



# Exton C of E Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 120178  
**Local Authority** RUTLAND  
**Inspection number** 291655  
**Inspection dates** 27–28 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Newell

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Garden Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Exton, Exton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Oakham, Rutland LE15 8AY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01572 812380
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	55	<b>Fax number</b>	01572 812300
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Annie Lea
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kathy Whitehead
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 June 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 27–28 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 291655
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small primary school serving the village of Exton, Greetham and surrounding areas in Rutland. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic families or have English as an additional language. A small percentage of children from Showman families attend the school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average but an above average percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities attend the school. The school has been awarded an Activemark for sporting activities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and pupil achievement by the end of Year 6.

The overall effectiveness of the school is currently inadequate because standards and how well pupils achieve by the time they leave the school are inadequate. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory because the pupils' progress has declined; as a result, the school does not provide value for money. However, under the strong leadership of the headteacher, the school has a good capacity for improvement.

Attainment when children start at school is broadly average. The good teaching and provision in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 result in good progress and standards being above average by the end of Year 2. However, by the end of Year 6 standards drop and have been consistently well below the national average. This represents inadequate progress. The good teaching in Years 3 and 4 is now helping pupils make better progress but if standards are to rise progress needs to be consistently good throughout the school. The effective teaching in school is characterised by high expectations, careful match of work to pupils' needs and abilities and learning that motivates and enthuses pupils in equal measure. Teaching for the older pupils in school does not consistently do this. The headteacher has ensured that a far greater focus is now given to assessing and tracking pupils' progress but recognises that the information needs to be used in as sharp a way as possible to have a positive impact on pupil achievement and for pupils to play an active role in their own target setting.

Pupils' personal development, the curriculum, and the care, guidance and support for pupils are all satisfactory with some notable strengths. Pupils behave well and particularly enjoy the good range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs that are on offer. These also make a telling contribution to pupils' healthy lifestyles, their awareness of keeping safe and their involvement with the local community. Parents and pupils speak very well of the school; they feel it is a place where children are safe and secure, and where any concerns are dealt with in a sensitive and reassuring manner.

The leadership and management of the school are now satisfactory overall with that of the headteacher being good. The school's self-evaluation is honest and frank but whilst generally accurate, a little generous at times. Since her appointment, the headteacher has robustly tackled weaknesses; this has had an impact on and led to improvements in, for example, teaching, assessment, provision and planning. She has brought staff, parents, governors and pupils with her. Equally, she is fully aware that much still needs to be done to ensure that all pupils reach the standards they are

capable of and that teachers and governors must play a more rigorous role in evaluating how well pupils and the school are achieving and performing.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards and how well pupils achieve by the end of Year 6.
- Improve the quality of teaching for the older pupils by ensuring work is matched to and challenges pupils of all abilities.
- Ensure assessment information is used rigorously to track pupils' progress and that pupils play an active role in setting and reviewing their own targets.
- Further develop the role teachers and governors play in monitoring the work and performance of the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class because of good teaching and provision; by the time pupils start in Year 1 standards are a little above national expectations. Pupils' good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 because teaching motivates and challenges pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties, and by the end of Year 2 standards are securely above average in English, mathematics and science. There is however a different picture by the end of Year 6. Assessment data shows that standards have been significantly below the national average over a period of years and were particularly low in 2006 and well below the targets that were set. The basic skills necessary to help pupils' future economic well-being are inadequate. Data indicates that the progress all pupils make between Years 2 and 6 has not been good enough. Although pupils in Years 5 and 6 are currently making satisfactory progress, good or better progress is needed to address the legacy of underachievement and to reach the ambitious targets that have been set for 2007. However, while there is still much work to be done, shoots of improvement are clearly visible because of the good teaching and progress for all pupils in Years 3 and 4, well planned intervention strategies and the rigorous assessment, tracking and monitoring procedures instigated by the headteacher - all geared to move the school on at an accelerated pace.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory with some good aspects. Pupils behave well, have a ready smile for visitors and are keen to point out that 'Bullying is not a problem in our school.' Pupils clearly enjoy and feel safe in school, which is reflected in the above average attendance rates, although older pupils are not always ready to take enough initiative and responsibility for their own learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils get on well with each other and show a good awareness of how their actions can affect others. Pupils' spiritual awareness is satisfactory but whilst aspects of cultural diversity are celebrated, pupils' multicultural awareness is a little patchy. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy

lifestyles and pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is improving well through the recently re-established school council and participation in an increasing number of local community events. Pupils are not yet well enough prepared for their future well-being because of weaknesses in their literacy and numeracy skills when they leave the school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but weaknesses over time have contributed to pupils' low standards when they leave school. Across the school the good relationships and management of pupils help to create a positive learning environment. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to how well pupils learn. Teaching for the younger pupils and pupils in Years 3 and 4 sees them making good progress, working hard, contributing to lessons and enjoying themselves because teaching expects a lot, matches work to pupils' ability, moves along at a cracking pace and makes learning fun. Where teaching is less successful it is because expectations are not high enough as a result of a lack of a secure knowledge of the levels that pupils are working at or what precisely is needed to reach higher levels. More robust and effective assessment and tracking systems have been recently introduced but the school is still working on ensuring the information is used well to have the best possible impact on pupil achievement and accurate target setting. The marking of pupils' work in some classes is very good and leads to immediate and sustained improvements. However, this practice is not adhered to or followed for older pupils..

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. The school makes good provision for developing pupils' computer skills and adds to the breadth of pupils' learning through the teaching of a foreign language. However, improvements are needed in the systematic development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and in building on the good practice in some classes of promoting pupils' writing skills across the curriculum. Good provision is made for those in Reception. Although the curriculum planned for pupils with learning difficulties and the higher-attaining pupils is improving, it does not yet consistently provide enough challenge for all pupils. A good range of visits and visitors brings an added dimension to pupils' learning and the extra-curricular activities on offer promote healthy lifestyles well in addition to forging stronger links with the local community.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and demonstrate a strong sense of care. This is one of many things that parents appreciate about the school. Pupils feel safe and know that there is always someone to talk to if they have any concerns. Appropriate procedures are in place for safeguarding pupils and for child protection and ensuring safety in school. Established links are in place with outside agencies to ensure help is available for pupils experiencing difficulties or at an early stage of acquiring English. Good quality systems for tracking pupils' academic development have been put in place but there is still room for improvement in how well the information is used to ensure good progress and providing opportunities for pupils to play an active role in setting and reviewing their own targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are currently satisfactory. The appointment of the present headteacher, twelve months ago, has coincided with the school moving at a much faster pace in addressing weaknesses that over time have led to the low standards at the end of Year 6. The headteacher has injected a very strong team spirit and a renewed sense of urgency and energy into the school. She has astutely assessed the school's weaknesses and importantly put in place strategies that have seen improvements in standards at Key Stage 1, Foundation Stage provision, teaching, assessment and curriculum planning. The headteacher is realistic and recognises that there is still much work to be done in ensuring that standards rise and that all pupils in school make good progress. Key to this will be the rigorous and more incisive role played by teachers and governors in monitoring the work and performance of the school. This is satisfactory at present because the last twelve months has seen their roles develop well and in doing so gain a far greater awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, this is work in progress and needs to maintain a cutting edge so that the good achievement of all pupils becomes the norm.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
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?	Yes

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

29 November 2006

Dear Children

Exton CE Primary School, Garden Road, Exton, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8AY

You may remember that I recently visited your school and this letter is to tell you about what I found out. Before I do that I would like to thank all of you for making me so welcome and being so polite and helpful. I had the chance to talk to many of you and it was really pleasing to hear about how much you enjoy school, that bullying is not an issue and that there is always someone to talk to if you have any problems.

I found that the school offers a good range of after-school clubs and visits out of school that you really enjoy. The school works hard at making sure that you are cared for and looked after and helps you to keep fit and healthy. A strength of the school though is you, the children! Your good behaviour and enjoyment of school shone through. Mrs Whitehead leads the school well and together with all the staff and governors she is very keen to make the school a better place for you to learn. I have spoken to Mrs Whitehead and staff about what is needed to make your school a more exciting place to be.

There are times when not all children in school do as well as they could. So I have asked the school to make sure that teaching always helps you to make good progress. Also to make sure that how well you are doing is carefully and regularly checked up on and for teachers and governors to make sure that the standards you reach are high enough.

Mrs Whitehead, the staff and the governors want the school to continue to improve. Having met you I am sure you will want to play your part as well. I wish you every success in your futures. It was a pleasure and privilege to meet you.

Martin Newell

Lead Inspector