

Flore Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121970
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	327609
Inspection date	12 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Canham

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	107
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	Alex Duncan
Headteacher	J Stoppani
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Avenue Flore Northampton NN7 4LZ

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	12 March 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all the pupils at this small school are from families of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage age are taught in a single Reception class.

All members of the teaching staff were appointed during 2008, including the deputy headteacher.

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. The high quality displays provide an insight into several of the school's outstanding features, particularly the richness of the curriculum. The wide range of learning experiences successfully develop skills in literacy and numeracy, nurtures pupils' performance skills in music and drama, and promotes creativity and quality in artwork that are recognised nationally. The celebration of achievement shows the value the school places on each pupil, whatever their ability.

The success of the headteacher's leadership is valued by parents, who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The headteacher has rapidly inspired cohesiveness into the new staff team and together they have focused successfully on raising standards. The school's accurate self-evaluation is based on rigorous assessment and continuous review. Well-informed governors are highly supportive of the school and share in the school's vision and expectations. Staff are focused on improvements in pupils' achievement, as well as ensuring the highest possible quality of care for its pupils. The fostering of respect and care is at the core of the school's happy and welcoming environment. Consequently, pupils have outstanding attitudes to school and behaviour is exemplary. Pupils work exceptionally well in groups and independently. These strong features have a positive influence on pupils' progress and their excellent personal development and well-being. Year 6 pupils this year are on track to reach above average standards in English and mathematics. Children start in the Reception class with a range of knowledge and skills that is broadly typical for their age, although there are wide variations from year to year. They make good progress, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, although the school recognises there is scope for some children to be given opportunities to make their own choices earlier in the year. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the school has been more successful in consistently promoting achievement in English than it has in mathematics and science. However, pupils are currently on course to meet higher and challenging targets. The school's focus on weaknesses in problem solving in mathematics and drawing conclusions from science investigations has already led to substantial improvements. Pupils' good progress reflects the positive picture of teaching that successfully accommodates the wide range of abilities in individual classes. However, on occasion, not enough is asked of more able pupils. Tailored support ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with their peers.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that children's needs are identified early in Reception and information is used well to guide planning. Close monitoring means that adults have a clear picture of each child's stage of learning and that activities build positively on what they already know and can do. As a result, children settle quickly and are eager to learn in a supportive and caring learning environment.

Children make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning, reaching above average standards by the end of the Reception year. The good start to their learning reflects the lively and stimulating teaching, supported by a wide range of well-planned activities. The school provides numerous opportunities for children to play together, work cooperatively within small groups and become aware of safety issues. Consequently, children make particularly rapid progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Behaviour and relationships are

real strengths. Children listen carefully and talk confidently to adults and to each other because the school has helped them to develop strong and trusting relationships. The close relationships with parents are illustrated with a comment from a parent who wrote: 'The communication between the school and myself is excellent.'

Children have a good understanding of right and wrong and enjoy the security of being in a fair and supportive environment. As a result, they readily respond to the expectations set for them and follow the guidance they are given. When given the opportunity, children make decisions about their own learning, although the school recognises the need to give children, particularly the more able, earlier opportunities to make choices and take control of their own learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that planning for the Early Years Foundation Stage provides opportunities for children, particularly the more able, to make choices, explore ideas and share their thoughts earlier in the school year.
- Ensure that teaching consistently challenges the more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. From starting in the Reception class with skills that are broadly typical for their age, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. This picture represents good achievement.

Following a dip in standards in 2007, the school's focused work on identified weaknesses led to improvements in 2008, when the school exceeded its targets in English and mathematics. This momentum has been sustained and pupils in Year 6 are on course to meet their expected targets, which include a lifting of expectations in all subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils say that they like coming to school because they feel safe and there are 'loads of interesting things to do'. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in the above average attendance. Pupils' outstanding moral and social development is clearly demonstrated in their excellent behaviour. Respect and consideration, which are at the core of the school's values, are reflected in the caring approach taken by pupils, who get on extremely well with each other. Pupils embrace opportunities for practical activities in, for example, art, music and sport. Take-up of other out-of-school activities is also very good and pupils enjoy participating in additional activities, including residential trips. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy and are very clear about what constitutes a healthy diet. Their attitudes and efforts are recognised by the Healthy School award and Activemark award for sport.

Pupils make a very valuable contribution to the school through the school council, which provides good opportunities to represent the views of others and help the school make decisions regarding, for example, improvements to play equipment and lunchtime arrangements. Pupils also make significant contributions to the wider community through raising funds for local,

national and international charities. By the end of Year 6, pupils are self-assured young people, confident and well equipped to face future challenges.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

One of the strengths of teaching is the attention that is given to individual pupils, whatever their needs or abilities. This feature is underpinned by the collaborative approach taken by teachers and their assistants, who work effectively within teams and provide well-focused support. Learning is also promoted by comprehensive planning and effective use of precise learning targets which successfully extend pupils' knowledge and skills and involve them in their learning. However, on occasion, introductions are too long and more able pupils are not stretched enough early in lessons. Teachers use marking extremely effectively to provide pointers for improvement. In lessons, pupils confidently explain what they are learning and how they are going to improve. Pupils work very well together in pairs and groups and willingly share their findings.

Information and communication technology, including interactive whiteboards, is used regularly and very effectively to engage pupils and give them a broad range of interesting learning opportunities. Pupils also benefit significantly from working independently from the teacher and carrying out their research on the computer.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum takes very good account of the wide ability range and mixed-age classes. It provides an exceptionally good balance between basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and the development of pupils' performance and creative skills in subjects such as physical education, music and art. One parent typically commented: 'The school provides a breadth of education that encompasses music and the arts.' The school's achievement in art has been recognised in its award for Artsmark gold and by the National Gallery. The teaching of French and other languages adds a further dimension. The very good range of out-of-school activities, including residential trips, is much enjoyed by pupils. The school makes very effective use of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' experiences and extend their learning.

The school recognised the need to raise achievement and lift standards in aspects of mathematics and scientific skills. With the help of revised curricular planning, this is now happening. For example, to overcome weaknesses in science, the school is giving pupils more first-hand experiences through practical work. Effective links between subjects successfully reinforce pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Academic guidance and pastoral care are both outstanding. One parent expressed a typical view in the comment: 'My daughter has settled well into school life because she is so well cared for and stimulated educationally, emotionally and physically.' A caring ethos underpins much of the school's work and gives rise to extremely strong foundations on which excellent relationships are built between pupils and staff, and amongst pupils. Parents are highly

supportive of the school and appreciate the support given when they have concerns. Every step is taken to ensure pupils feel valued and respected as individuals. At the time of the inspection, arrangements to safeguard and protect pupils were firmly established.

Comprehensive assessment procedures provide the school with detailed information on each pupil's stage of learning. As a result, staff know the pupils extremely well and pupils understand what level they are working at and how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, with close support from governors, has very effectively managed the recent and extensive changes to staffing. With the help of new staff, she has focused successfully on the areas for improvement. Some key leaders are new and their roles are not yet fully developed, although they are beginning to play an influential role in raising standards.

The school's self-evaluation is reliably based on observations of teaching and learning and a close scrutiny of the school's work. Strategic planning is good and, as a result, the school is well placed to bring about further improvement. Well-informed governors are closely involved in all aspects of the school's work and have a thorough understanding of its performance. Governors bring a wide range of knowledge and expertise to their role in holding the school to account for the standards achieved by pupils. The school has very good links with parents, who are almost unanimous in their praise for the school.

Community cohesion is good. With the school located at the heart of the village, the needs of the community are understood well and met by providing social events, such as May Day celebrations, and other activities that draw together the local community. The school is actively engaged in promoting links with a school nearby which has a diversity of ethnic and faith backgrounds, and with agencies in developing countries, including Ethiopia.

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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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
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	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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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**

12 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Flore Church of England Primary School, Northampton, NN7 4LZ

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school and thank you for making us feel so welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found out about your school. Importantly, yours is a good school, where staff and governors are working hard to make it even better. We were impressed by your excellent manners and politeness and delighted to find that you like your school so much. The large majority of your parents are happy with the school too.

Here are some important things about your school.

- You make good progress and enjoy lessons, because they are interesting.
- You talk proudly about your achievements and range of after-school activities.
- You feel very safe and secure in school.
- Staff and governors have made lots of improvements that have helped you to make good progress.
- All staff take exceptionally good care of you, and make sure that you know what to do to keep safe.
- You have an extremely good understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and healthy eating.

This is what your school has been asked to do to make things even better.

- Help those of you in the Reception class to make choices and try out your ideas earlier than you do at present.
- Make sure that teaching always challenges those of you who learn quickly.

We wish each one of you every success in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Paul Canham Lead inspector