

# Cottingham Church of England School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121965
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314168
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth Westbrook

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	124
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lorraine Desmond
<b>Headteacher</b>	Luke Whitney
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Berryfield Road Market Harborough LE16 8XB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 771391
<b>Fax number</b>	01536 772226

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following:

whether there was variation in achievement between girls and boys

the progress made by Key Stage 2 pupils in science and the more able pupils in Key Stage 1 in writing

the contribution made by leaders at all levels to curricular development and its impact on raising pupils' achievement.

Evidence was gathered from discussions with pupils, members of staff and governors, observations of teaching and learning, views of parents, scrutiny of work and school documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a small school serving the village of Cottingham and surrounding area. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and three are at an early stage of learning English.

## 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 with a number of outstanding features. The headteacher sets very clear direction for all members of the school, including parents. They share a commitment to providing a community where children can achieve their best. The school is, in the words of one parent, 'a vibrant hub of our village. Local life is enriched by its high standards and continued presence.'

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in all three subjects have improved since the last inspection at a greater rate than those nationally. All groups of children make good progress through the Foundation Stage and the rest of the school. Their progress in writing has accelerated with improvements in teaching methods. In 2007, Key Stage 2 test results in writing were, for the first time, as good as in reading. In science, children have made slower progress. The school has identified the reasons for this and has increased the opportunities for investigation. Links have been established between science and other subjects to improve children's understanding. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are using their knowledge of the human body and diet to plan a healthy tuck shop. There is clear evidence that these actions are already raising standards in science.

Good teaching helps children make good progress in their learning. Classrooms are well managed and this promotes very good attitudes to learning. Effective partnerships exist between teachers and other adults in the classroom so that all children receive help if they need it. Lesson planning is thoughtful and includes a wide range of activities that sustain interest. All teachers set learning objectives and in most cases there is a clear link between the objective and a child's individual target, so that the child knows very clearly what steps to take to reach his or her target and how to make further progress. In a few instances, the link between the two is not clear to the learner.

Individual pupils are set challenging targets. The school tracks progress towards these targets very carefully to check that all individuals and different groups of children are making good progress. Underachievement is identified swiftly, and additional support is put in place. The appointment of a learning mentor last year has increased the additional support available. Parents are able to refer any concerns about their child's progress.

Parental comments demonstrate the great value that they and their pupils place on the outstanding care, guidance and support that are provided. Individual needs are quickly identified and very effectively met. As a result, pupils are very happy and feel secure. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are very thorough. Pupils at an early stage of learning English receive good care and support from staff and other children. Strong links have been established with home. When facing the challenge of teaching non-English speaking entrants for the first time last year, staff developed their skills fast; as a result, the children are making good progress in learning the language and have settled happily in the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities integrate fully into school life. In the words of one child, her school is special because 'everyone is nice to each other, no one is left out'. The well-established school council are seeking to ensure that this is the case in the future by providing 'buddy' benches in the playground.

This strong pastoral care and a good curriculum promote outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy school immensely. They like working with friends on 'fun things like cooking, science experiments and making ginger beer'. Attendance is good, and improving. Pupils act very responsibly without supervision when carrying out a range of duties in school.

They are happy to help the school community and each other. Older pupils are very caring towards younger ones and all understand the need to play safely together. Behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent because children want to create a positive school community. There are many opportunities for moral and social development and pupils learn to work harmoniously and are supportive of each other in lessons. They understand very well how to lead a healthy and safe life and put this into practice in their lunches and participation in physical education and sport.

The good curriculum prepares children well for their future lives through a number of well-planned opportunities. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are currently enthusiastically planning a healthy tuck shop. Literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and interpersonal skills develop as children plan the finance, promotion and organisation of their enterprise. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development have been a focus for improvement since the last inspection. These are now good, and children have a much greater awareness and understanding of the faiths and backgrounds of other cultures. Additional activities, visits and visitors make a good contribution to pupil's personal development. The range of extra-curricular activities is wide and provides additional sporting and creative enrichment. Curricular planning takes account of different needs within a group. However, there are occasions when tasks do not challenge the more able pupils to work independently and solve problems that are more difficult.

Leadership and management are good because the headteacher leads very effectively, with a clear focus on raising standards and improving achievement within a caring environment. The school's improvement planning is well focused and built on effective evaluation of strengths and areas for development. This is informed by regular checking of the school's work. The recent strengthening of the senior leadership is providing additional direction for the school in the next stages of its planning. New leaders are rapidly developing the skills to share the school's leadership. Governors know the school well and are able to give additional support in this. The good quality of self-evaluation, as demonstrated by the good rate of improvement since the last inspection, shows that the school's capacity for further improvement is good. The school works well with others, particularly parents, the great majority of whom are very appreciative of its work.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good, and the personal development and care provided for children are outstanding. The strong links with parents and pre-school providers help children to make a good start. They enter the school with abilities at broadly expected levels. Within a short space of time, children settle quickly to the well-thought-out routines. They make good progress and move on to Key Stage 1 with skills and abilities that are above average. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Well-planned lessons contain a good balance of child-chosen and adult-led initiatives. Children are encouraged to be inquisitive but safe. They are included in all school activities. They listen carefully in assembly and play happily in the playground with all the older children. There are very strong links between this stage and Key Stage 1. Children from both stages work together increasingly as the year progresses, presenting a joint pantomime in the spring. This contributes to the progress made in all aspects of development. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good, very effectively linking this stage with the rest of the school. Leaders have rightly identified development of the outdoor space into learning zones as a priority because

gains made in physical development, although satisfactory, are not yet as high as in other areas of learning.

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

- Ensure pupils always understand the link between a lesson's learning objective and their own literacy and numeracy targets, and that feedback on their progress towards targets clearly identifies the next steps needed.
- Develop the curriculum to ensure greater and more consistent challenge for the more able pupils.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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?	1
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	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	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?	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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

13 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cottingham Church of England School, Market Harborough LE16 8XB

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly on my recent visit to your school, which I have judged to be good with some outstanding features. I would like to share with you what I learned about the school. These are the things I particularly liked:

- you make good progress in your work and reach standards that are above average
- you enjoy school very much, working with your friends on the many activities during and after the school day
- you have a very good understanding of how to keep yourself and others healthy and safe around the school and in the playground, where younger children feel very well cared for by older ones
- your behaviour is excellent
- you welcome opportunities to serve your school and local community; I am impressed at the number of jobs that many of you carry out within school and you have good ideas of your own which you are able to act on responsibly.
- your headteacher leads the school very well
- all staff care for you very well and support you to do your best; as a result, you feel safe in school and that there is always someone there to help should you need it.

These are the things I have asked the school to improve, to make it even better:

- you find the targets in the front of your literacy and numeracy books helpful and most of you know what level you are aiming for. However, you are not always told in lessons, how the work will help you to achieve your target or what you need to do next
- you enjoy the interesting lessons that are taught and the real opportunities to put your skills into practice when you raise money for charity or organise your healthy tuck shop, but I think some of you could manage more of a challenge to achieve higher levels in your academic work.

I hope you will help your headteacher and his staff to put these plans into action.

Ruth Westbrook Lead inspector

**Annex B**

13 February 2008

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**Inspection of Cottingham Church of England School, Market Harborough  
LE16 8XB**

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Ruth Westbrook  
Lead inspector