



# Deeping St James Community Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 120396  
**Local Authority** LINCOLNSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 291715  
**Inspection dates** 7–8 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Geof Timms

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Hereward Way
<b>School category</b>	Community		Deeping St James, Deeping St James
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Lincolnshire PE6 8PZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01778 342314
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	273	<b>Fax number</b>	01778 342314
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs A Taylor
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs P Eccles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 March 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than average and serves the village of Deeping St James and surrounding areas. Most pupils are from a White British background but there are a small number of pupils from a range of different heritages. A few are at an early stage of learning English. A below average proportion of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. An above average number of the pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children have a range of levels of attainment on entry to the school, but the overall picture is broadly average. The school has had a number of significant changes to its leadership and the current headteacher has been in post for less than one year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school has had a chequered history over recent years. However, major improvements made by the current headteacher have ensured its current effectiveness is satisfactory and that it is a rapidly improving school. The school is well on the way towards further success and rising standards. It gives satisfactory value for money. Most parents are very happy with the school and one summed this up by saying, 'We find the headteacher and staff very supportive and feel they are doing an excellent job.'

Currently standards are broadly in line with those expected and this reflects the satisfactory level of achievement found throughout the school. The school has focused its efforts on addressing underachievement and getting better test results. This showed in the 2006 national tests for Year 6 where the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels improved. Standards at the end of Year 2 were too low although changes to the teaching and to the level of intervention mean that current pupils are on line to achieve better standards and more challenging targets in 2007. Standards in writing are still too low throughout the school and pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length. Pupils' sentence construction and their understanding of grammar and punctuation require improvement. Standards in music are well above those expected due to some outstanding teaching. The provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving, and the children make satisfactory progress. New assessment and pupil tracking systems are being introduced and these need to become part of the school's everyday provision. The outdoor area is underdeveloped and because of this underused at present.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils have a good awareness of how to live healthy and safe lives. There are good opportunities for them to work together and to show enterprise, for example, by making and selling goods to raise money for charity. Behaviour is good and pupils have very positive attitudes; they told inspectors that they like school. Pupils lack sufficient opportunities to show independence or to self-assess their progress.

Currently the overall picture of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but there is good and outstanding teaching in the school. One pupil said, 'Teachers make learning fun and you can learn from your mistakes.' Not enough has been done to spread the existing good practice and make more of the teaching consistently good quality. The curriculum is satisfactory with good provision for extra curricular and enrichment activities. The school provides a good level care and guidance for the pupils.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and has done a tremendous job in reversing a slide in standards. In a very short time she has built a strong staff team who are committed to improvement and raising standards. The new leadership structure is effective and the staff are now working and planning together much more efficiently, but the full impact of these improvements is not yet reflected fully in the current standards achieved by the pupils.

The governing body are effective in holding the school to account and receive good, detailed information from the headteacher.

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

- Raise standards in writing by improving pupils' sentence construction, their understanding of grammar and punctuation, and ensuring sufficient opportunities to write at length.
- Make the teaching and learning more consistently good by spreading existing best practice, and giving pupils more opportunities to show independence and to be involved in evaluating their own learning.
- Raise standards in the Foundation Stage by continuing work on assessment and the new tracking system, and develop the outdoor area so that it can be a consistently effective part of provision.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Disruption in staffing since the last inspection has had a negative impact on standards. However, the current headteacher has urgently and successfully tackled the falling standards of recent years. Consequently, the achievement of all groups of pupils has risen and is now satisfactory. This has resulted in current standards that are higher than those found in the school's most recent test results. The children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress and reach levels that are broadly in line with those expected, although they remain weak at linking sounds and letters, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Boys' writing also remains below that expected. Most pupils in Years 1 to 6 are now achieving at least average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in music are well above those expected and this is a major strength. Pupils with learning difficulties, and those at an early stage of learning English, make satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' enjoyment of school is shown clearly in their positive approach to learning and their good behaviour and attendance. Pupils say that there is little bullying and that staff take good care of them. Year 5 and 6 pupils act effectively as peer mediators on the playground to support younger pupils. The school council contributes pupils' views to whole school improvement well. For instance, they devised questions to put to candidates for a teaching post in the school. Pupils make every effort to stay healthy by exercising vigorously and know how to eat healthily. Older pupils take part in a business enterprise project each year, which helps them to understand the world of work. They acquire satisfactory standards of literacy and numeracy, which prepare them for the next stage of learning. The school is working hard to help pupils to increase their skills in these areas. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but improving, and there are examples of good and outstanding teaching in the school. Teachers plan activities that help pupils of differing abilities to progress satisfactorily. Teachers are effective in asking good open questions and pupils are keen to answer. This supports and consolidates their learning. In some lessons the pace slackens and pupils have few opportunities for independent learning so that their progress is slower than it could be. The school has introduced new assessment procedures that enable teachers to track pupils' progress more effectively. This has helped identify pupils who have not made enough progress and then provide them with additional support and guidance to get them back on track. The recently introduced target setting system enables pupils to be more aware of what is expected from them and what they are to learn. In some classes pupils are starting to evaluate how well they are learning but this is not yet consistent in all lessons or classes.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Statutory requirements are being met and the curriculum provided meets the needs of pupils. There is good planning in place and teachers are increasingly using opportunities to link pupils' learning in different subjects. The curriculum for English, music, and art and design is good. Basic literacy skills are being re-enforced through other subjects, but this is not as consistent in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The school is aware of the need to improve the use of the outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage. Pupils' learning is enhanced effectively through visits to places of interest and through visitors who share their knowledge and experiences with pupils. They enjoy taking part in a good range of additional activities. These activities include netball, football, music and ICT.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. The procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and comply with the latest government requirements. Procedures for child protection are in place and health and safety checks are rigorous. The procedures for monitoring pupil absence are good and are having a positive effect on improving attendance figures. Teachers assess pupils' progress in lessons accurately and use these assessments appropriately to set suitable targets for improvement. However, the quality of teachers marking is variable and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Good systems are in place for identifying and supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. The school's procedures

to track pupils' progress over longer periods of time are being used well to raise standards. Parents are pleased with the care, guidance and support their children receive and the progress they make.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management are good and improving rapidly. The school has been through significant changes in the senior leadership which led to a significant fall in standards. Since the current headteacher arrived she has demonstrated outstanding leadership. Significant improvements have been made to the quality of teaching and learning and standards have already begun to rise. She has a clear and consistent focus on raising standards through setting challenging targets and supporting teachers to help achieve them. The school has readily accepted advice from the local authority and elsewhere to enable change to happen quickly and effectively. Because the school's self-evaluation is so good, the priorities for improvement are soundly based on the most significant weaknesses. The governing body now has better information and stronger systems to help it hold the school to account. Subject leadership has improved and the way staff share the headteacher's vision is a major reason for the current fast improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Clearly many of the recent improvements are too new to show fully in higher standards but there has been enough significant improvement, especially in standards in Year 6, to show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<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>	2

<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>	2
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	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	3
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

11 December 2006

Dear Children

Deeping St James Primary School, Hereward Way, Deeping St James, Lincolnshire, PE6 8PZ

We want to thank all of you for the way you made us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our two days in the school and those of you we spoke to were very good at helping us find out about the school.

What really impressed us most is the way all of the adults, and all of you as well, are working so hard to make the school better. Your standards of work are rising, and this is helped by the way you behave in lessons and the way you are obviously so keen to learn new things.

We also really enjoyed seeing the Reception and Year 1 and 2 pupils Christmas nativity play. You all sang, danced and spoke really well!

Although the school is already improving rapidly, there are three more things we think the teachers need to do to help you learn even more:

- Help you get better at writing, and use your writing skills in other subjects. You can help with this by making your writing much neater and by using better sentences.
- Help the teachers get even better at what they do by sharing their methods and good ideas, and give you more chances to show independence and assess how well you are learning.
- Keep working on the new assessment systems in the Reception classes, and improve the outdoor area.

Once again, thank you for the help you gave us and the friendly way you talked to. We think you are part of an important time in the school and we know you will help Mrs Eccles and the staff make the school even better in the future.

Enjoy your time at Deeping St James and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead Inspector