

Cottingham Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	121965
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	393457
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2012
Lead inspector	Martin Cragg HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lorraine Desmond
Headteacher	Emma Tayler
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2010
School address	Berryfield Road Market Harborough LE16 8XB
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Martin Cragg

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with one days' notice. The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by five teachers. He held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, governors and staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, and looked at the school's improvement plan, self-evaluation, information on pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour records.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. A smaller proportion of pupils than average are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is below average. A higher than average number of pupils join or leave the school during the year. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which determine its minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

A privately-operated breakfast club uses school premises and was not visited as part of this inspection.

At the time of its last inspection, the school was judged to require special measures.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- The school has improved markedly and now provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It is not good because inconsistencies in teaching mean that pupils do not make consistently good progress in their learning. There are also issues in the development of writing skills, including in the Reception class. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils’ achievement is satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress from their starting points and an increasing proportion now make good progress. By Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average in reading and mathematics. Their writing is not as strong because pupils are less confident orally and the quality of their handwriting and presentation is variable.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well, match work closely to pupils’ abilities and engage their interest. However, not all manage the pace of learning, so that all pupils make similar progress, or use questions effectively to extend their ideas. Teachers mark work well but do not ensure pupils respond to comments.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They try hard and cooperate well. Pupils get on well together and are safe in school. They are confident that staff deal effectively with the rare instances of bullying.
- The headteacher has brought about significant change and improvement. Staff and governors know the school’s strengths and areas for development well. Middle leaders play a full part in driving improvements. The school has successfully tackled the issues from its last inspection, taking effective action to manage performance, improve teaching and pupils’ achievement. It has good capacity to improve further.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment further and improve their progress, especially in writing, by:
 - developing pupils' speaking and listening skills so that all can articulate their ideas clearly
 - providing purposeful and challenging opportunities for writing across the curriculum, including for boys in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - improving pupils' handwriting and presentation.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that almost all is good by ensuring that all teachers:
 - manage the pace of pupils' learning so that all make good progress
 - use questions effectively to develop pupils' understanding and extend their ideas
 - use their marking to encourage pupils to correct errors, practise new skills and respond to guidance.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Reception class with knowledge, understanding and skills that broadly match those expected for their age. They settle in quickly and make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning, although boys' writing skills are slower to develop. This is because they are not always challenged to use their writing skills in a range of activities. Nonetheless, most children achieve the early learning goals by the end of their Reception year.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in reading and mathematics and broadly average in writing. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils in Year 6 is an improvement on the broadly average results in National Curriculum tests of the 2011 Year 6 group. Attainment in reading and mathematics is above average and writing broadly average.

Pupils' reading skills develop well and they are confident in using the sounds that letters make (phonics) to help them read unfamiliar words. They also use other strategies, and most correct errors themselves or recognise where the sense of what they read is not clear. Older pupils enjoy choosing books and discuss different genres confidently. Pupils' calculation skills have improved because of regular short mental mathematics challenges. Teachers' strong focus on making clear what is expected in different types of writing has improved attainment but this remains the weakest of the skills. Pupils' handwriting and presentation do not always match the quality of their ideas and composition.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Parents and carers are pleased with the progress that their children make. Pupils make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress in Key Stage 1. Pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 has improved steadily and is now satisfactory overall and good in reading. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers and their attainment compares well to similar pupils nationally. Some make accelerated progress in specific skills because of effective interventions delivered individually or in small groups outside lessons. The small number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those who join the school after the start of the year also make progress in line with other pupils.

Throughout the school, pupils enjoy learning and work well in pairs and groups. They particularly enjoy practical tasks and solving problems. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils enjoyed helping to plan how the teacher could share out equipment to classes, practising their skills in division as they did so. Pupils answer teachers' questions willingly. However, their ability to articulate their ideas clearly and at length varies too much and prevents some from explaining what they have learnt both orally and in writing.

Quality of teaching

Teachers plan lessons carefully and set clear objectives for learning. They match work closely to pupils' differing needs. For example, more able Year 3 and 4 pupils were expected to manage three variables in data and translate these into a bar chart while others managed two sets of data or constructed the bar chart using a template and cubes. In the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers provide a coordinated range of activities with common objectives from which children can choose. Adult-led activities focus well on key concepts. Teachers use real situations well to develop pupils' social, moral and cultural awareness. For example, Years 4 and 5 designed a science experiment to test tooth decay and used drama to discuss the reasons why a character might steal or not.

Teachers use good relationships to encourage pupils and engage them with interesting activities. The best teaching sets high expectations and gives pupils the responsibility to organise themselves and plan their learning. In the best lessons, teachers have a good understanding of when the pace of the lesson may need to slow to ensure that all understand or to move more quickly because pupils are ready to apply their knowledge. However, this is not consistent and some teachers do not manage the pace of learning effectively.

Teachers use a sound range of questions to check pupils' understanding and often give them time to talk with others before answering. However, not all teachers use questioning to help pupils deepen their understanding or develop their ideas. Teachers' marking is thorough and consistent. Teachers identify where pupils have achieved objectives and what they need to do to improve. However, they do not ensure that pupils respond by routinely correcting their own errors, practising new skills or showing that they understand teachers' comments.

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Teachers plan structured lessons to improve pupils' reading, ensuring that younger pupils read daily. Well-planned activities challenge older pupils to use their reading skills to improve other aspects of their work, for example, identifying and recording good vocabulary to use in their writing. However, there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive effective support in class, often working with an adult and using different approaches to secure understanding. Well-planned interventions have contributed to these pupils' improved progress with some increasing their reading skill by one level in a year.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers were very positive about behaviour in the school and had great confidence in the way staff dealt with any concerns they raised. Pupils said that their lessons were not affected by poor behaviour and that they felt safe in school. Inspection evidence, including school records, show that pupils typically behave well in lessons and as they move around the school. They are encouraged to take on responsibility and even younger pupils act as door monitors to ease movement to and from the hall. Older pupils act as playground buddies, helping to share out equipment and stimulate play. They have a mature sense of building relationships and explained how they had reported an incident to a teacher because it made them feel uncomfortable.

Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and could explain physical, emotional, prejudice-based and cyber bullying. They understand the difference between bullying and friendship issues. They are clear about the school's expectations. They said that there were very few incidents of bullying in the school but that if anything was reported it was dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils' attendance is above average and there are few pupils who are persistently absent. Staff monitor these cases regularly and work effectively with parents and carers to bring about improvement. No time is lost for learning as pupils settle quickly when entering classrooms.

Leadership and management

The headteacher sets a clear vision and high expectations for the school. There is a regular and rigorous system for monitoring performance and evaluating progress. Subject leaders now summarise progress and report to the governing body. Staff and governors have a good understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to develop. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching closely. She identifies areas for improvement and each teacher has an individual plan which is supported by relevant training and coaching. Consequently, teaching has improved steadily and all is now satisfactory with an increasing proportion that is good. The constant focus on improving teaching, assessing pupils' progress and raising achievement has led to clear improvements in outcomes for pupils so that attainment is average in writing and above average in reading and mathematics. Pupils now

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make at least satisfactory progress and the school has good capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' basic skills have improved because reading, including phonics, and calculation are now well taught although writing skills lag behind. Themed topics engage pupils' interest well. These are often launched with whole day activities which pupils say they really enjoy, for example exploring the science of sound by making headphones that work. The wide range of clubs, activities, events and trips contribute strongly to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents and carers spoke of the impact that weekly athletics sessions had had on pupils' confidence, leading to the school winning the local competition for the first time in ten years. Pupils spoke enthusiastically of their visit to a Sikh Gurdwara. They recounted important aspects of Sikhism but also showed real awareness of the importance of tolerance and understanding different faiths. The school's strong ethos supports the good relationships amongst pupils and provides good opportunities for reflection and consideration of others.

The governing body ensures that pupils are kept safe and that the requirements for safe recruitment and child protection are in place. Discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils from a range of backgrounds, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are treated with respect and make similar progress to their peers. Parents and carers are appreciative of teachers' individual responses to their child's needs. They say that they receive good information on their progress.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cottingham Church of England School, Market Harborough, LE16 8XB

Thank you for the welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking with you in lessons, meetings and at breaks. Your views helped me find out about the school.

When your school was inspected in October 2010 it was placed in special measures, which means that it had to improve. Your school now gives you a satisfactory education and I have taken it out of special measures. Your achievement in reading and mathematics has improved and is above average. Your writing has also improved and it is now broadly average. You make at least satisfactory progress in lessons. Your teachers plan lessons well and make learning interesting for you. You enjoy the good range of clubs, activities, events and trips provided for you. You behave well and show respect for each other. You say that there is very little bullying and that you feel safe. Your attendance is above average. Your headteacher, with the staff and governors, has set a clear view of what the school should be like, and the actions they have taken have improved your school.

I asked the school to improve some areas of its work. These were to:

- improve your work and progress further, especially in writing and including for children in Reception, by helping you to express your ideas orally, making your handwriting better and giving you more opportunities to write in other subjects
- make teaching good by teachers speeding up or slowing down lessons to match your learning needs, using questions to help you develop your ideas and getting you to follow up their corrections and comments when they mark your work.

You can help by taking care in your presentation, trying to explain your ideas to others clearly and trying hard to improve your writing.

I enjoyed my visit to your school and wish you success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Cragg
Her Majesty's Inspector

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