

# Ravensthorpe Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110761
<b>Local Authority</b>	CITY OF PETERBOROUGH LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310410
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Killman HMI

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	189
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Canon Mostyn Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Liz Walmsley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	Brigstock Court Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE3 7NB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733263342
<b>Fax number</b>	01733269295

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school in an area of social and economic disadvantage. Nearby rented accommodation with short term letting results in new pupils often joining the school mid-year. Almost a quarter of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. On entry, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are well below expectations for four-year-olds. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is average and rapidly rising. The percentage of pupils with additional learning or physical needs is also average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Ravensthorpe provides good education and care for its pupils. This school is a happy and safe place. The pupils develop positive relationships with adults and each other that promote their good personal development and well-being. Incidents of bullying and racism are very rare, and pupils know how to stay safe and keep healthy. The pupils behave very well because they know and understand the rules. Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is good. Missed opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate the cultural differences in pupils' family backgrounds limits their cultural development.

The leadership's determined drive to raise standards for all learners has borne fruit, most notably in their achievements in mathematics throughout the school and in writing at Key Stage 1. Every pupil's progress is under continuous scrutiny. Reasons for underachievement are unpicked and steps taken quickly to provide additional support. As a result, standards are average and improving. From very low starting points, most pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6 with most reaching average standards and a good proportion performing above expectations in mathematics. Pupils' targets are challenging, regularly reviewed and revised.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher, supported ably by the deputy headteacher and governors, communicates her vision for the school effectively generating a good team spirit amongst staff. Leadership and management in the curriculum has been strengthened with subject leader's systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning providing a clear view of where strengths and weaknesses lie. The school has improved considerably since its last inspection.

The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good. Teachers have high expectations for pupils to behave well and use their time constructively. In the majority of lessons, teachers provide for the needs and abilities of all learners well enabling all groups to make good progress. The best teaching typically generates high interest levels for pupils through well-chosen activities and probing questioning that challenge them and keep them engaged. However, the pupils are not always clear about how to judge for themselves if they are being successful and there is wide variability in how well they present their written work. The curriculum is satisfactory. Literacy and numeracy are strong features. The creative dimension of the curriculum is lacking with insufficient opportunities for pupils to experiment, use their imagination and pursue their own ideas. The school's resources for information and communication technology (ICT) have considerably improved since the last inspection. Nevertheless, opportunities for pupils to use ICT in all subjects are too few.

The majority of parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school offers and speak highly of the good quality of care, guidance and support that their children receive. One parent expressed her delight in receiving a digital image of her child's work on his third day at school describing her son as 'a very happy chappie'.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The environment is safe, calm and orderly, and staff are attentive to the needs and welfare of all children. When children start school, most are well below the expected starting points for their age in most areas of learning.

They quickly learn routines, show good attitudes towards learning and most enjoy school. They are specifically taught how to behave and listen well, and are encouraged to be as independent as possible. They make good progress in their understanding of number and in their physical development. Systematic teaching of letter sounds (phonics) provides children with a secure start as beginner readers and writers. However, the children's creative development and in particular their knowledge and understanding of the world remain well below expected levels as they move into Year 1. This is because opportunities are too few for them to explore their ideas and interests in depth or to immerse themselves in creative and imaginative play. The outside area is insufficiently developed and underused. Toys and other learning resources although adequate, are uninviting and not displayed in original or inspiring ways to capture the children's attention. Adults observe and record progress carefully so that they can base the next steps in learning on what children know and can do. Staff give parents regular feedback on their child's progress.

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

- In the Foundation Stage, provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about the world and be creative in their play in the classroom and outside.
- Add a creative dimension to the curriculum and provide regular opportunities for pupils to use ICT in all subjects.
- Recognise and celebrate the richness of the school's diverse cultural community to enhance pupils' cultural development.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well. They make good progress in meeting the challenging targets they are set. For example, in 2006, after starting school with literacy and numeracy skills well below the national average, seven-year-olds were performing close to the national average in reading and writing and above it in mathematics. The school's latest assessment information, together with work seen in pupils' books shows that, in Year 2 and Year 6 standards are broadly average in English and science and consistently above average in mathematics. Class teachers, subject leaders and senior teachers carefully track pupils' progress. Pupils who appear to be underachieving are identified quickly and well-chosen additional support is provided to get them back on track. Skilful teaching assistants support pupils well in lessons helping learners make good progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pupils are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate across all key stages.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils clearly enjoy school, and this results in good attitudes towards their learning. Their good behaviour in and out of lessons makes them a pleasure to teach, and they have good opportunities to work together on tasks needing co-operation and collaboration. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good but their cultural awareness is less well developed. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They know what constitutes a healthy meal and take part in a wide range of physical activities in school and beyond the school day. Through the school council, and a good range of other jobs and responsibilities, they are able to make an effective contribution towards the school and wider community. There are too few opportunities to develop pupils' economic awareness or improve

their basic ICT skills. Attendance has improved because the school is improving its contacts with parents, and it is now in line with the national average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The pupils make good progress and show good attitudes to their work, as a result of effective teaching. The teachers ensure that no learning time is wasted. Pupils enjoy their lessons as shown by their willingness to listen and concentrate well during lessons. Good relationships generate a positive atmosphere for learning. Lessons are structured, well planned and resourced so that activities are closely matched to the pupils' needs and abilities. The teachers' use of new technology enlivens the teaching and helps maintain pupils' attention. The teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils in learning, especially those with learning difficulties. Teachers make good use of displays to remind pupils of key points and to give information. Pupils say the marking of their work helps them understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. This is evident from looking at their books. In mathematics, expectations for neat and tidy presentation are high, but in other subjects, the quality in presentation of written work is variable.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including for religious education, and ICT, which have improved since the last inspection when they did not meet requirements. Over recent years, the school has focused correctly on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. The school has now begun to review the curriculum in the light of the latest guidance on creativity and making links between subjects. However, this work is still in its early stages, and is not yet consistent or widespread in practice. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught French or Spanish in preparation for changes to the curriculum in 2008 and the move to secondary school. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory but not enough is done to recognise and celebrate the cultures of many of the pupils, especially those from Eastern Europe. For example, there are few displays relating to their home countries, dual language books or other resources. The school offers pupils a good range of extra-curricular activities including sport, music and other activities such as cooking. Educational visits and visitors to the school help to make some learning more meaningful.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school tracks pupils' progress very effectively through good assessment systems. Their progress is reviewed on a regular basis. This helps teachers provide appropriate support and guidance to help pupils make progress but they do not involve pupils enough in measuring their own success in lessons and setting their targets. It also helps identify at an early stage any underachievement or those pupils who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that they are well looked after by all adults. The school meets all safeguarding requirements and health and safety has a high priority. Detailed risk assessments are undertaken for all activities, and child protection systems are fully in place. Pupils' individual needs are sensitively catered for, and they are guided and supported effectively

in their learning. Effective relationships with a range of outside agencies, pre-school providers and the local secondary school ensures that pupils are supported well at each stage of their education.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides the school with clear direction in her quest to improve and promote the well-being of pupils through good quality care and education. Clear communication about what needs to be improved brings staff and governors together working effectively towards achieving shared goals. There is a keen sense of teamwork, and standards in English and mathematics are rising as a result. The school welcomes support and guidance provided by the local authority and takes on challenges with enthusiasm. The school's leadership team is realistic in setting goals for future improvement and have manageable yet ambitious plans in place to raise pupils' achievement in other subjects. The quality of leadership provided by subject leaders has improved significantly since the school's last inspection providing the leadership team with accurate self-evaluation information to guide them in decision-making. Staff continuously strengthen their practice through robust performance management procedures and training. Governance is good; finances are managed effectively and governors are confident in holding the school to account through challenging questioning and debate. The school's realistic and challenging targets in English, mathematics and science are securely based on accurate assessment information, and are being used effectively to improve pupils' progress and attainment. The school is aware that more work is required to achieve the same success in other subjects. The good leadership skills of the management team ensure that there is no room for complacency, and contributes to the school's good capacity to improve.

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## Annex A

## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	3

### 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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Annex A

**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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

21 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ravensthorpe Primary School, Peterborough, PE3 7NB

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we came to see how well you are learning. It was a pleasure to spend two days at your school. We enjoyed joining you for lunch and we think that the meals are delicious. Cook is making the most of her new kitchen! You and your parents told us that you enjoy school and we are pleased that you all come to school regularly. We think that the school is good because the adults care about you very much, teach you well and look for ways to improve.

These are some of the good things we found.

- You all behave well in class and around the school.
- No time is wasted in lessons and the teachers make sure that you work hard.
- The teachers are doing a good job in checking how well you are learning so that they can give you work that is not too easy or too hard.
- You are all making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You are well looked after in school and your teachers tell you what you need to do to improve.

We think that there are things that can be even better so we have asked your teachers to do the following.

- Make the Reception classroom a livelier and more interesting place to learn, with new toys, more choices and exciting things to do outside.
- Give you the chance to use your imagination more and experiment, test out your ideas and solve problems.
- Tell you more about the different cultures and backgrounds that you come from.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Killman HMI

Lead inspector