



Great Staughton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110678
Local Authority CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number 288737
Inspection dates 15–16 January 2007
Reporting inspector Marina Gough

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Causeway
School category	Community		Great Staughton, Great Staughton
Age range of pupils	4–11		Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE19 4BA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01480860324
Number on roll (school)	124	Fax number	01480860639
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Helen Bryson
		Headteacher	Mrs Vyveanne Francis
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 15–16 January 2007	Inspection number 288737
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school caters for children from the villages of Great Staughton and Perry and from a number of outlying villages. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties is close to the national average. Almost all pupils are White British and their first language is English. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and National Healthy School Standard.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that has made very good progress since its last inspection under the leadership of an imaginative and reflective headteacher. There is a real sense of team work amongst the small team of staff and a shared commitment to providing the best education possible for all pupils. The school knows itself very well, and its evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses closely matches the inspection findings. The school is very well placed for continued and further improvement, and provides good value for money.

Standards are well above the national average when pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, and pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress as they move through the school. Children in the reception class have a very good start to their education, and are very ready to take on Key Stage 1 work by the end of their first year in school. The school does much to promote numeracy and literacy across all age groups, and as a result pupils have a good range of basic skills that enable them to successfully and independently access all areas of the curriculum. Writing continues to be an area of whole-school development. Whilst standards in this aspect of learning are good, pupils of all ages, and especially the most able pupils, need even more challenge to produce well constructed extended pieces of writing that maintain the interest of the reader. The school has raised standards in information and communication technology to a satisfactory level since the last inspection, but standards could be higher still if there were more computers for the pupils to access.

Teaching and learning are good and have some outstanding features. Teachers are particularly skilled in encouraging the pupils to think for themselves. They create a very positive working environment where pupils are unafraid of making mistakes, and where they know their ideas will be valued and their successes celebrated. Staff provide very well for the different age and ability groups within classes by making very good use of ongoing assessments so that work is closely matched to the current needs of individual pupils. The curriculum is good and pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. They are keen to do things for themselves and to make choices and decisions about their learning.

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils of all ages behave well and show respect for one another. Pupils are happy, and have very positive attitudes to work. They greatly appreciate the excellent range of additional activities that the school offers and tackle new learning with high levels of confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils know how to keep safe, and are fully aware of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle through their work on the recently achieved 'National Healthy School Standard'. The care, guidance and support that pupils receive are outstanding. The school forum provides an excellent 'pupil voice' and is fully involved in whole-school development and improvement.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a real driving force who very much leads by example. She has a part-time teaching commitment which enables her to share high quality classroom practice, and to get to know all pupils in the school.

Her ability to prioritise whole-school development targets means that those staff who have curriculum responsibilities are not over-burdened. The governors take a keen interest in the school's life and work and fulfil their roles well. They are regular visitors to the school and are beginning to take a good part in the overall monitoring of provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision for ICT by making available more computers for pupils.
- Raise the standard of writing, especially for the most able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils generally start in the reception class at an above average level, and by the time they transfer to Year 1 almost all achieve beyond the early learning goals for this age group. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, and gain a good breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average when pupils leave school at the end of Year 6. The school makes very good use of assessment information to track and monitor the pupils' progress and to enable staff to put in additional support when and where it is needed. As a result, pupils who have learning difficulties do well and achieve their targets.

The school places very good emphasis on pupils acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills, and provides many very good opportunities for pupils to use and practise these skills in their work in other areas. Standards in writing are good, but could be even better, especially for the most able pupils. Pupils sometimes have difficulty in sustaining and developing their ideas to produce extended pieces of writing. In mathematics and science pupils have impressive investigative skills. This is partly because of very good teaching, and partly because the pupils have no fear of making mistakes, and therefore tackle new learning with lots of confidence, and a firm belief in their ability to succeed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well being are good. Pupils behave well, and the vast majority are polite, friendly and helpful. There are many opportunities, such as the weekly 'Big Read' for older pupils to interact with younger pupils, and to set a good example. The pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is very good, and the school fosters these aspects very well by providing a exceptionally rich and exciting range of activities that extend, challenge and enhance pupils' thinking.

The school does much to ensure that the pupils' views are heard and taken on board, including sending out regular pupil questionnaires. The 'school forum' is a very powerful group of pupils from all year groups that represents the views of the different classes thereby making a significant contribution to the overall life and work of the school.

Pupils have a very clear idea of how to look after themselves by eating a healthy diet, taking regular exercise, and staying safe. They have frequent opportunities to work together on shared tasks, and to learn life skills such as considering the views of others, and taking collective decisions. Pupils are keen to come to school and attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and have some outstanding features. A real strength throughout the school is the ability of teachers to make lessons and activities exciting and stimulating so that pupils of all ages want to learn. Teachers use questions exceptionally well to extend pupils' thinking, and to check their understanding. In all classes, there is a very positive working ethos, and pupils know that their ideas are valued and that originality is celebrated. Teaching assistants provide very good levels of additional, classroom support enabling teachers to cope well with mixed age classes and a wide range of ability.

From a very early age, pupils are encouraged to develop skills of independence and as a result they have good levels of confidence in their ability to make appropriate choices. Pupils of all abilities participate well in lessons, and are keen to solve problems and to find things out for themselves. However, the lack of computers currently hinders pupils' learning as they have only limited access to them, and therefore no real sense of using information and communication technology on a daily basis as a tool for learning. The school is planning to make improvements to this aspect of provision.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provision is very good and progressively builds on pupils' learning as they move through the school. Teachers make very good use of the available teaching time and there is a good daily balance of activities so that pupils' learning is maximised. Links between subjects are excellent, and provide very good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their existing knowledge and skills within a range of different contexts.

The statutory curriculum is significantly enhanced by an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities and clubs which pupils talk about with high levels of enthusiasm and animation. Excellent use is made of the local area as a learning resource, and the school welcomes many visitors throughout the year. A wide variety of visits to places of interest significantly enriches the pupils' learning, and does much to extend their personal, spiritual and social development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding levels of care, guidance and support for pupils, and pupils agree that they are happy and feel safe. Arrangements for keeping the pupils safe, including a detailed critical incident pack, are excellent. Very good use is made of a wide range of external agencies to ensure that the pupils are well informed about issues such as drugs and 'stranger danger', and the school's personal, social and health education programme further reinforces pupils' knowledge about keeping safe.

The school has very good links with parents and works closely with them so that additional support can be provided for those pupils who are experiencing difficulties either at school or at home. Teaching and support staff are unobtrusive and sensitive in the way in which they work with pupils who have learning difficulties, and do much to build the confidence and self-esteem of individual pupils who have weak social skills or who are emotionally immature.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership is inspirational. She has tremendous drive and enthusiasm, and firmly places 'the child' at the centre of all decisions to do with school improvement. The headteacher is well supported by a strong and committed staff who are able to successfully fulfil their individual leadership roles because of careful prioritising of whole-school targets by the headteacher and governors.

The governing body fulfils its role well and is becoming increasingly active in monitoring the school's work. Governors are regular visitors to the school, and are well known to pupils. The school does much to forge very good links with the local community within the village through shared events such as the 'Summer Gala', and regularly seeks the views of parents and other stakeholders.

Progress since the last inspection has been very good. There is a strong focus at all levels on continuing to raise standards, and more importantly to ensure that each and every pupil reaches his or her potential across as wide a range of contexts as possible. The school has good capacity to continue with its planned developments which are appropriate and which reflect the next steps the school needs to take.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?	1

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	2
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	2
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 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Great Staughton Primary School, The Causeway, Great Staughton, St Neot's, Cambridgeshire, PE19 5BP

I am writing to thank you very much for the kind way you welcomed me into your school when I visited a short while ago. I am pleased to tell you that I think that Great Staughton is a good school. I can see that you are right when you say that the school is a happy place. I enjoyed sharing lessons with you, and seeing how much you enjoy your lessons and the other activities that the school provides. My favourite parts of the inspection were observing the choir practice, watching you enjoy your playtime games, and sharing the lovely assembly about India. I was really pleased to be invited to the 'school forum' and was amazed at how well you presented your ideas, and how sensibly you came to your decisions.

You work hard in school so that by the time you leave at the end of Year 6, you are getting results in the national tests that are much higher than many pupils achieve in other schools. However, I think you could do even better in your writing by writing longer pieces that are more interesting and that have a clear plan. You enjoy working on the computers, but because there are so few, you do not get as many opportunities as you should to practise your skills. I have asked your headteacher and the governors to look at ways of providing you with more computers. They are going to be expensive, but I know that the PTA has lots of ideas for raising money to help.

Your teachers do a great job in making lessons interesting and exciting, and I was delighted with the way they asked questions that really made you think. They keep a good check on how well you are doing so that they can give you extra help if you need it. You are very fortunate to have many exciting activities outside school, and you told me how much you enjoy going on visits and having visitors into school.

Your headteacher has lots of excellent ideas about how to make the school even better than it is, and I am sure she will succeed with the help of the other staff and the governors.

Marina Gough

Lead inspector