

Cossington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120124
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313524
Inspection date	8 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Marion Thompson

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	104
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mick Graham
Headteacher	Heather Sewell
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Main Street Cossington Leicester LE7 4UU
Telephone number	01509 812565

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	8 October 2008
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Fax number

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

How accurately the school identifies areas where progress is too slow and how effectively these areas are addressed, especially in relation to the achievement of girls.

The level of challenge presented to pupils by teaching, and academic guidance.

The levels of skills on entry to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the progress children make, especially in writing.

Evidence was gathered from data on current standards and achievement, examination of pupils' work and school documents, observation of lessons, and discussions with the headteacher, chair of governors, staff and pupils.

Description of the school

This is a small school and EYFS where the vast majority of pupils are of White British origin. The headteacher took up post in September 2007, following the retirement of a long-serving headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, which provides a good education for its pupils. It provides a satisfactory education in the Reception class. Parents strongly support all aspects of the school's work. One parent accurately wrote, 'This is a very caring school that values all its pupils. They leave with a good sense of self and a respect for others.' New initiatives to improve communication, such as the literacy and numeracy evenings for parents, are much appreciated.

The headteacher, supported well by the deputy headteacher, staff and parents, provides a clear sense of direction for improvement. Governors provide very good support, but their monitoring of the work of the school is more limited. Improvement planning is good, and is based on a thorough evaluation of the work of the school. A number of recent changes, including closer and more regular monitoring of pupils' progress, improvements in teaching and the introduction of more effective strategies to teach writing and mathematics, have already improved the rate of pupils' progress. The impact of changes is carefully evaluated to inform future planning and long term targets for pupils are used effectively to raise expectations. The school has improved well since the previous inspection and has good capacity to improve further.

Standards are above average and boys and girls achieve well from their broadly average starting points on entry to Year 1. Rates of progress across the school vary and are particularly fast in Year 6, where teaching is most challenging. Progress has been slower in some other year groups, but this is beginning to accelerate because teaching is improving. Reading develops well throughout the school. Achievement in mathematics has improved, because the school has successfully focused on the relatively weaker area of problem solving. Writing, another school priority, has begun to improve, but there is further to go. Achievement in science is good, although results in national tests last year were lower than expected for pupils who had a reasonable chance of attaining higher levels. The issues that caused this, for example lack of understanding of key scientific terms, have been addressed successfully. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they are supported well.

Pupils' successful learning is promoted by good teaching and a good, varied and interesting curriculum. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, motivating children to learn. Learning intentions are made explicit, so lessons are purposeful. Teachers are using assessment data increasingly effectively to plan lessons that match the wide range of learners' needs in mixed age, mixed ability classes. Marking is regular and supportive, and sometimes supplemented by useful discussions. However, too often written comments do not provide sufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. Careful review of the interventions the school has put in place has ensured that the most effective strategies are increasingly used to promote pupils' achievement and those that are ineffective are dropped. Enrichment and extra-curricular activities are good, and increase pupils' enjoyment and motivation. Links between different subject areas are at the early stages.

Pupils' good personal development and welfare are promoted well by the good level of pastoral care the school provides. This is enhanced by effective partnerships with other agencies. Satisfactory procedures ensure pupils are kept safe. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils are set suitably challenging short term targets, but sometimes do not understand them or do not use them often enough to help them to improve their work.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and cultural development is satisfactory. Many aspects of cultural development, such as increased opportunities to learn to play an instrument, are good. However, within this largely mono cultural school, pupils' awareness of the range of faiths and cultures within Britain is rather narrow. The promotion of this awareness within the curriculum is satisfactory, but somewhat limited and the school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to live a healthy life and behave safely even in the school's rather cramped, smaller classrooms. They really enjoy all aspects of school life and attendance is above average. Behaviour is good. There is occasionally some rumbustious behaviour in the rather cramped playground, and some bullying, but pupils feel it is dealt with well. They make a good contribution to school life, for example by acting as members of the school council. Their good academic achievement and social skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children come into the EYFS with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. However, personal development is above the expected level and knowledge of sounds and letters and skills in calculating numbers are below the expected levels. Children's achievement is satisfactory and they reach broadly average standards on entry to Year 1, except in writing. Although standards in writing are below average, children make satisfactory progress.

Children settle quickly into the routines of school because of the good care, support and guidance provided by the teaching staff. Links with parents are good and ensure problems are dealt with quickly. Personal development is good. Children learn to share equipment, line up in an orderly way, and listen to each other politely. They enjoy their time in the Reception class and learn to work and play safely. They become aware of health issues, like the importance of drinking water. They begin to take responsibilities, such as tidying up their toys. Teaching is satisfactory, but occasionally lacks pace. Children's progress is monitored effectively and the information is used to plan activities that meet their needs. Children start to develop independence, for example through choosing activities. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. However, the outdoor area has not yet been fully developed to enhance children's development across all areas of learning. The EYFS coordinator provides good support for the Reception class, but monitoring of provision, especially for the outdoor area, has been limited over the past year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure planned activities in the Reception class make effective use of the outdoor area to develop children's skills across all areas of learning.
- Improve pupils' achievement in writing, by ensuring that:
 - marking consistently provides clear guidance to pupils on the next steps they need to take
 - pupils understand their targets and use them to help them improve their

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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 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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are 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	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	3

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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	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**

9 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cossington Church of England Primary School, Cossington, LE7 4UU

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. A number of your parents replied to our questionnaire, so please share the contents of this letter with them. Your school provides you with a good education overall and a satisfactory education in the Reception class. Children in the Reception class make satisfactory progress, because teaching and the programme of activities are soundly planned and led. Children settle in quickly because they are cared for well.

In Years 1 to 6 you make good progress overall, reaching above average standards. You do best in reading. Some of you make slower progress in writing than in reading, but many of you have been making faster progress over the last year. This is because teaching, the curriculum, tracking of your progress, and assessment of your work are getting better. A number of you have been helped to catch up quite quickly when you have fallen behind.

Because school staff provide good care for you, you enjoy school, attend regularly and pay attention to safety. You have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. You behave well, but some of you are a little boisterous in the small playground occasionally. Try to remember it is very cramped! You take your responsibilities seriously and are well prepared for the next stage in your education. The headteacher and staff are working hard and successfully to ensure that you do even better.

In order to make sure things continue to improve we have asked the school to:

- Make sure that activities planned for the Reception class make use of the outdoor area to develop the whole range of children's skills.
- Improve progress and standards in writing, by making sure that: – marking always provides you with clear guidance on the next steps you need to take – you understand your targets and use them to improve your work.

Best wishes

Marion Thompson Lead inspector