

Corby Glen Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120374
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313593
Inspection date	9 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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	144
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alistair Jackson
Headteacher	Mrs Vanessa Atter
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Station Road Corby Glen Grantham Lincolnshire NG33 4NW
Telephone number	01476550260
Fax number	01476550260

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- What is the school doing to address writing standards and to improve provision for the most able in both key stages?
- What is the impact of the teaching and learning on standards and why does Key Stage 2 appear much stronger than other parts of the school?
- Are the targets sufficiently challenging and is the school addressing the recent fall in standards?

The inspector gathered evidence from observations of lessons, samples of pupils' work, discussions with pupils, staff and the chair of the governors, and from the parents' questionnaires. The main documents used by the school in monitoring and strategic planning were examined. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as provided in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. It serves the village of Corby Glen and surrounding villages. A well below average proportion of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion who are from minority ethnic groups is below average; very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average and high in some year groups. These pupils have a range of needs including learning, speech, medical and behavioural. The school has been awarded a Basic Skills Quality Mark, an Active Mark, Healthy School status and a Football Association coaching award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Corby Glen is a good school. It is providing pupils with a good start to school life and helping them reach a good level of basic skills to help them with their future education and their lives after school. Talking to pupils shows how much they enjoy school and they take a full part in activities offered to them. A particular strength is the outstanding contribution pupils make to the community, both within and outside school. This is evident in the way they take responsibilities seriously, such as when meeting adults to discuss the planned improvements to the outdoor facilities, working as a school council or in raising money for a range of charities.

Standards are well above average by the time pupils leave the school. This represents good achievement overall given their attainment on entry to the Reception Year. Good progress in the Foundation Stage has been followed in the past by inconsistent progress and a decline in standards in Years 1 and 2. However, this year progress has been good and the decline has been reversed. In the latest national assessments, standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 are above those typically found nationally. The school's data shows that the current Year 6 pupils are well on track to achieve above average standards in English and exceptionally high standards in mathematics and science. Pupils who find learning difficult, either because of behavioural, physical or learning difficulties, are well supported, especially when they work individually or in small groups with teaching assistants and many make good progress.

The school recently recognised lower standards in English, especially writing, than those in other subjects. This has been successfully addressed by extending the opportunities for pupils to discuss their work so they develop a better vocabulary. Teachers make more use of techniques such as drama to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. This is seen in a good Year 5 and 6 lesson where the teacher and pupils took on the complex role of a character in a poem. The school has also extended the opportunities for pupils' writing in different subjects.

Although this is a successful school, a significant minority of parents feel it has shortcomings. Many of these impressions are based on historical issues that have been addressed. Even so, the school has not done enough to explain and celebrate the success of its work to parents. Governors are currently devising a newsletter to be sent out at the end of each year but much more needs to be done to ensure parents and the local community are more familiar with the effectiveness of the school's work.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They behave well in and out of lessons and pupils talk about how well new systems for rewards and sanctions are working. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to live healthy lives and how to keep themselves safe, including when using the Internet. Their attendance at school is above average and reflects their outstanding enjoyment of many of the activities. The pupils' good personal development is the result of good care, support and guidance. The school ensures safeguarding and child protection requirements are met, although risk assessments on day-to-day activities within school do not fully cover all aspects of outdoor learning. The recently introduced systems for tracking pupils' progress provides staff with a clear picture of how well individual pupils are doing on a termly basis, supporting early intervention if underachievement is evident, and also helping recognition of the most able and the faster learners. This information is very new and does not yet inform teachers' planning fully. Pupils are provided with individual targets for improvement and, together with their parents, they have the opportunity to decide on some of their own targets, enabling them to take some responsibility for their learning.

The good achievement is the result of good teaching and learning. Staffing has been disrupted recently but the school has worked hard to maintain its best practice and to ensure standards continue to be above those expected. The best lessons actively involve pupils and have good opportunities for speaking and listening. However, teachers do not always make clear to pupils exactly what they are expected to learn and this is an aspect of assessment that the school plans to improve. The curriculum is good and staff have worked hard to create meaningful links between subjects, so that skills learned in one subject can be used in another. For example, in Years 1 and 2, a topic based on books about a fictional Scottish island provided the basis for creating an island shop so pupils could use role-play to improve their basic mathematical skills and use of money. Recent improvements to the outdoor facilities, as well as those already existing, such as the environmental area, have greatly improved the potential for outdoor learning. The school is aware it needs to give more thought to the planning of how to make the best use of these.

The leadership and management are good. The headteacher has dealt well with some staffing turbulence although it has meant she has had less time to develop some aspects of the leadership as much as she would have liked. This includes providing sufficient opportunities for subject leaders to work alongside colleagues to spread good practice or to evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. The headteacher has used very detailed and accurate observations of teachers' work to develop a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses, and this work has resulted in improved practice. Self-evaluation is accurate and targets for pupil progress are sufficiently challenging. The governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Regular visits help them understand how well the school is working and where areas need to be improved.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with a range of levels of attainment, but often a significant proportion is below the levels expected. They make good progress during the year and the school's data shows that by the time they start in Year 1 they have reached at least the levels expected of them, and many attain levels expected of older pupils. The good progress is due to good leadership, effective teaching and a well-planned curriculum that is suitable for children of this age. Their progress is tracked well and assessments are used effectively to ensure learning is targeted appropriately. Since the last inspection, the outdoor facilities and resources have much improved. Planning for the use of the outside area is not fully developed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the role of subject leaders by providing more opportunities to spread good ideas and evaluate the teaching and learning in lessons.
- Extend the curriculum planning to maximise the use made of the school's outdoor facilities.
- Improve the communication with parents so that more are aware of how the school operates and the success of its work.

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

10 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Corby Glen Community Primary School, Corby Glen, NG33 4NW

I am writing to thank you for the way you made me welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and I was very impressed with the positive way you talked about your school and the things you do there.

I think Corby Glen is a good school. Your teachers work hard to plan good lessons for you and you told me that teachers help you learn new things. You help them by being well behaved and attentive in lessons. A lot of you are very enthusiastic and take part in the activities offered such as clubs and especially those things that make an excellent contribution to help the school improve. The school council do very well in advising the staff of ways to make the school even better. I think the playground team are outstanding in the way they dealt with the adults involved in designing, funding, supplying and building the new facilities, and in the way they shared this work with other adults at the Lincolnshire show.

The school is well led by Mrs Atter, with the support of her staff. Because of this, you learn well, make good progress and reach standards that are well above those expected by the time you leave the school. Those of you who find learning more difficult are helped very well, especially by the teaching assistants.

Even the best schools can improve and I think there are three things that will help Corby Glen get even better in the future:

- make sure that teachers in charge of subjects have more time to see how well their subject is being taught in other classes and to share good ideas
- ensure that the school plans the use of the outdoor facilities more thoroughly to help your learning
- make sure that, with your help, parents and the local community are more aware of all the good things it does.

Thank you again for your help. Enjoy your time at Corby Glen and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector