

Cottingham Croxby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117874
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	312733
Inspection dates	7–8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	304
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Duncan Shaw
Headteacher	Mr Dave Ledgard
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2005
School address	Bricknell Avenue Hull HU5 4TN
Telephone number	01482 846171
Fax number	01482 876624

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger-than-average school serves families from a wide range of backgrounds; numbers of pupils taking up free school meals is lower than usual. Most pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The number of pupils who leave or are admitted throughout the year into the junior classes is higher than usual. The building and resources suffered substantial damage in the 2007 floods. After a three week closure, the school was relocated within the university and pupils were taught on a reduced school day. Subsequently, mobile classrooms were provided on the school site. During the inspection, pupils had been re-housed in the refurbished building but parts of the accommodation were still out of use.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Cottingham Croxby Primary is a good school and provides good value for money. It has a deservedly good reputation. Parents have very positive views of the school. They praise the 'safe, caring environment' and the teachers who, they say, are 'committed and approachable'. Extensive links with other schools, agencies and businesses bring many benefits for pupils' learning. Very good use has been made of local authority support to compensate for loss of learning time following the flood damage.

Standards are average by Year 6 and, from a lower than typical starting point, achievement is good. Data from the 2007 tests showed that progress at the school dipped. In part, this was due to a significant proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school. Measures have been introduced to address other factors which included the rigour of assessment and teachers' expectations. Detailed records and work in books show the majority of pupils are now making good progress. They are on track to meet challenging targets at the average standard, although there is scope to further improve numbers working at the higher levels.

Pupils' personal development is good and behaviour is excellent. The school provides a strong caring ethos which ensures that pupils feel secure. As a result, there is a lively, purposeful atmosphere and pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. A host of awards celebrate the outstanding work done in learning about healthy living and caring for the environment. In good preparation for their future economic well-being, pupils develop secure skills of literacy and mathematics and they take responsibility for jobs around school.

Teaching is good with aspects of outstanding practice for the older pupils. Teachers now have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve but occasionally, in mathematics and science, the more able have the same work as the average attaining pupils and are not stretched to the full. Older juniors are becoming confident in evaluating their own progress and considering the next steps; this promotes independent learning very well.

The headteacher provides very strong leadership and generates good team work among staff. There is an energised feel to the school with adults and pupils enjoying the advantages of the refurbished accommodation and new resources. The key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed and standards have risen. The disruption to learning was kept to a minimum and improvements have been successfully implemented during the last year, in spite of the difficulties. This is testimony to the dedication, ingenuity and stamina of staff. The school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start school with a varying range of skills. Overall, their development on entry is below that typical for the age group, especially in communication, language and personal skills. Children benefit from good teaching and make a flying start to their education in the Reception classes.

Children learn well in the adult directed and class groups but there are a few occasions when they sit for too long listening to the teacher. Good use of the exciting learning environment, both inside and out, enables children to explore their world and develop independence. By the end of the year many have reached the nationally agreed expectations for the age group but a significant proportion have not.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher level.
- Ensure all lessons provide sufficient challenge for the more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From a below average starting point, achievement is good. Standards are average by Year 6. Achievement data in Key Stage 2 is affected by a significant number of pupils who enter the school through the junior years, many of whom have experienced difficulties in their previous education. Once settled, they do well but often have lost some ground in their learning. This is one factor behind the dip in progress in 2007. However, following the tests, the school began to improve assessment systems and developed more challenging targets for each year group. Current records and work in books show good progress. An added emphasis on learning sounds and letters has boosted reading skills and new planning for mathematics has led to good improvements, especially in mental arithmetic. In science, pupils' experimental and investigative skills are developing well. However, there has been little improvement in numbers working at the higher levels in all three subjects.

Most pupils have caught up for the education they missed during the unavoidable closure and shorter school days. The remainder are on track to do so. Pupils who have learning or emotional difficulties make good progress and have good self-esteem. Boys did better than girls in the 2007 tests but this was an unusual occurrence. In lessons, both progress equally well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

This is a very happy school where pupils show very good care towards each other. Behaviour is excellent and the older pupils display good self discipline and mature attitudes. Pupils say they enjoy learning very much. Through their school council, they make their views known and play a significant part in decision making. Older pupils have an extensive rota of responsibilities, including running the fruit tuck shop. These factors mean that they are well prepared for their future education and are able to make an outstanding contribution to school life.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. The Healthy Schools and Activemark awards recognise the good work done in teaching about exercise and diet. In addition, the prestigious Green Flag Eco award shows pupils have a very good understanding of environmental issues. Pupils know how to look after themselves and say they feel safe. Attendance is satisfactory. The vast majority of pupils attend regularly and staff do all they can to discourage unnecessary absence among a small number of families. To the pupils' credit, rates of attendance remained stable when they were being educated off site.

Good spiritual, moral and social development stems from the school's caring ethos and a valued system of rewards. Pupils know about world faiths and cultures but are less secure in their understanding of the diverse nature of their own society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall. Relationships in lessons are good across all age groups and pupils trust their teachers. This means that they develop good attitudes to learning and a willingness to persevere with tasks. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear so pupils know what is expected of them. Well trained teaching assistants provide good support for learning in class and extra sessions.

Many improvements have been made in teaching. There is still some inconsistency where new practices are not fully embedded. Teachers now have higher expectations of pupils' progress but, on occasions, work is set at the same level of difficulty; this does not challenge the more able fully. The quality of advice given in marking and opportunities for pupils to evaluate and improve their own work are often excellent for the Years 5 and 6 pupils. This practice is not yet extended to younger ones. Expectations in terms of presentation vary. It is exacting for the older pupils but in some younger classes, work is occasionally untidy or careless.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Termly assessments identify pupils who are not making the expected progress and special teaching groups are arranged to provide extra help. This is an important factor in the improved progress at the school. Managers recognise that providing additional opportunities to stretch talented and more able pupils is an area for further development. The extensive use of information and communication technology to support learning has a positive impact on pupils' progress and motivation.

Enrichment for learning is good. Themed events, such as the very successful 'arts week', together with a wide range of visits and visitors, help to broaden pupils' interests and inject fun into learning. Pupils talk with great enthusiasm about the wide range of extra curricular clubs that are usually on offer. These activities have been curtailed to some extent due to lack of accommodation but some boys and girls were seen thoroughly enjoying their lunchtime clubs for gardening and sewing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes very good care of its pupils and their welfare is at the heart of its work. Staff go to great lengths to provide resources and expert support for pupils with learning, physical or sensory difficulties. As a result, they are able to take a full and active part in all aspects of school life. There are effective procedures for child protection and safety. Requirements for safeguarding pupils are fully met.

Guidance to help pupils with their learning is good. The school tracks progress closely so teachers are able to clearly identify the next steps for learning. This very useful information is shared with individuals so that they are clear about how to improve. Some excellent practice in the older age group involves pupils in assessing and evaluating their own progress and setting their own goals for development. This supports independent learning very effectively but is not so well developed in the younger age groups.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides very good leadership and is instrumental in maintaining the caring ethos shared by all adults. Parents hold him in high regard. One wrote how, during the recent turbulent time, he had 'done an amazing job keeping the school together and spirits up' and another commented 'this school is superbly run by an extremely dedicated headteacher'.

Under the new deputy headteacher, assessment and tracking records have been improved to keep a close and constant eye on achievement and standards. The subject managers check teaching and learning and pupils' work, and make improvements where needed. Some intended outcomes from their action planning are rather vague and could be more precise. Nevertheless, these management systems provide a continuous cycle of evaluation and improvement and enable swift action to be taken. They have proved to be very effective in highlighting any shortfalls in learning caused by the disruptions and introducing measures to address them.

The inviting learning environment, good quality resources, highly efficient administration and good maintenance reflects a shared sense of pride among all adults at the school, and their commitment to providing the best for the pupils. Governors understand the strengths of the school thoroughly and take a good, active and critical role in the process of monitoring performance. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met.

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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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.

Annex A

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 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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

9 May 2008

Inspection of Cottingham Croxby Primary School, East Riding of Yorkshire. HU5 4TN

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for your warm welcome and for helping my colleagues and me when we came to visit your school. I would like to tell you what we found out.

Cottingham Croxby is a good school. Your behaviour is excellent and you take very good care of each other. We enjoyed chatting with some of you and learning about the exciting things you do. You trust your teachers and say that 'there's always someone who will help'. It is good to know that you feel safe from bullying. We were especially impressed with the Eco council and the way they are encouraging all of you to take care of the environment. You also collect for charities which is thoughtful. All of this good work shows you are becoming good citizens of the future. Please thank your parents for sending us lots of replies to the questionnaire. They are very pleased with the school and especially praise the care that your headteacher and staff take in ensuring you are happy and safe. They say they enjoy school performances so you must be good entertainers as well as good workers.

You coped very well with all the changes following the floods last summer. I was very impressed to meet primary age pupils who have been educated at university! You missed some learning time because of the shorter school days there but most of you have already caught up. I know you like your newly repaired and decorated school and all those new resources. Your school has been making your lessons a bit harder over the year and so you have been making better progress. Well done, keep up the good work. We think the fastest learners could do even better and have asked your school to make sure that lessons always stretch them to the full. I think they will enjoy the extra challenges.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had and for letting us know your views so clearly. There is a great deal about your school of which you and the staff can be very proud. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector