

# Captains Close Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119988
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313470
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Callow

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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 (total)	137
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	23
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carol Hall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Bannister
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2004
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Saxelby Road Asfordby Melton Mowbray LE14 3TU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01664 812630
<b>Fax number</b>	01664 813035

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision, and investigated the following issues: the impact of work to raise standards and achievement in English; the role of leaders in ensuring good quality teaching and learning; and the development of the curriculum. Evidence was gathered from: discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject coordinators, teachers and support staff, the vice-chair of governors, parents and pupils; lesson observations; scrutiny of work; analysis of assessment data; and a review of the school's monitoring and evaluation records.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

Nearly all pupils attending the school are from White British backgrounds and the majority live in the village of Asfordby. They come from widely differing backgrounds. Over one quarter of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is above average. The headteacher took up his post just over a year ago. The school holds a number of awards, including Healthy School and Basic Skills. Asfordby Pre-school is a privately run facility for children from two to five years of age which uses premises on the school site.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Captains Close is a satisfactory and improving school. Through thorough and accurate self-evaluation the headteacher has started to build on its strengths and eliminate its weaknesses. As one parent commented, 'He has brought a clear, fresh vision to the school.' He has set out a very clear agenda for raising standards and for ensuring that the good achievement of children, which is established in the EYFS, is maintained as they move up through the school. He has gained the confidence and involvement of staff, pupils, parents and governors in bringing about change. The headteacher's effective leadership in establishing much more rigorous pupil tracking and the setting of challenging targets, coupled with the determination of the literacy and numeracy coordinators to bring about improvements in their subjects, have already had a positive impact. The school has good capacity to improve further.

A strong commitment to high quality pastoral care by all staff contributes significantly to the good personal development and well-being of pupils. One parent summed this up by saying, 'The staff are a great team. They are very dedicated and always have children's needs in mind.' A significant number of parents commented on how happy their children are to go to school and this is reflected in consistently above average levels of attendance. Pupils say they feel safe and can talk to an adult if they have any problems. Overall behaviour is good, both in and out of lessons, but as a few parents commented, one or two pupils can spoil it on occasions.

Even the youngest pupils talk knowledgeably about taking regular exercise, in order to lead a healthy lifestyle. This is strongly promoted, particularly through year-round swimming in the school's own pool, in sports clubs and breaktime activities such as skipping. Despite having only average skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, pupils are well prepared for their future lives and are keen to take on responsibilities. Pupils were observed running the fruit shop, organising the play equipment and cooperating well in their games, as well as looking out for others who had no one to play with. Pupils also demonstrate a growing awareness of the needs of others from different cultures and backgrounds and older pupils talk sensitively about the importance of 'treating others as you would like to be treated yourself'.

Children's levels of skill when they start in the EYFS are varied, but overall they are below those normally expected, especially in aspects of communication, language and literacy. Children of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well. As a result, when they enter Year 1 they have caught up and reached broadly average standards, as they did in 2008. Pupils, and particularly those who are more able, do not make the same amount of progress as they move up through the school because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. Their overall progress is satisfactory, which was reflected in broadly average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2008. Although standards were lower in English than in mathematics, as they have been for the last three years, the school's own records and work in books this term show that strategies to bring about improvements in English are already helping standards to rise.

Teachers are now planning English lessons much more carefully than formerly, with close attention paid to aspects such as the systematic teaching of phonics, as well as to the needs of different ability groups. Specific weaknesses, such as sentence structure and punctuation identified through careful analysis by the literacy coordinator, are currently a focus for the whole school. Pupils not only have class targets to achieve, but also personal targets. The

majority of pupils know what their targets are and improved marking of their work reinforces how they can reach those targets. Older pupils are becoming increasingly confident in assessing their own work, which is enabling them to take more responsibility for their own learning. Many of these developments, and especially those related to academic guidance given to pupils, are comparatively recent and so their impact is only just starting to be seen.

Initiatives to raise standards, and especially those in English, are limited by variations in the quality of teaching and learning. Despite consistently good teaching in some classes, overall it is satisfactory. With the support of the headteacher, the literacy and numeracy coordinators are working hard and successfully to improve the quality of teaching in their areas, particularly with regard to subject knowledge and making accurate assessments of pupils' levels of attainment. They regularly monitor lessons and review pupils' work, providing feedback to teachers about their performance and how they can enable pupils to make more progress. For example, all lessons now make the success criteria clear to pupils at the start. In a very small proportion of lessons, not all pupils make the progress of which they are capable because there is insufficient challenge, particularly for the more able, and the pace is too slow.

Whilst concentrating on raising standards the headteacher is determined that pupils experience a broad and rich curriculum that excites and engages them. Pupils particularly enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are offered. Where teachers are confident and it is appropriate, units of work are starting to be built into themes such as 'Pirates' in Year 2, which makes the curriculum more relevant and cohesive. As the result of a review of teaching and learning when the headteacher first arrived, teachers and pupils have a much clearer view of what makes a successful learner. For example, new topics now start with finding out what pupils already know and what more they want to find out. Involving pupils in this way is helping them to take much more responsibility for their learning than previously and make greater progress. They also now have opportunities to practise skills across the curriculum in clubs for independent learners. These provide appealing activities once a week across the school in subjects as varied as 'horrible history', 'pop-art' and 'making meals'.

The school is aware of the need to improve its provision for more able, and gifted and talented pupils and as a result has begun to access extension activities for them as part of the county's Pathway Project. Whilst the school provides a good range of strategies to support pupils with learning difficulties, the impact of these in improving pupils' progress has not been systematically evaluated.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents are keen to acknowledge how quickly their children settle in the EYFS and that this is due to the good transition arrangements with the pre-school and to the care given to each child. One parent commented, 'Since starting school this year my daughter always comes out saying "I have had a great day."' Children's confidence and self-esteem grow quickly because of a strong focus on their personal development. Good leadership of the EYFS by the assistant headteacher ensures that there is an appropriate balance of child-initiated learning and teacher-led activities. The views of children and their parents are used well to plan a relevant and exciting curriculum that builds on children's previous experiences. This enables children to make good progress from starting points that are below those normally expected, especially in communication, language and literacy and particularly this year in listening. However, staff acknowledge that even more could be done to ensure that boys are 'switched on' to reading

activities. Those pupils with learning difficulties and the most vulnerable receive effective support so that they make the progress expected of them.

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

- Raise standards, particularly in English and for those who are more able, by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6.
- Ensure all pupils make the progress of which they are capable by providing a consistency of good quality teaching across the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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<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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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?	3

## 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	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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

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

Dear Children

Inspection of Captains Close Primary School, Asfordby, LE14 3TU

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we visited your school recently. We were impressed with the way you settled down to work when you arrived at school in the morning. It was clear that as well as enjoying school you have good attitudes to your learning.

Your school is satisfactory and improving. This is because your headteacher, with the good support of other adults working in the school, is determined for it to become better. These are some of the best things that are happening:

- You are able to take more responsibility for your learning by having your own targets.
- Teachers are tracking your progress more carefully to make sure that all of you do as well as you can.
- There is a good focus on you reaching higher standards in your work, particularly in English.
- The adults know you well and look after you.
- You are good at taking responsibility and you cooperate well with each other.
- The youngest children get off to a really good start in their learning in the Reception Year.

Your headteacher is good at knowing what is going well and what needs to be improved. He agrees with us about the things that need to be improved:

- Raise the standards you reach by the time you leave the school, particularly in English and for those of you who find learning quite easy.
- Ensure that all of you make the progress of which you are capable by providing you with good teaching across the school.

You can help by working as hard as you can and thinking carefully about your targets and what you need to do to reach them.

With best wishes Yours sincerely

Peter Callow Lead inspector