

Spratton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121991
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	322310
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Paul Brooker HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Enid Jarvis
Headteacher	Tony Cox
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2007
School address	School Road Spratton Northampton NN6 8HY
Telephone number	01604 846530
Fax number	01604 847761

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school draws its pupils from the village of Spratton and the surrounding rural area. The number on roll has declined since the last inspection. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national figure.

When the school was last inspected it was judged to require special measures. Since that time, there have been changes in the school's leadership with the appointment of the headteacher and the assistant headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and improving. Since the last inspection, all aspects of the school's provision have been strengthened so that the outcomes for its pupils have improved significantly. This rapid transformation has been ably led by the new headteacher, and has been implemented by a committed and hard working team of staff. The school has good capacity to sustain its recent improvement.

At the time of the last inspection, standards were too low and there was significant underachievement, linked with weaknesses in teaching, the unsatisfactory curriculum, and ineffective academic guidance. The legacy of some weak provision means that older pupils still have gaps in their learning. However, improvements in teaching and the curriculum mean that pupils across all year groups have made accelerated progress during the last year. Standards are broadly in line with those seen nationally and pupils make expected rates of progress as they move through the school. Achievement is satisfactory and improving.

The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils, particularly in developing their basic skills in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, the development of the wider curriculum, including links with subjects other than English, mathematics and science, is still at an early stage. The quality of teaching has improved and is satisfactory, with notable strengths. Children get off to a particularly good start in the Foundation Stage, where learning is purposeful and enjoyable. Elsewhere, sharply focused teaching is beginning to make up for the legacy of uneven progress. Nonetheless, the school recognises that the proportion of good and outstanding teaching needs to rise in order to accelerate further the pupils' progress and raise standards.

The school provides good care, guidance and support for all its pupils. Their personal development and well-being are consequently good. The pupils' positive attitudes are reflected in their good attendance, their high standard of behaviour and their enjoyment of school. The pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the enrichment opportunities that the school provides, many of which contribute positively to their personal development. The school council is starting to play an active role in school decision making. However, there are too few opportunities within and beyond the school community for pupils to be enterprising or to develop their wider responsibilities and contributions.

The school's rapid improvement has been skilfully guided by the headteacher's sharp focus on raising standards, and has been effectively supported by the local authority (LA). Leadership and management, including governance, have been transformed since the last inspection and are good. The headteacher's very good leadership has galvanised staff and driven forward the school's development. School self-evaluation is accurate and rigorous.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Reception class. Learning is fun and children enjoy the wide variety of different activities that are carefully planned during the course of each day. The learning environment is greatly enhanced by the stimulating new outdoor area, which is very well used. Underlying the happy atmosphere is purposeful and well focused planning that meets

the individual needs of the children in the class. Adults are judicious in deciding when to intervene and support individuals and when to let them learn through their own play and social interaction. The result is that, by the end of the Reception year, the children have made good gains across all areas of learning and are well prepared for a more formal approach in Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching across the school in order to raise standards further at Key Stage 2.
- Enrich the curriculum by developing links between subjects so that aspects of excellence and enjoyment are embedded in teaching and learning.
- Strengthen the role that the pupils themselves play in the school and its wider community so that they develop greater responsibility, independence and enterprise.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Small year groups make year on year comparisons unreliable but, taken over time, children start school with ability levels that are typical for their age. The standards that pupils gain in national tests and assessments at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are broadly average, although this has not always been so. The school put in place intensive support to secure higher levels of attainment in the national tests for 11 year olds in 2007, with notable success in English and particularly in writing. These improvements have been consolidated and extended over the last year to ensure that there is no underachievement in any year group or core subject. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

The standards of pupils' work are broadly in line with age related expectations, and sometimes well above the levels expected. Since the start of the academic year, pupils have made satisfactory and often good progress. The school makes very good use of assessment and target setting to steer and accelerate pupils' improvement. Tracking is systematic and rigorous, and the analysis of assessment information is thorough and detailed. The school makes effective use of this analysis to identify pupils that might be falling behind. Intervention strategies are carefully planned, using a good balance of withdrawal and additional in-class support and carefully targeted work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development has strengthened and is good. The school's happy atmosphere and positive ethos contribute to pupils' good social and moral development and their satisfactory spiritual and cultural development. The pupils are well behaved and have positive attitudes to learning. The pupils' good attendance reflects their enjoyment of school. Pupils take great delight in the wide variety of activities that are planned for them, including trips, visitors and themed days, such as the fashion show for the youngest children and the Tudor banquet for Years 3 and 4. There is a good range of extra-curricular enrichment, including music and sport.

Pupils understand the importance of eating healthily and exercising regularly. They feel safe and secure and are confident that adults will resolve their concerns. Pupils are beginning to take more responsibility through the work of the school council, but there are too few opportunities for them to develop their responsibilities more widely, or to develop independence and enterprise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Weaknesses in teaching have been addressed so that pupils make consistent progress as they move through the school. The best teaching is consistently good or outstanding, with lively lessons that are sharply focused to challenge the full range of abilities in the class. Resources, including information and communication technology, are used well to plan stimulating activities. Improvements in teaching are underpinned by high quality marking and careful target setting, so that the pupils themselves are clear how they can improve. Occasionally, when teaching is rather laboured and the pace of learning is pedestrian, a few pupils become rather restless. However, the priorities for improvement are accurately identified by the school's monitoring and evaluation.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has a number of good features that contribute positively to pupils' enjoyment of school and their personal development. Pupils are offered a good range of extra-curricular activities and much has been done to improve provision in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science so that pupils develop sound basic skills. However, the development of links between subjects is at an early stage and the best practice embedded in the core subjects does not always extend across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides pupils with a safe and caring environment in which they are able to thrive, both academically and socially. The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Procedures for child protection, risk assessments and safeguarding pupils are carefully organised and well known to staff. Pupils' progress is closely monitored and academic guidance has become a strong feature of the school. Pupils know their targets, how well they are doing, and what they need to do next to improve. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The rapid and sustained improvements made since the last inspection demonstrate that leadership is good and that the school has capacity to improve further. The headteacher has been rigorous in evaluating the school's performance and in using data to raise standards and improve teaching. He has strengthened aspects of the school that needed sharper focus and

improvement. There are good systems for monitoring the school's performance which involve staff at all levels. Teachers have responded positively to the programme of local authority support and the intensive monitoring, and work collaboratively to share best practice.

Governance has been strengthened and is good. Governors are regular visitors and are knowledgeable about the different areas of the school's work. They are in a strong position to hold the school to account.

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
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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?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	3
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

15 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Spratton Church of England Primary School, Spratton NN6 8HY

Thank you for being so welcoming during my recent inspection, which was the third time that I have visited your school. As always, you were friendly and helpful, and I really enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work.

Your school was put into special measures last year because lots of things needed improving. Over the last 12 months, I have seen how the hard work of all the staff has transformed your school. I have also seen how hard you work, how much better you are doing in lessons and how much more you enjoy what you do both in the classroom and in all your extra-curricular activities.

The teaching is now so much better that you make lots of progress in lessons. I have been particularly impressed with your attitudes and behaviour. You are generally kind and look after one another well. It was good to see that some of you are taking responsibility by working on the school council. Events such as your 'pyjama day' show that you are happy to take responsibility.

- Your teachers, governors and other staff have worked really hard to improve things for you. Standards in your school are rising, but we all know that you can do even better. I have asked your teachers to keep up the good work and to focus on:
 - making more of your lessons excellent, so that the standard of your work improves even further
 - planning better cross-curricular topics that are exciting and interesting, like the Tudor banquet!
 - giving you the chance to be more independent and enterprising, for example in organising events.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by doing your very best.

I have always enjoyed visiting your school and now wish you all every future success.

Yours sincerely

Paul Brooker Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex B

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Paul Brooker
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