some of the rehearsal for your Christmas production.

We were impressed to see how much you enjoy your lessons and you told us you find learning fun because teachers make your lessons interesting. You get on together and behave well. You know a lot about being safe and healthy. We found that you make good progress in your time at Great Doddington and you are well cared for by all adults. Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body work well together to make your school a happy place in which to learn.

You told us yours is a good school and we agree with you. We have suggested two things which would help to make your school even better.

- To help improve the progress you are making, we have asked your teachers to always use what they know about how well you are doing to give you work that really stretches you, so that you do as well as you possibly can.
- We have also asked the school to give your parents and carers lots of information about what you are learning in class, and how they can help you at home.

You can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best at school. It was a great pleasure to visit Great Doddington and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball
Lead inspector

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