

# Walesby CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122771
<b>Local Authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314394
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Brennan

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	159
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	15
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs M Staples MBE
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr N J Thorpe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 April 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>	New Hill Walesby Newark Nottinghamshire NG22 9PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 860575
<b>Fax number</b>	01623 836806

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, teaching and learning, care, support and guidance and leadership and management, gathering evidence from scrutiny of school documentation, observations of teaching and learning, and discussions with members of staff and with pupils. 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, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school admits pupils from the village of Walesby and the surrounding area. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Whilst the significant majority of pupils are of White British heritage, almost 15% of pupils are of Traveller heritage. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Children's skills and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are a little below expected levels. An independently run after school club and playgroup operates on the school site.

## 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 that serves pupils' academic and personal needs well. Pupils achieve well to reach standards at the end of the Year 6 that are above average in English, mathematics and science. Traveller pupils make good progress during their time at school, as do pupils with particular learning needs. However, the pattern of achievement for pupils as a whole is not even across the school. Progress is rapid in the EYFS and in Year 6. In between, progress fluctuates somewhat from class to class and sometimes within classes. As a result, some pupils do better than others and a handful of pupils of varying abilities are not achieving well enough. This can be seen in standards at the end of Year 2 which vary considerably from year to year and which, taken over the past three years, are near the average mark.

Much of this unevenness is due to some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning and because a system for tracking pupils' ongoing progress and acting on the information gained is embryonic. Consistent strengths in teaching are to be found in the comfortable relationships staff build with pupils and their gently encouraging manner of them. As a result, pupils feel good about themselves and school. Many say the best thing about school is the teachers. Demonstrations at the beginning of lessons are clear and accurate. They are helped by the good use of interactive whiteboards to make lesson openings engaging. Although teaching and learning are good overall, teaching in the EYFS and in Year 6 stands out. Here, expert subject knowledge leads to probing questions that tests thinking and deepens understanding. In Year 6, for example, pupils had to think hard when using their own mental 'ready reckoners' to plot their way through complex mathematical problems. Elsewhere teaching succeeds in engaging pupils but questions are not as probing and do not always make pupils think hard enough. The lack of an embedded pupil tracking system sometimes makes it difficult for staff to pitch work at the right level. As a result there are times when the work is not matched well enough to pupils' everyday needs.

This shortcoming in systems for academic guidance undermines what is otherwise good quality care and support given to pupils. Consequently, the overall quality of care, support and guidance is satisfactory. This is a caring school. Pupils feel safe and happy. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' safety, although in some instances informal, meet current government guidelines. The school works in close partnership with parents and makes strenuous and successful efforts to involve all groups of parents, including Traveller parents, in the life of school. The school has for example acted as a launch pad for releasing information to help others understand key features of Traveller living. Systems for monitoring attendance are thorough and tailored to the circumstances of the school. Despite this, attendance rates are below average. This is largely because of the lengthy absence of a few pupils. Pupils who have the most complex learning or emotional needs are given sensitive support. Teaching assistants, especially in group work, make a key difference to how well these pupils achieve.

Pupils' personal development is good. As pupils themselves confirm, whether you are from the village, outside the village or part of the Traveller community all are one at school. As one pupil succinctly put it, 'We are all friends here.' Pupils have a good knowledge of the lives and customs of others. This is indicative of their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils have a good understanding of how to live a healthy and active lifestyle. They have a strong voice in the school and help shape decisions about its future. They play a key role in the local community, often through providing social occasions for all the community to attend. Pupils have a good understanding of right from wrong; they behave well and develop many of the

academic and personal qualities needed for the next stage of their education. The good quality of the school's curriculum plays a key role in this. Work on drugs education, for example, helps pupils understand how to stay safe. Enrichment to the curriculum is particularly strong and is a key reason why pupils say they enjoy school so much. A wide range of residential experiences provides good social opportunities for pupils to live together.

This is a well-led school. The key issues in the previous inspection have been successfully dealt with. Leaders at all levels have a good understanding of the differing needs of the school community. Strenuous efforts have been made to ensure all elements of the school community are represented on the governing body, and, at times, this has been achieved. Parents are very happy with the school. As well as offering good support, governors visit the school to see for themselves how well it is doing. The headteacher and the relatively newly appointed deputy headteacher bring complementary skills to the school. The deputy headteacher, for example, has added impetus to the development of management systems. The school development plan captures priorities that are largely pertinent, and actions are well planned with good attention to staff training. Improvements have been made to the way the school monitors its work. This, together with its track record of meeting challenging targets for the end of Year 6, gives the school good capacity to improve. Classroom observations are increasingly regular and are of reasonable quality. However, the school still relies on national data to see how well pupils are doing. Whilst this ensures that its self-evaluation is broadly accurate it is too broad a brush to assess the ongoing achievement in each year group and for differing groups or to establish a culture of target setting through the school.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

This well- led unit ensures that children's education gets off to a flying start. From the first, a close partnership is struck up with parents. Equally close liaison with the pre-school setting ensures a seamless transition to school. Induction arrangements are thorough, paying close attention to children's welfare needs. Children settle happily and feel safe and secure. They behave well and enjoy their time in school because routines are firmly established. Staff in both EYFS classes plan exciting tasks where there is a good balance of teacher led and child initiated activities. Activities, both inside and out, often combine learning from several areas of the curriculum adding interest and purpose to what children do. However, in Reception, where key staff are fairly new to post, confidence in assessing children accurately as a way of plotting future needs is still emerging. Nevertheless, staff observe children closely and question them well to check their understanding and develop their thinking. As a result children learn and develop well so that by the end of Reception they generally reach levels close to those typically found across all areas of learning.

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

- Make sure all pupils achieve as well as they might by making full use of the school's embryonic tracking system to set targets through the school, monitor progress towards them and consistently match work to pupils of differing abilities.
- Improve the quality of teacher's questioning techniques so as to deepen pupils' understanding and thinking.

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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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

<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>	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	3
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

<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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## 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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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



## Annex B

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

24 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Walesby C of E Primary School, Walesby, NG22 9PB

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school when we visited it recently. We would like to share with you what we thought about your school.

You go to a good school. Many of you told us how much you enjoy school. Lots of you told us that your teachers were one of the best things about the school. I could see for myself how happy you are and how well you work and play together. It felt like we were visiting one big happy family. You play your part in this well by trying hard and treating each other well.

The headteacher and staff do a lot to make school life fun. We were particularly impressed with how many clubs there are and visits for you to go on. There are lots of good things happening in your classrooms, especially for the younger children and those of you in Year 6. Here children are asked some very interesting questions, which really make them think. The school is going to make sure that this happens more often in other classes.

I have asked the school to keep a closer eye on how well you progress as this differs from class to class. The school will gather information about how well you are doing from day to day and make sure all of you are given work that is just the right level for you. I have also asked the headteacher and staff to make sure that when they pop into class they look to see how you are doing. You can help in all of this by continuing to do your best.

Once again thank you for your warm welcome and good luck in the future.

John Brennan

Lead inspector