

Great Creaton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121820
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	327575
Inspection date	1 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Graeme Bassett

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	87
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	Ann Hanson
Headteacher	Richard Camp
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Welford Road Creaton Northampton NN6 8NH
Telephone number	01604 505535
Fax number	01604 505535

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school. It draws most of its pupils from the immediate neighbourhood of surrounding villages and an increasing number of children from Northampton. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. There is one Reception class for the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are three more classes in the school and each contains pupils of more than one year group.

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. Many aspects of the school are excellent. Pupils have many opportunities to explore beyond the usual range of experiences evident in most primary schools. As a result, this is an exciting environment where pupils achieve well, whilst thoroughly enjoying their lessons and activities. As you enter the school, it is immediately evident that the staff endeavour to provide an exceptionally wide range of experiences for each child. The enthusiasm and exceptionally good organisation skills of the headteacher encourage a dedicated commitment to ensuring that all pupils are highly valued within this family atmosphere. One parent summed up the views of most parents when she reported, 'My child bounces into school every day to meet her friends and bounces out at the end of the day to talk about the exciting things she has done.'

The overall good leadership and management ensure that the school continually evaluates how it can improve further. The headteacher, supported ably by the senior leadership team and the governing body, provides outstanding leadership and management. He demonstrates an exceptional vision for the future development of the school and provides a very clear direction to the developments. Many important curriculum developments are beginning to make a big impact and teaching and learning are developing extremely well. As a result, the school has improved effectively in many areas since the last inspection and the capacity to make improvements in the future is good.

Children enter the Reception class with above the expected levels of skills and knowledge but with some weaker aspects in their writing skills. However, as a result of the good provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage, they achieve well. Throughout the rest of the school, the good and often excellent teaching, especially in the older age classes, enables pupils to continue to make good progress so that by the end of Year 6 they currently attain high standards in English and science, and well above average standards in mathematics. Nevertheless, some teachers do not make enough use of the assessment records and the comments they make when marking pupils' work to set targets and to help pupils understand what they need to learn next.

With pupils demonstrating consistently good achievements and high standards in the basic skills, the school is now enthusiastically developing an excellent curriculum. Currently, there are strong links between subjects. Imaginative teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy through themes and topics ensure that pupils learn in a relevant and meaningful way. The excellent pastoral care fosters the happy way that all pupils get on well together. Consequently, their personal development and well-being are excellent. The care with which pupils look after the school grounds, their class gardens and school animals is excellent. They have an outstanding understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, and have gained a Healthy School award and an Activemark. The school's links with parents and the community cohesion established with the local village and other nearby schools are outstanding. Excellent links are also forged with the global community, particularly through the Comenius Project.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills on entry above expected levels. The provision for these children continues to be good, meeting their needs well, even though there have been recent staff

changes. There are good procedures to introduce children to school, resulting in them settling quickly to routines. Nearly all achieve well throughout their Reception Year and their skills by the start of Year 1 are higher than average in all areas of learning, with the exception of writing, where they are slightly lower than expectations.

Teaching is good. There is a good balance between teacher-directed tasks and opportunities for children to plan and carry out investigations of their own choice both indoors and outside. The regular assessments record accurately how children respond to different activities and what they learn. However, some tasks still focus too much upon activities as planning does not identify precisely enough what children are to learn. There are good arrangements for children's welfare and relationships between school and home are very good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that marking and other assessment information are used more precisely to identify and plan what each pupil needs to learn next and to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with above average level of skills and they continue to make good progress, especially in their literacy skills. As a result, last year the school's performance at the end of Year 2 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Currently, the pupils are achieving well and standards overall continue to be above average, even though some of the more able pupils are not yet reaching the higher Level 3 expected of them in writing. In the national tests in Year 6 in 2008, the pupils' achievement was good and standards were well above the national average overall. This matches the long-term trend that shows standards to have been above average for several years. Currently, achievement in Year 6 is good and standards are high in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher National Curriculum Level 5 in mathematics is broadly average and in English and science it is above average. Pupils' skills in art and information and communication technology (ICT) are above expected levels for their ages. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding, with most reaching the expected levels for their ages.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils really enjoy coming to school. There is a whole-school feeling of enjoyment and most pupils are industrious, demonstrating a very positive approach to their learning. Pupils readily demonstrate excellent caring attitudes towards each other. The pupils' behaviour is excellent overall but one or two pupils find it difficult to sustain this high level and sometimes stray. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils' multicultural awareness is enhanced successfully by contacts with schools in India and Germany. Attendance is good but some parents still take holidays during school time and this reduces overall attendance rates. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility. They maintain the school's gardens and grounds extremely well and have gained an Eco Schools Green Flag. Pupils feel safe in school and have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe. Pupils' contributions to the school and local communities are excellent and the school council is an effective pupils' voice. Very good links with local businesses and the management of the school's own egg producing business contribute exceptionally well towards the pupils' excellent future economic well-being. Pupils

are well spoken and can express themselves very clearly, but many do not present their written work neatly enough.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The teaching and learning are good overall and often outstanding, particularly in the older classes, where pupils' achievements accelerate rapidly and standards improve markedly. For example, this excellence was seen in a literacy lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils as they prepared a play script. They made exceptional use of ICT, as they recorded their role-play scenes using four video cameras and a four-screen editing facility on a laptop. This aided the development of their speaking and listening skills before they began writing. Pupils in a Year 2 mathematics lesson solved problems about number enthusiastically. However, some of these tasks focused more upon doing an activity than developing their skills and understanding.

Some pupils are encouraged to assess their own work but these routines are not yet commonplace and often teachers do not yet give pupils sufficient guidance to show what they need to do next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. Themes that embrace the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects are imaginative. The use of ICT to enhance and develop pupils' writing and numerical skills is also very good. Practical activities for the full age range across the school are also developing extremely well with the involvement of the local community in promoting additional craft and home skills. This is a strength of the curriculum, resulting in an extension of pupils' interests in the environment and hobbies. For example, pupils regularly pursue camping, fashion design, cookery and sweet-making interests, under the guidance of staff and volunteer helpers from the community. The curriculum is very effectively extended through the learning of German, which is also enhanced by the exchange visits with pupils from Germany. There is an extensive range of out-of-school activities which are very well supported by pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel valued. With the many activities arranged throughout the age range, the school ensures that equal opportunities are comprehensively fulfilled and that all pupils are included in all that the school does, regardless of their ability or background. The school works extremely effectively with outside agencies to support whole families as well as pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. At the time of the inspection the school ensures that all reasonable measures are taken to ensure pupils' safety and protection. Transition to secondary school and from the local pre-school groups is smooth and well prepared. The quality of the long-term academic guidance, including the newly introduced tracking records, is excellent. However, the school does not yet use these sufficiently well to enable pupils to know what they need to do to improve. The support and guidance given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is exceptionally good, ensuring they make outstanding progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

All levels of leadership and management, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, are good. Staff morale is high and together with the governing body, everyone works with enthusiasm for the benefit of all pupils. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements extremely well. The school's budget is managed prudently and is used very effectively to improve resources and building. There are robust systems for analysis of the school's self-evaluation and monitoring its work, resulting in a shared understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. This identifies the correct priorities and lists accurate judgements and actions for all areas of the school's work. However, the subject leaders are not able to visit lessons enough to allow them to evaluate the direction and quality of guidance and support given to pupils to help them to know what they need to learn next. Community cohesion is outstanding and the school strives to build links with the local community through art and craft as well as links with other schools and local societies. The links with other schools and societies abroad are excellent, especially because of the project fostering strong connections with children in Germany, Brazil and India.

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?	1
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	1
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	1

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which 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	1

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?	1
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	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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**

5 May 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Great Creaton Primary School, Northampton N6 8NH

Thank you for helping us when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your school. We found that your school provides you with a good education. You do some very exciting things and the ways you care for the school animals and the gardens are exceptional. There is a good team spirit in your school and it is a happy place. Well done!

- These are the things that are particularly good in your school.
- The leadership and management of your school are good. Your headteacher provides outstanding leadership and management and the teachers and other staff in your school work well as a team to support your headteacher.
- Throughout the school, staff have a very good understanding of how to make your work interesting and raise the standards of your work.
- The teaching is good and sometimes outstanding, especially when teachers involve you in themes and topics use ICT to develop your writing and mathematics.
- Your teachers have high expectations for you and give you good encouragement to do even better. As a result, your work is above average throughout the school and well above average in English and science by the end of Year 6. You all make good progress.
- The Reception class is managed well to give the youngest children a good quality of education that helps them to make good progress.
- You are all developing exceptional attitudes towards your work and towards each other. You have an outstanding understanding about how to remain healthy and how to keep safe. You are very polite and the behaviour of most of you is excellent.
- Staff look after and care for you excellently.
- There are still some ways in which your school could be better. We have asked your headteacher and governors to:
 - ensure that the teachers' marking and assessment records, that plot your progress, are used more precisely to identify and plan what each one of you needs to learn next and to help you understand what you need to do to improve your work.

Once again, thank you for your help. You can help by asking your teachers how you can make your work better.

Yours faithfully

Graeme Bassett

Lead inspector