

William Law CofE (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110858
Local Authority	City of Peterborough
Inspection number	325242
Inspection dates	2–3 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Brown

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	563
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	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend George Rogers
Headteacher	Mr Philip Williams
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Twelvetree Avenue Werrington Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE4 5DT

Age group	5–11
Inspection dates	2–3 October 2008
Inspection number	325242

Telephone number
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Age group	5-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is significantly larger than average. It is situated in the suburb of Werrington, to the north of Peterborough, but it draws pupils from a very wide area, and nearly half the pupils come from outside its catchment area. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds and there are small numbers of pupils from a wide range of different ethnic backgrounds. However, almost all pupils speak English at home. A small proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/ or disabilities is just below that normally found in most schools. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the September of the year in which they become five years of age. Their attainment when they start in the EYFS is broadly average.

There is onsite childcare provision in the form of a breakfast club and an after school club that is not managed by the governing body. This can cater for a maximum of 44 children.

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. Parents are very supportive of its work. Many wrote glowing comments saying how much they appreciate the 'family atmosphere,' the 'supportive Christian ethos' and the 'many out of school activities which enhance pupils' experiences'. One of the outstanding features of the school is the pupils' personal development. The pupils are polite, well behaved and very caring. Older pupils do a marvellous job in leading the half-termly 'buddy groups'. At these sessions, groups of pupils of all ages meet in friendship groups to work on a range of activities. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the many opportunities for sports and music and are especially enthusiastic about the wide range of clubs, trips and visits that are available to them.

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected. Children in the EYFS settle quickly into the school routines and make good progress with their learning. The results in the end of key stage assessments have risen in all areas and are now above those expected nationally. Teachers and teaching assistants carefully assess, monitor and analyse the pupils' attainment. The information that is gathered is used productively to ensure that the great majority of pupils, whatever their background or starting points make better than expected progress in most aspects of their learning and consequently their achievement is good.

The quality of teaching and learning, which was criticised at the last inspection, has now improved and is good. This is because in most lessons the teachers make the work interesting, and the pupils are fully engaged in the tasks that they are given. Staff morale is high. There are a number of new teachers working alongside the experienced and longer established teachers and teaching assistants. The new teachers are full of praise for the clear structures that underpin the work of the school and welcome the support and guidance they receive from senior staff. The phase teams within the school work very effectively, planning curriculum areas and evaluating progress. The staff have identified that pupils' progress in mathematics is not as consistent as that in English. They acknowledge that work in mathematics is not always matched as accurately to an individual pupil's needs in this subject and that overall success is not as great as in English.

The good quality of leadership and management of the school arises from the high quality of the teamwork that is apparent at all levels. The school's governors are well informed about the working of the school, thanks to extensive reports, their inclusion in the training events and many discussions with the staff. The performance management of staff works particularly well and is carefully linked to targets on pupils' progress. However, the school's overall self-evaluation process is not strategic. There is no proper evaluation of the impact of the changes and improvements or the lessons that can be drawn from these. Nevertheless, given the success in raising standards in most subjects, and the consistently outstanding nature of pupils' personal development, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's good progress in the Foundation Stage shows in their enjoyment of the varied and challenging activities planned for them within a vibrant, purposeful, safe and secure learning environment. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are achieving at a level that is just above that which is expected and therefore their progress is good. They know how to share,

enjoy choosing which activity to do and are confident using tools such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes. They like explaining what they are doing, for example when using a magnifying lens to look at Autumn leaves. Relationships between children and staff are very good and parents are very supportive, with many volunteering to help. Teachers plan work thoroughly, and good day-to-day assessments help to ensure that all children make good progress. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult led experiences, both indoors and outdoors, and resources are used well. Leadership and management of the EYFS is good and their effective use of staff expertise contributes well to the smooth running of the department. There is some variation in practice in the three classes but the EYFS leader is aware of the need to develop greater consistency.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the good practice in English lessons to ensure that all pupils have work matched to their needs in mathematics.
- Sharpen the focus of the school self-evaluation processes to sustain the impact of the improvements that are being made across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

By the time that pupils leave the school, standards have risen to above the national average, with standards being highest in English and science. This represents good progress and achievement, brought about by good teaching. The picture is, however a little more complex. Children get off to a good start in the EYFS and achieve well. National test data shows that over time, standards at the end of Year 2 have not been high enough, but this situation has improved significantly because of improvements in teaching and assessment. This positive picture continues in Years 3 to 6, where teaching continues to be consistently good. The school's accurate, rigorous and challenging assessment and target setting information paints a picture of continually improving standards. There is no significant variation between groups of learners and many pupils exceed their challenging targets. Staff acknowledge the necessity to improve the consistency with which they plan and teach mathematics in order to bring it into line with the good practice and improving standards they have created in English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils really enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is excellent, encouraged by the staff's close monitoring. Behaviour on the playground and in lessons is good. Pupils show an excellent awareness of the need to keep themselves safe, expressing confidence in the high level of care they receive. Pupils said that they know that the adults in school will always help them deal with any problems that may arise. All the adults provide the pupils with excellent role models and relationships across the school are outstanding.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils and parents particularly enjoy the class assemblies, where work is presented and shared. Older pupils take responsibility in the wider running of the school, for instance as register monitors, and acting as friends to new or less confident pupils. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the wider community. They enthusiastically take part in many events, especially sports competitions and musical performances, as well as raising money for local and international charities.

Pupils appreciate the need to stay healthy through sensible eating, but admit that they do not all apply this knowledge to what they choose to eat. They appreciate the good opportunities they have for sport and physical exercise, both in normal lessons and in the large number of extracurricular clubs. Pupils understand and celebrate diverse cultures. They are provided with good opportunities to develop the skills they need for later life, through teamwork and participation in residential trips. The school council is well organised and pupils feel that they have the opportunity to influence decisions. They recently suggested that there needed to be some improvements to the external play area and this has led to some significant changes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Learners make good progress because most lessons are interesting. Pupils like their teachers, behave well and know what they have to do to improve. In the best lessons, all pupils make progress because the activities are varied, challenging and well matched to pupils' abilities and interests and support staff are deployed effectively. Where lessons are less effective, and progress is less apparent as a result, it is because teachers spend too much time explaining what pupils have to do or the tasks set are too hard or too easy to enable pupils to make good progress. The marking of pupils' work is improving, with teachers providing helpful written comments for pupils about what they have done well and what they need to do next. This good practice is being applied with increasing consistency across the school

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the well-planned, well-organised, broad and balanced curriculum that the school provides for them. There are an increasing number of opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Pupils access to information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning is less effective due to insufficient access to computers; 20 classes have to share the one ICT suite. ICT is more effective in Year 2 where there are now more computers sited in the classrooms. School leaders have plans in place to extend this approach. The school works well with secondary schools and makes good use of local venues and visits to further afield which enhance and enrich pupils' learning experiences. There is good provision for those pupils who have special gifts and talents with special activities provided for them. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, voluntarily provided by staff and parents. The provision staff make for music is a strength. Many pupils learn a musical instrument and sing in one of the choirs, with many taking part in performances in the community. Sport too figures strongly at the school, and pupils' success at all levels is celebrated.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount and the school's caring attitude is fully demonstrated in all aspects of its work. Parents agree and praise the high level of care demonstrated by all of the staff. The school carries out the required checks on those who work with children and all staff have received training on child protection. Detailed risk assessments are carried out for activities both on and off the school site. Most pupils feel that rare incidents

of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. They report that initiatives such as the 'Buddy Stop' help make playtimes more enjoyable social occasions, with pupils across the school playing alongside one another during breaks and lunchtime. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good.

The school uses assessment data well to identify pupils who would benefit from additional support to meet any special learning needs and as a result, most make good progress. However, the systems to set individual pupil targets are newly in place and still evolving, and although the systems to track pupil progress are robust, the impact of this work is still limited.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher benefits from strong and effective support from both the senior leadership team and other leaders who are helping to drive forward initiatives that are improving pupil achievement. Performance management and other opportunities for leaders to regularly monitor, teaching and learning, or sample pupils' work are carried out regularly. Governors play an important and influential role in supporting the work of the school. They have a clear understanding of what is happening in the school through the detailed reports they receive, their visits and their participation in training days. However, the analysis of the school's self-evaluation is not effective enough. The staff know what is working well and what is working less well, but they do not yet strategically assess the impact of their work to allow them to determine the most effective next steps.

The school plays a key role within its local community, hosting regular events and encouraging pupils to attend activities across the town. It has good links with a number of partner organisations, which give further support to this work. Pupils' contribution to the national and global community is developing well through their work to improve the environment and regular work for a range of charities.

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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 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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 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

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 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**

6 October 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of William Law C of E (Aided) Primary School, Peterborough PE4 5DT

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited you. I would like to explain what we found when we spent time in your lessons and talked with you and your teachers.

We really enjoyed our time in your school. We were very impressed with how polite and thoughtful you are. We think that the opportunities you have to take part in sports and musical activities are great, and we were pleased to hear how many of you participate. We could see how the staff use these and the visits to places of interest to widen your horizons and to help you make outstanding progress in your personal development. We were also delighted to hear how you enjoy coming to school, and when we checked, we found that your level of attendance is now excellent. Well done, keep up the good work!

You go to a good school. It is clearly working well and a great many of your parents wrote to me to tell me this. A number of things really pleased us. One was the way in which your teachers have been able to raise the standards you achieve, especially in English and science. Others include the way your teachers encourage you to play an active role in making decisions about what is happening at the school. What was especially notable was the way you take responsibility for each other. Well done once again.

We could see that your teachers and teaching assistants work really hard to help you to learn and they have some great ideas to help you. However, we would still like them to work on the way they teach mathematics. We could see that they have some really smart techniques for improving your English, but these are not always used when they teach you mathematics. We also want your headteacher and the staff to think about how they evaluate what is working at the school. They already monitor what is happening really well, but we believe that the next step is to analyse what they know to help them make the best choices about what to do next.

Thank you once again for your warm welcome, and all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Roger Brown

Lead inspector