



Cuckney CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122757
Local Authority NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number 281335
Inspection dates 14–15 November 2006
Reporting inspector Roy Bowers HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Cuckney, Mansfield
Age range of pupils	4–11		Nottinghamshire NG20 9NB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01623 842223
Number on roll (school)	139	Fax number	01623 845391
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Miss M Stokes
		Headteacher	Mr L J Beldham
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2000		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Cuckney Church of England Primary School is smaller than average size. Only one third of its pupils live in the school's catchment area with the remainder opting to come to the school from surrounding areas. This is often because of the school's good reputation for providing well for those pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities. The proportion of these pupils is average overall, but there is an above average number in Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'My child loves it here. Everyone is so kind and the children really get on. It is a marvellous school'. This is typical of many comments received during the inspection and parents accurately judge Cuckney to be a good school. At the heart of the school is the headteacher's strong belief that all pupils have the right to be happy, valued and well cared for. This is supported by the staff. As a consequence the care, support and guidance offered to pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school and feel that their views are acted upon.

Personal development and well-being are good and the very good relationships that exist ensure that pupils feel safe and secure. They know there is always someone ready to help if they have problems. Pupils get on well with each other and the 'buddy' system allows the older pupils to take on responsibility by helping those new to the school to settle in well. The 'family' atmosphere generates a feeling of warmth and friendliness. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes. They are courteous, polite and confident.

Those pupils with learning and emotional difficulties receive very good academic guidance and care. As a result their rate of progress is comparable to that of their peers. Pupils' self-esteem develops well throughout the school. Discussions in classes enable pupils to express their own feelings and learn to understand those of others. All pupils have many opportunities to succeed through the school's rich curriculum and sporting and musical activities. 'Special weeks' add excitement and enjoyment to pupils' learning. For example, pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the chance to work in a garden. The school proudly exhibits its award of 'Activemark Gold' in recognition of the outstanding commitment to promoting the well-being of pupils through physical activity. Pupils' good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe and healthy is enhanced through programmes such as the drug abuse programme 'Dare'.

The termly parent consultation meetings promote good communication and allow the pupils' targets to be discussed and reviewed. Reading diaries and the occasional use of a behaviour diary provide good ongoing contact between home and school.

The attainment of pupils is consistently above average in end of key stage tests and teacher assessments. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and by the end of the Reception class most pupils achieve the levels expected. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school which is due to the consistently good teaching. Overall standards and the progress pupils make in writing, however, are lower than in other areas. The school is developing a useful structure for teaching writing skills. However, the small steps within the structure are not matched well enough to the different starting points of the pupils in all lessons.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has successfully ensured that pupils achieve well and are developing good attitudes. Governance is satisfactory. The governors make an effective contribution to the school through their committees and visits to the school. The tracking system enables the headteacher to monitor pupils' progress and allows challenging targets to be set. However, the information is not

used well enough to provide an overview of strengths and areas for development. Consequently, the information the governors receive from the headteacher is not always concise and clear enough to allow them to hold the school to account. There have been good improvements since the last inspection and the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the analysis of data and other information about pupils' progress to identify and address areas of potential underachievement and to inform governors of areas for development.
- Improve pupils' writing by linking the agreed structure for developing writing skills more closely to the varied needs of pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children start school their knowledge and skills average. However, many come into school with language skills which are below the level expected for their age. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding and thoroughly enjoy their learning. This good progress continues in all classes. Over the past four years standards have been above average. The more able pupils achieve lower standards in writing than they do in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 1. In 2006 almost all pupils attained the expected levels by the end of Year 6, but few pupils attained a higher level. The school is correctly focusing on pupils' writing which is an area where they are making less progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress due to the emphasis that is placed upon the good quality support given.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Strong relationships within the school contribute well to pupils' enjoyment, good behaviour and achievement. The very good attention paid to developing pupils' self-confidence and independence is helping to prepare them well for the world of work. For example, the family atmosphere was evident in the Reception and Year 1 assembly. Pupils performed confidently encouraging everyone to join in. Pupils thoroughly enjoy being at school. Consequently, attendance is good and improving. The new building is greatly appreciated by pupils and is helping them to have very positive attitudes towards school and learning. 'I love the massive new gymnastics mirror', said one pupil. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the need for a healthy diet and exercise. They respond well to the opportunities offered to contribute to the school community. The meetings of the school council are taken seriously. 'Even the teacher has to put up her hand before she can talk', said one pupil. Pupils are involved in the work of charities and go out on visits, but they say that they would like even more involvement with the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. A strong sense of team work ensures that all staff work well together for the benefit of pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are of high quality. This secures good discipline and contributes well to the positive climate for learning. In all classes the atmosphere is calm, friendly and productive. Lessons are clearly planned and the purpose of the work is shared with the pupils. Teachers work well with the pupils, assessing their needs well as they talk with them, giving assistance where necessary. The school gives high priority to employing a large number of highly skilled teaching assistants. Their time and expertise is used very well and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive plenty of very good support. In some lessons, especially in writing, the work is not always matched to the needs of pupils closely enough to ensure progress is as good as it can be.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum enriched by a very good range of additional activities. Pupils are involved in a number of exciting programmes, such as 'Life Education', which make a valuable contribution towards their well-being. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very well planned and the activities shared with parents. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and 2 has a good overall structure, but the progression of writing skills is not clear enough to enable teachers to plan for the differing needs of the pupils. Provision for pupils with learning and emotional difficulties is very good. Visits, visitors and a good variety of extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum. The school is rightly proud of its provision for sport and displays the trophies showing the many successes of its teams. The clubs are greatly appreciated by the pupils and well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good quality care, guidance and support successfully promotes pupils' well-being and is evident in their positive attitudes and good personal development. Child protection requirements, risk assessments and safety procedures are in place. Pupils feel safe and would not be afraid to approach any of the adults in school if they were unhappy. Academic guidance usefully includes meetings between parents and teachers to discuss pupils' targets. Parents praise the caring support their children receive. They are well informed about their children's progress and work in an effective partnership with the teachers. New entry pupils received a good level of support and 'buddies' are allocated to make sure that pupils settle in well. Pupils are well informed about secondary education. Very good support is provided for pupils with learning or emotional

difficulties. There are very effective links with external agencies such as the inclusion service to ensure pupils' specific needs are met.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's passionate commitment to improving the life-chances of all the pupils is clearly shown in his enthusiasm and dedication. A new senior leadership team has been created but, due to illnesses and long term absences, has not yet had an impact upon school improvement. Because of this, the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. Progress made by individual pupils is tracked and the school uses this information to set targets and to monitor progress made. However, the analysis of this information is not used well enough to provide an overview of how the school can raise achievement even higher. Leadership of special needs is exemplary. The co-ordinator has a thorough understanding of what is needed and organises the provision extremely well. The governors are effective advocates of the school but do not have sufficient access to information which would enable them to see quickly what are the school's successes and areas for development.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 November 2006

Dear Children

Cuckney CofE Primary School, School Lane, Cuckney, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG20 9NB

Thank you for making my recent visit to your school such a pleasurable experience. It was a delight to talk to you about your school and to hear all about the exciting things that you do. I was really impressed. You were all so polite and cheerful. I learned a lot about your school from you. Your new building is wonderful and I can see why you are so proud of it. Well done for helping to raise the money! Your Reception and Year 1 assembly was wonderful.

You obviously enjoy coming to Cuckney. You go to a good school where everyone cares for you and really does their best. It is just like one big family! Those of you who sometimes have problems or difficulties are looked after very well. You do some really exciting things especially during your 'special' weeks. Your sports trophies are very impressive. Mr Beldham is really proud of them and I expect that you are as well.

Although you are doing well, I have asked Mr Beldham if he can make things better for you. He is going to look at how well you make progress in a slightly different way so that he and the governors can make sure that you are all doing as well as you can. Your writing is good but you can do even better. Mr Beldham agrees that the teachers can help you by being very clear about what you need to do to improve.

I shall take away lots of good memories about your school. Thank you again for being so polite, helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers

Lead Inspector