

Old Clee Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131256
Local Authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	328572
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	584
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	Mr Rob Cullun
Headteacher	Mr Steve Gallaway
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Colin Avenue Grimsby DN32 8EN
Telephone number	01472 691887
Fax number	01472 200606

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school serves a suburban area. It opened in 2007 as a result of the amalgamation of an infant school with a junior school. Almost all pupils are of White British background. Fewer pupils than average have statements of special educational needs, but a higher proportion than usual have learning difficulties, mostly moderate learning difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery and three Reception classes. The school has won several awards for its provision including Silver Artsmark and the Healthy School Award. Extended services are provided in a children's centre on the site, run by other providers, and are inspected separately by Ofsted.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Old Clee Primary is a good school because the headteacher creates a caring ethos in which staff provide effective support for pupils' learning and their personal development. The attractive and spacious facilities, expanded as a result of the amalgamation, form an effective backdrop to the vibrant curriculum which is adjusted to meet pupils' needs and inspire learning. Though under major re-development, the curriculum is peppered with good spiritual and cultural opportunities, such as the lively African drumming workshop which took place during the inspection.

Standards are average, representing good achievement by pupils throughout the school from the start of the Nursery to the end of Year 6, and preparing them well for their futures. Inspection evidence shows no significant difference now in the relative performance of any group. This is because help from outside agencies for pupils with additional learning needs has assisted the school to improve provision for this group and accelerate their progress over the past year. Strategies to improve boys' performance, which was lagging behind, are also having a positive impact. The main reason for pupils' good progress, besides the lively and responsive curriculum, is good teaching. Usually, lessons contain plenty of tasks to spark curiosity so that pupils can learn for themselves. Teaching assistants are deployed very well, particularly in supporting those pupils who need extra help with their learning. However, some lessons are less effective. In these, little variation in task is offered to cater for different abilities. Sometimes, teachers' written feedback is too cursory to help pupils identify what they need to do to improve. Good relationships mean that pupils are well motivated in lessons and generally eager to learn.

Pupils develop good personal skills. They say they feel safe and can approach their teachers, or their trained peer mediators, with any problem they may encounter. They talk enthusiastically about the school's Healthy School Award, and its impact on their understanding of the need to live healthy lifestyles. They enthuse about their extensive work in the local community. Parents describe how much their children grow in confidence and how well they behave, and their good progress in basic skills, which they put down to 'an excellent support team', and 'caring and dedicated staff'.

Good levels of care, guidance and support, provided to pupils of all abilities, underpin their well developed personal skills. A good mechanism has been put in place to measure and plan for each pupil's progress, but the use of this information varies between classes. This means that sharing precise targets with pupils, for their next steps in learning, is not embedded. This shortcoming has been correctly identified as a point for development by the school's monitoring activity over the past year. In this well run school, the headteacher has put in place many good initiatives for improvement. With the support of his effective team, much has been accomplished in the school's two years of existence. Shared vision has led to accurate self-evaluation. Community cohesion is given good attention and local and global links are good. Governors are supportive but their understanding of the breadth of their role, especially as critical friend, is not fully developed. What is very evident is the emerging commitment to the school's success from the entire school community. This, and the positive impact already evident from some of the good initiatives underway, demonstrates good capacity to improve and develop further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter Nursery with skills which are below age-related expectations, particularly in their personal, social and emotional, communication and language skills. They make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals and this year they have reached the levels expected of five-year-olds. This is an improvement on previous years. Children behave very well and respond positively to adult direction and requests, so they are quickly learning to keep themselves safe and healthy. The good relationships established between adults and children support their developing self-esteem and confidence well. The varied range of well planned adult-led and self-chosen activities enable children to learn how to work together and make independent choices. Staff have introduced strategies to support children's language development. This is proving beneficial and children show confidence as they chat with one another, ask questions and volunteer information. The outdoor area is accessed most days and children clearly enjoy playing in the sand, water and manoeuvring wheeled toys around the area. Opportunities for children to explore and investigate and initiate their own designs and ideas are less well planned for, both indoors and outside.

Children's welfare is promoted well. Policies, procedures and the necessary documentation are in place and underpin effective practice. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed so that constant checking of children's progress accurately highlights how each can be helped to learn and develop further.

What the school should do to improve further

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, help children learn and develop by providing regular opportunities, indoors and out, for them to design and make things, to initiate their own ideas, and to explore and experiment.
- Accelerate progress in lessons by providing tasks that are matched to individual needs and by improving academic guidance so that pupils know how to improve and reach the next level in their learning.
- Develop the role of governors further to ensure they have a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses so that they can perform their role as critical friend more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From starting points below expectations in the Nursery and at each key stage, standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 6 are average. Boys and girls now achieve well throughout their time at Old Clee. The pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similarly good progress, having improved over the past year because support is now more intensive and skilled. Boys' standards had not been as high as they should be. Inspection evidence shows the positive impact of the strategies to engage boys' interest, such as the enhanced vibrancy in the curriculum. In the 2009 Year 6 teacher assessments, there is no significant difference between boys' and girls' attainment.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school. Relationships are good and pupils behave well. They enjoy the opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example, as school councillors. They feel they are consulted and they can make a contribution to how the school runs. They say their lessons are fun, and they like the clubs on offer, and the trips and other experiences provided for them. They are proud of their Healthy School Award, which they feel has taught them how to lead healthy lifestyles. They feel safe at school because adults respect them and are always concerned for their welfare. Pupils develop good skills for later life, for example, through the emphasis in the curriculum on 'learning how to learn'. They understand the need to contribute to the community and recently planned an evening of entertainment for a local group who are mostly housebound. They make good progress in basic skills, preparing them well for the world of work. Attendance is average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all good. 'It was brilliant', was the unanimous feedback from the pupils about a day of drumming workshops through which pupils' cultural and spiritual awareness was enhanced. They learn much about their own and global cultural heritage and about different faiths, but their broader understanding of life in multicultural Britain is more limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are conducted at a lively pace so that, in the main, the pupils get a lot done. Teachers know their pupils well and usually plan varied activities which help to keep them on their toes. They succeed in making learning interesting and fun, which greatly contributes to pupils' enthusiasm for school. In lessons, the large majority of pupils learn well because they are eager to volunteer answers to the incisive questions that the teachers pose. Teachers make effective use of their teaching assistants, especially in supporting the pupils with learning difficulties. Although teachers' expectations are generally high, just occasionally they set the whole class essentially similar work to do with too few separate tasks more appropriate for pupils' differing needs. This can mean that work is not as precisely matched to each pupil's level of ability as it could be. Marking is regular and supportive, but sometimes does not provide enough information for pupils as to how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has a vibrancy that ensures pupils enjoy their education and develop personally as well as academically. School awards, such as the Silver Artsmark, underpin the good aesthetic and creative elements of the curriculum. School leaders have made adjustments to the curriculum as a successful strategy to increase its appeal for boys, and plans are currently underway to link subjects together to make learning more meaningful. Visits and visitors, and participation in activities run by a children's centre on site, enhance learning further. The school's commitment to teaching pupils how to think and learn, so that they can take an active role in their own learning and personal development, prepares them well for the next stage of their education and later life. For instance, in a Year 6 history lesson, pupils took independent notes during a presentation about life in ancient Greece. Pupils' preparation for their future lives is further supported by the effective personal, social and health education programme.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. The policies are implemented well and staff receive relevant training. Staff are enthusiastic and committed to pupils' well-being, enjoyment and achievement. Support for pupils with learning needs has sharpened this year. It is based on effective links with external agencies, which have contributed to the good rates of progress now recorded for this group. Parents praise the good levels of care and emotional support their children receive. Academic guidance is a developing initiative and a good system is emerging to measure and track progress and standards. Use of the data to match resources to individual needs and to set learning targets, shared with pupils, is at an earlier stage. This means that in some classes, pupils do not have a clear enough view of what they need to do to progress to the next level in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

In the two years since the school opened, a well led community is emerging that is focused on raising standards; this underpins the school's good capacity to improve. Good leadership and clear direction from the experienced headteacher, supported by an effective team, ensure that managers throughout the school are working together to raise standards. School targets are challenging and are used well by leaders and managers to set clear plans for improvement, focused on successful strategies that deal quickly with any pockets of relatively weak performance. Self-evaluation is accurate. Management makes accurate judgements about the quality of lessons they observe and encourage good practice across the school which is leading to steadily improving results and good progress. The monitoring of subjects is less well developed although senior managers are mindful of this and have clear plans for future improvement. All groups of learners have equal opportunities to participate in activities, and benefit from the good range of indoor and outdoor resources. The school promotes community cohesion well. A wide range of activities is planned through links with the local community and abroad. This enables pupils to be considerate of others and value diversity, although the school acknowledges that opportunities for interaction between pupils from different backgrounds are limited. The extended school provision and children's centre on site facilitate the strengthening links with the local community. Governance is satisfactory. Governors understand their responsibilities and are developing their skills in holding the school to account.

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	NA
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	3
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?	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

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	3
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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Old Clee Primary School, North East Lincolnshire, DN32 8EN

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We really enjoyed our time at your school, and we could see that you greatly enjoy your time there too.

Your school is a good school where you make good progress from the start of the Nursery to the end of Year 6. You reach standards that are about the same as other children of your age in the rest of the country. This is because you benefit from good teaching and a curriculum that is made interesting and appealing, particularly in the way it includes some extra things to make school life exciting. Wasn't the African drumming wonderful? Year 4 pupils sounded as though they had been practising for years!

The headteacher and staff are good at their jobs. Everyone in the school benefits from the good care and support they provide. The governors think a lot about the school. We have asked them to make sure they know as much as they can about the school so they can help the headteacher a bit more.

We noticed how very well you all get on together and how well behaved you all are. We have asked your teachers to make sure that the youngest children are given the chance to be a bit more adventurous in their activities, for instance, by designing and making things. For all of you, we have asked that activities are arranged that are just right to stretch you and make you think. That will help you make even faster progress. Teachers often give you helpful feedback on your work through their marking but they do not always share targets with you to help you know what to do to reach the next stage in your learning. We have asked them to do this a bit more.

You can help by always making sure that you know what to do, and do your very best to follow their advice.

Thank you again for being so helpful to us on our visit, and best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Ruth McFarlane

Lead inspector