

Guilsborough Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122022
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314192
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Terry Elston

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	144
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon King
Headteacher	Philip Henretty
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2003
School address	The Green Guilsborough Northampton NN6 8PT
Telephone number	01604 740307
Fax number	01604 740307

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Inspection number	314192

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small school has significantly fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and all speak English as their first language. The school has close links with the Peterborough Diocese. Children's attainment on entry is broadly typical of 4-year-olds.

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 where pupils achieve well. From the time they enter Reception, they work hard in class and always try to do their best. As a result, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave. Pupils' achievement and enjoyment of reading is particularly good because teachers give them a love for books. Standards in mathematics are not quite as high as in other subjects, mainly because some pupils struggle with problem solving tasks. This is because not all teachers place a strong enough emphasis on teaching pupils strategies that would help them solve mathematical problems effectively.

Pupils enjoy school, and attendance rates are good. They take a keen interest in the environment and enjoy good links with the Church and local community. They think deeply about people less fortunate than themselves and support local and national charities enthusiastically. Pupils say the best thing about school is the way that their teachers make learning fun. They particularly like it when teachers use the interactive whiteboards to pop up pictures or words to illustrate their lessons. Teachers are very good at asking the right questions to make pupils think deeply about topics. They assess pupils' progress accurately and set demanding targets for them to achieve.

Parents are pleased with their children's achievements and nearly all speak highly of the school. They feel that it cares for their children well, and comments such as 'exceptionally happy school' and 'lovely atmosphere' are typical. Pupils nearly always behave well, feel secure at school and know who to turn to if they have worries. Systems for safeguarding them are rigorous and reviewed regularly. Those with learning difficulties benefit from good support and guidance and make good progress as a result.

Pupils say how much they enjoy the varied curriculum provided and, as one put it, 'the really interesting clubs at lunchtime and after school'. The very well planned personal, social and health education provision teaches them much about how to live healthy lives and stay safe. The good provision for literacy and numeracy enables pupils to develop the key skills of reading and number well and this prepares them successfully for the future.

The headteacher leads the school well. His high expectations and clear vision for the future mean that the school keeps improving. He is supported well by senior staff who play an important role in checking on pupils' progress and rectifying weaknesses in their attainment. The school recognises that subject co-ordinators do not take enough responsibility for evaluating the quality of teaching. This means that inconsistencies persist, for example, in aspects of mathematics. The knowledgeable governing body supports the school very well and is closely involved in setting future priorities. The improvement plan is detailed and has the right targets to move the school on. With these significant strengths, the school is in a good position to improve still further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The school makes good provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The strong home-school links and well planned induction arrangements ensure that children make a smooth transition to school and settle into routines quickly. The detailed assessments provide accurate measures of their progress and adults use them well to plan activities at the right level for individual children. The curriculum is planned well to ensure children have a good balance of work to

improve their academic skills and develop their independence. Adults work well as a team to provide very good care, support and guidance to ensure children's safety and well-being. Teaching and learning are consistently good. Lessons are fun and challenging so that children learn quickly. As a result, they make good progress so that, by the end of the Reception Year, their knowledge and skills exceed those expected for their age in all areas.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teachers help pupils to develop better strategies for solving mathematical problems.
- Ensure that co-ordinators evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subject more rigorously.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. They leave Reception with good skills and, by Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing, science and mathematics. By Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. This continues the upward trend in test results over recent years. In mathematics, pupils calculate quickly and accurately but sometimes find it hard to work out which operations to use when asked to solve problems. Their reading is a strength because of the good phonics teaching and the many opportunities provided for them to enjoy books. In the past, boys' standards have been significantly lower than those of girls in English, but boys now do as well as girls because teachers have introduced more activities to motivate them, both in reading and writing. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well. They benefit from good support in class and when withdrawn for small group work. Their reading skills in particular improve well because they are taught clearly how to work out unfamiliar words.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development and well-being are important reasons for their academic successes. Attendance is good. Pupils say how much they enjoy school because of the friends they make and the interesting lessons. One pupil echoed the views of many when he said, 'Lessons are great because teachers make them fun.' Nearly all pupils develop a good sense of right and wrong and behave well. However, very occasionally there are disruptions when individual pupils misbehave and affect the learning of others. Pupils have a very good awareness of how to stay safe and live healthily. They show good levels of maturity as they explore topics such as road safety and the dangers of fire. They develop a good awareness of their role in the community, particularly by raising funds for charities and using the school council to make improvements, for example in the range of activities available at playtime. As one pupil put it, 'Now, if you are on your own there are always things to do in the playground.' Pupils' good spiritual development is evident when they think deeply about subjects such as poverty and appreciate the wonders of the world around them. Pupils are well prepared for the future by their participation in projects such as the mini-enterprise scheme, local environmental projects and by developing good literacy and numeracy skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers are very good at making their lessons interesting so that pupils enjoy learning. Lessons are a good balance between the teacher teaching new skills and pupils working in groups or on their own at tasks that match their ability. Teachers' use interactive whiteboards effectively to illustrate their lessons, and pupils respond enthusiastically to the images that flash onto the screen. The good teaching of phonics explains why so many pupils read fluently and enjoy books. In mathematics, while teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their calculation skills, not all provide enough guidance on how to solve complex problems. This is why some pupils find these tasks difficult. Skilled teaching assistants work effectively with pupils with learning difficulties who make good progress, both in lessons and when taught in small groups outside the classroom. The school has good assessment systems that show teachers clearly how well pupils are attaining. This helps them set pupils challenging but achievable targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned well to provide an interesting range of activities that are relevant to the needs of all groups of pupils. The planning for literacy and numeracy is detailed and ensures that pupils make rapid progress in their reading and number work. The very well planned personal, social, health and citizenship programme plays an important part in helping pupils understand their own feelings and keep safe. Pupils enjoy a wide range of popular activities, both at lunchtime and after school that enhance their skills in areas such as French, chess and information and communication technology and develop their sporting talents. While pupils have good opportunities to learn about the different cultures of the world, there is little in the curriculum to enable them to explore in any depth the richness of different cultures in Britain.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good care, guidance and support are valued highly by both pupils and parents. Teachers are thorough in their recording of pupils' academic and personal development and use this detailed knowledge well to set them challenging targets. The staff are very good at supporting pupils who are anxious or need someone to talk to. Health and safety and child protection procedures are good and are reviewed regularly to ensure pupils' well-being. As a result, the school is a secure and happy place in which pupils enjoy learning. The school does much to encourage pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles, as has been recognised by a recent Healthy Schools award. Links with other professionals such as educational psychologists, education welfare officers and health staff are good and provide valuable support for the school. The systems for encouraging good behaviour generally work very well, although a few pupils continue to misbehave despite clear sanctions and rewards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads well with a sharp focus on raising standards and ensuring pupils are well prepared for the future. He has helped create a good team of staff who work well together to ensure the school continues to improve. He is supported well by other senior staff who share his vision and aspirations for the school. This team is very effective at analysing data to evaluate the school's effectiveness and rectify any weaknesses in pupils' achievements. For example, following detailed analysis of pupils' test results that showed underachievement in writing, particularly by boys, teachers provided more tasks that made writing fun. This helped to raise standards significantly, and now boys do equally as well as girls. Subject leaders do limited evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning, and the school recognises that they need to do more to avoid inconsistencies in the teaching. The school has developed good partnerships with other schools and sports clubs in the area that do much to enhance provision in sport and the arts. Governors hold the school to account for its effectiveness, are supportive and have a thorough grasp of what needs to be done to raise standards.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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	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 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

3 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Guilsborough C of E Primary School, Northampton NN6 8PT

Thank you for making us both so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and have such fun in the playground. Those who were kind enough to speak to us told us a lot about your school. You think yours is a good school, and you are right.

What we liked most about your school.

- You work very hard and make such good progress that your work is of a better standard than in most schools.
- Your behaviour is nearly always good, both in class and out in the playground.
- You have a good understanding of how to live healthy lives, eat the right foods and take regular exercise.
- Your headteacher and other leaders run the school well and know what needs to be done to make it even better.
- Your teachers do a good job. They work very hard to make your lessons fun and help you learn quickly.
- You enjoy the interesting activities provided and the many exciting clubs after school.
- All staff at the school take good care of you and keep you safe.

What we would like your school to do now.

- Help you to work out problems in mathematics more successfully; you can help by thinking carefully about whether the problem needs you to add, subtract, multiply or divide.
- Make sure that those in charge of subjects observe lessons and help other teachers teach even better.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston Lead inspector

3 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Guilsborough C of E Primary School, Northampton NN6 8PT

Thank you for making us both so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and have such fun in the playground. Those who were kind enough to speak to us told us a lot about your school. You think yours is a good school, and you are right.

What we liked most about your school.

- You work very hard and make such good progress that your work is of a better standard than in most schools.
- Your behaviour is nearly always good, both in class and out in the playground.
- You have a good understanding of how to live healthy lives, eat the right foods and take regular exercise.
- Your headteacher and other leaders run the school well and know what needs to be done to make it even better.
- Your teachers do a good job. They work very hard to make your lessons fun and help you learn quickly.
- You enjoy the interesting activities provided and the many exciting clubs after school.
- All staff at the school take good care of you and keep you safe.

What we would like your school to do now.

- Help you to work out problems in mathematics more successfully; you can help by thinking carefully about whether the problem needs you to add, subtract, multiply or divide.
- Make sure that those in charge of subjects observe lessons and help other teachers teach even better.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston
Lead inspector