

# Cliffedale Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120393
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313602
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

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)	314
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	44
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Derek Booles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Robert Young
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2005
<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>	Northcliffe Road Grantham Lincolnshire NG31 8DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01476568740
<b>Fax number</b>	01476591566

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The Cliffedale Primary School is much larger than most other primary schools and serves an area of mainly private housing. The majority of pupils are of White British background. A few pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average as also is the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is average. Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with knowledge and skills that are consistent with those expected for their age. The school has received several Department of Children Schools and Families (DCSF) Achievement Awards, and holds the Primary Quality Mark for basic skills and the Activemark for sports.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This excellent school enables pupils to achieve exceptionally well. Pupils say that they really enjoy being at Clifedale because everyone is so friendly. This view is reflected in the excellent relationships that exist throughout the school. Pupils feel safe and secure because of the outstanding care, support, and guidance provided by staff. Parents overwhelmingly support the work of the school. One wrote, 'Clifedale is a wonderful school. All staff are professional, caring and helpful.' The strong sense of community and partnership with parents contribute much to the school's success. In this supportive environment, and with a very carefully planned curriculum, pupils flourish and develop the essential academic and personal skills necessary to do well in future.

From standards on entry to Reception that are largely consistent with those expected for their age, pupils make rapid progress. As a result, standards rise to well above average at the end of Year 2 and they are high at the end of Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been maintained at this high level since the last inspection and represent outstanding achievement. This is made possible by excellent leadership and management which focus strongly on the whole child, ensuring a well-rounded and balanced education. In addition, exemplary use is made of assessment information to track pupils' progress so that underperformance can be identified and tackled at an early stage. This is having a significant impact on pupils' achievement, particularly on that of pupils who find learning more difficult.

Much good and often outstanding teaching is also having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Pupils want to learn and, in most lessons, they make rapid progress because teaching captures their interest and imagination. In some lessons however, progress is slowed because pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their independent learning skills. The pupils themselves are a great strength of the school and their exemplary behaviour contributes much to the school's success. They show genuine concern for one another and understand what is needed to be healthy and safe. Pupils demonstrate an appreciation of cultural diversity and make excellent contributions to the school and wider communities. A small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying but the inspection evidence shows that incidents of bullying are rare and any that do occur are treated very seriously by all staff. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding and they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school gives excellent value for money and has outstanding capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Provision in the EYFS meets the needs of the children exceptionally well and provides an excellent start to their school years. Children thrive in a stimulating and safe learning environment in which their welfare is paramount. As one parent wrote, 'My child has only recently started at Clifedale, but he has settled well and we are delighted he is so happy.' Children make excellent progress towards achieving the early learning goals and, by the time they enter Year 1, virtually all have exceeded them. Leadership and management are highly effective and ensure that the wide range of interesting and exciting learning activities, both inside the classroom and in the outdoor area, include all the required areas of learning. The exceptional organisation of the learning environment, and the thorough assessment and tracking of children's skill development, underpin their rapid progress. The curriculum is carefully planned

to provide many opportunities for children to engage in imaginative and structured play. In one session observed, children were having so much fun that they did not realise how hard they were working at developing their observation, questioning and thinking skills. The lovely outdoor area is another real strength. It is large and safely enclosed with a variety of interesting resources to support children's intellectual and physical development. For example, one group of children was seen constructing a very detailed and ambitious bridge from a variety of large wooden shapes. This effectively linked recent work on three-dimensional shape with early problem-solving skills. Children are strongly encouraged to be independent learners and receive excellent support from teaching assistants, who display an impressive knowledge of the EYFS requirements.

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

- Extend pupils' independent learning by developing their skills of self-assessment so that they are able to evaluate their own work and identify their next steps in learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Because children do so well in the EYFS, they enter Year 1 with a range of skills that exceed expectations for their age. Their rapid progress continues through Key Stage 1 so that pupils reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are significantly above average by the time they leave Year 2. The school makes exceptionally good use of its assessment data to track pupils' progress and provide additional support where needed. This, allied to much highly effective teaching in Years 5 and 6, ensures that progress accelerates as pupils move through Key Stage 2. As a result, the school's challenging targets are usually met and standards in English, mathematics and science are consistently high at the end of Year 6. These standards represent high achievement when standards on entry are taken into account. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make equally good progress.

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

### **Grade: 1**

In this calm and friendly community pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are very enthusiastic about school and appreciate what it offers them. This is reflected in the above average level of attendance, although a few family holidays are taken in term-time. Pupils understand how to stay healthy and appreciate the many opportunities the school offers for physical activity. Excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development shows in the way that pupils regulate their own behaviour and the high level of social harmony in school. Pupils feel very safe. They say that bullying is rare and that all would know who to approach if any incidents did occur. They take the responsibilities given to them very seriously and make excellent contributions to the life of the school and the wider community. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education by developing excellent social and academic skills and an outstanding work ethic.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with many examples of outstanding practice. Strong features of all lessons are good planning, high expectations and very effective classroom management. These promote exemplary behaviour and effective small group work. In most lessons there is a high level of challenge and sharp, incisive questioning is used to assess pupils' understanding, share ideas and shape pupils' learning. The effective use of electronic boards and interesting resources enliven lessons. As one pupil said, these 'make learning fun because we can see as well as listen.' In a few lessons, however, the pace is slowed because pupils spend too much time listening to their teachers and do not have enough opportunity to develop as independent learners. In the very best lessons, independence in learning is promoted well by enabling pupils to assess their own work and to identify the next steps in learning for themselves. The school recognises the need to extend this approach to all areas of the school. Teaching assistants are a valuable asset and work very effectively to support pupils with particular learning needs.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum has been refined and improved since the last inspection and is now outstanding. An innovative approach to curricular planning is helping pupils to make more meaningful connections in their learning. Children are excited by interesting work across a range of subjects on themes such as volcanoes. They say that 'Focus Days', when the whole school explores one subject area such as physical education or design and technology, are particularly enjoyable. The curriculum is enriched by visits and numerous visitors to the school, and pupils benefit from a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Computer resources have been enhanced since the last inspection and are used successfully to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. Pupils of all abilities are enthusiastic in their appreciation of all that the curriculum offers. As one Year 6 child commented, 'You learn a lot, even though you're having fun!'

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The high quality care provided by staff makes significant contribution to pupils' excellent personal development. Adults know pupils and many of their families well and are alert to each pupils' needs. Pupils learn in a safe environment where relationships are excellent. Support for pupils who find learning more difficult and for vulnerable pupils is particularly strong and close attention is paid to the needs of those who are gifted and talented. There are rigorous procedures for child protection, risk assessments and for medical and emergency aid. The process of setting targets is well established and the systematic monitoring of pupils' progress makes a significant contribution to their high achievement. Older pupils make good use of their own self-evaluations to measure their progress. The school works closely with a range of external agencies and strong support from parents and carers help maximise pupils' learning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The highly effective leadership of the headteacher and his deputy is at the heart of the school's success and provides a clear direction to the school's work. With strong support from others with leadership roles, they ensure that this is a very inclusive and orderly community. Through rigorous self-evaluation, involving both senior staff and subject leaders, they have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and are able to pinpoint where improvement is needed. The careful scrutiny of assessment information provides senior leaders with a clear overview of pupils' progress as they move through this school. This enables resources to be allocated where most needed and has a significant impact on standards. All staff benefit from continuing professional development that is well planned to support improvement. This, and exceptionally good teamwork amongst all staff, help to maintain the school's high achieving learning environment, as well as strengths in pupils' personal development, reflected in their appreciation of both the school and wider communities. Governors are highly supportive and provide the school with a considerable amount of expertise. They are challenging and fulfil their roles as critical friends.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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

<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>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

16 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Cliffedale Primary School, Northcliffe Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 8DP

Following the visit of Mrs Watts, Mr Skinner and me to inspect your school, I am writing to tell you what we found out. Before I do, I would like to say thank you for making us feel so welcome and making our visit one that we will remember for a long time. We have told your teachers how you were all so helpful and polite. Through our discussions with you, it was good to hear how much you enjoy school and the many clubs, and other activities that are available for you. We particularly enjoyed listening to your singing in assembly.

We agree with you and your parents that this is an excellent school and one that is helping you to do exceptionally well. Provision for the youngest children in Reception is also excellent and gives you a first-rate start in Year 1. We particularly liked the way in which you work hard in your lessons, which are well taught and enable you to make such good progress. A real help to your teachers is your excellent behaviour because it allows them to concentrate on helping you to learn. In many lessons, we saw that you were making really good progress because you were able to evaluate your own work and see what your next step in learning should be, without having to wait for the teacher. We have asked your teachers if this could happen in more of your lessons.

All the staff take excellent care of you and work hard to keep you safe and healthy. Your headteacher and deputy headteacher lead the school exceptionally well and, together with staff and governors, make sure that you have many opportunities at school to develop academically and personally. You are really important in the school's success and, having met you, we know you will all want to continue to play your part in helping the school to keep its high standards. Through your hard work and the care you show each other, together with your willingness to take on responsibility, you all help to make this such a happy and successful community.

With best wishes for your future.

Kenneth C Thomas

Lead inspector