

Great Staughton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110678
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	337545
Inspection dates	27–28 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Martyn Groucutt

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Suzi Head
Headteacher	Mr Peter Allen (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed all five classes, seeing seven teachers in total. Inspectors also observed the school's work and looked at documentation that included pupils' written work, curriculum planning and minutes of the governing body meetings. Published policies and procedures were scrutinised, including those for the safeguarding of pupils. Meetings and discussions were held with senior governors, school leaders (including the recently appointed headteacher), the local authority's link inspector and pupils. A total of 47 parental questionnaires were analysed, together with a further 62 from pupils and 16 from school staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at:

- reasons for the decline in attainment since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2;
- the quality of teaching and the impact of local authority support in bringing about improvement
- the effectiveness of assessment and tracking systems to monitor the progress of every pupil.

Information about the school

This is a small rural primary school. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The numbers from minority ethnic groups and those not speaking English as their home language are very small. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national figure. Following the resignation of the previous headteacher, there is currently an acting headteacher. The governing body has appointed a successor who is spending one day a week in school prior to taking up her post full time in September. During the current school year the school has received additional support from the local authority and a consultant headteacher from a nearby primary school.

The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark and also has Healthy Schools and International School status. There is separate child care provision on the site that is not operated by the governing body. This is inspected and reported upon separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school now demonstrating good improvement following turbulent times since its last inspection. That said, the Early Years Foundation Stage has consistently demonstrated good practice and effective leadership despite having inadequate outdoor accommodation. In the main school there had been decline in attainment in the period up to July 2009, at which point the local authority put the school in its highest category of schools requiring additional support. This support for the school has been very effective, particularly the review of teaching and learning. Results have been immediate and positive, leading to a marked improvement in attainment in each year group and especially in Key Stage 2 where the decline had been most marked. The school is starting to maintain data that enables it to track the progress of pupils and create effective targets. This shows that attainment by Year 6 is above national averages in all areas except writing, where there is a focus for improvement. Progress is satisfactory and improving rapidly as the school year has progressed.

Teaching is satisfactory. Within the school there is good practice, some with outstanding features. All teachers are starting to use assessment more effectively to better understand the progress made by their pupils. However, there is a lack of consistency in practice and in the nature of target setting and feedback which enables pupils to know their targets and what they have to do to achieve them. There has been good professional progress during the year, but more remains to be done. Effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to make progress in line with other pupils.

Pupils enjoy coming to the school and their attendance is above average; their behaviour is good, even if some get distracted at times when lessons lack challenge. Parents' and carers' questionnaires reflect a level of disquiet about the school's leadership and the progress made by their children; this mirrors the concerns expressed by the local authority, but there is considerable support for the school itself and a belief that the changes made already will maintain improvements.

Leadership has gone through difficult times, but the dynamic leadership provided by the new Chair of the Governing Body and the effectiveness of the acting headteacher, supported by the recently appointed headteacher, have been key in enabling the school to benefit from the support it is receiving. Procedures to enable more effective monitoring to support strategic planning for sustained improvement are now being implemented, but are not yet embedded in good practice. Much has been achieved during the year and the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching by:
 - embedding assessment practice that ensures consistency and accuracy
 - improving the understanding of assessment so that teachers plan accurately for identifying next steps for pupils
 - selecting, sharing and monitoring challenging targets for all pupils
 - using effective marking and feedback to pupils.
- Develop leadership and management at all levels to ensure that:
 - all areas of the school's work, especially pupil achievement, is monitored carefully to provide an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness
 - monitoring and evaluation of the school's work becomes central to school strategic planning for improvement.
- Develop and implement robust procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and its input on learning, and use the information to identify what needs to be done to continue the improvement in pupils' achievement, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by developing the outdoor area.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enter Reception with skills and experiences generally below those expected for their age. They make good progress and enter Year 1 with standards that are broadly average. At the time of the last inspection pupils at the end of Year 6 demonstrated above average attainment, but there has been a subsequent decline and the 2009 results were below the national averages. The school has compelling evidence that this decline has been reversed: current Year 6 attainment is now above average in all areas except writing. The extent to which pupils are able to learn and to practice skills is satisfactory, with no differences between boys and girls, and their behaviour generally good, except when there is insufficient challenge in a lesson.

Achievement is satisfactory. Progress is now being regularly measured by teachers and targets set for pupils because better tracking and monitoring systems have been introduced. This enables teachers to know the progress made by pupils and how well they are achieving. However, this practice is not yet consistent and support continues to be in place to develop a uniformly effective approach. Improvement in the way the data is used also means that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to make progress at the same rate as their peers. The best teaching supports excellent progress, such as a Year 5/6 project in information and communication technology (ICT) where pupils demonstrated a range of skills in working together in small groups to

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create a 'virtual tour' of the school for its website. Such teaching motivates and inspires pupils, so supporting improving achievement.

Pupils feel safe and say there is no bullying, with their small school creating a family atmosphere. Healthy lifestyles are adopted in a variety of ways, sometimes supported by partnerships such as with the local secondary school to promote sporting activities and with a Royal Horticultural Society gardener to promote the development of the school garden for vegetable growing. This not only supports the wider curriculum but also strengthens pupils' links with the community, which are good.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has some good features, exemplified by the 'caring and sharing' approach of many pupils. There are links with a school in Mexico, but pupils have a limited understanding and experience of communities beyond their own in the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Pupils' improved achievement is the result of improvements in teaching and in the use of assessment. A notable development has been in the use of data by teachers so that

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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they better understand the progress being made by individual pupils and can set challenging targets that maximise potential. Some teachers have made greater progress in developing assessment practice, which means they understand pupils' next steps in learning better than others. It also means that some pupils have a clearer understanding than others of their targets and how to achieve them. The best teaching uses a range of styles, including effective use of ICT and the interactive boards found in each classroom. Sometimes, however, the pace of lessons is too slow and because the needs of each individual are not fully taken into account, the work lacks challenge. There are no endemic weaknesses in teaching and all was at least satisfactory. This means that pupils are making progress broadly in line with their capabilities. Where teaching is most effective, there is a stronger challenge to the more able which enables them to maximise their talents.

The focus of the curriculum is on improving basic skills of literacy and numeracy, part of the current strategy for school improvement. It is adequately matched to pupils' needs and interests. There are opportunities for cross-curricular and thematic learning such as in the popular half-termly 'Creative Weeks', the most recent of which focused on Germany. However, the development of a wider thematic curriculum remains at an early stage. Partnerships are used to support the curriculum, including opportunities for enrichment in clubs and activities. Links with the local village community are strong, reflected in the fact that the church organist gives his time to play in school assemblies. Care, guidance and support are generally effective in supporting the needs of pupils, including those who might be seen as vulnerable. Procedures for child protection are effective and all staff have received appropriate training. In the past, because of the limited information that teachers had on the progress of pupils, the element of support was sometimes limited. The improvement in this area has seen an increase in the support and challenge given to pupils, but these developments are recent and depend on the extent to which a teacher is comfortable in using the available data.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

There have been significant changes in leadership and management during the school year. The new Chair of the Governing Body and the acting headteacher have been proactive in working with the local authority and a consultant headteacher who, in turn, have been instrumental in providing very good support in bringing about change and

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improvement. There are now clear plans for addressing identified areas of weakness, but some have not yet been fully implemented. One example is the need to develop procedures for the effective monitoring of teaching and its impact on achievement. The process of developing strategic planning and involving teachers and parents and carers in partnerships to promote learning is developing, but not fully in place. There is already a greater commitment to using the proven skills of the Early Years and the English and mathematics coordinators in a broader style of management that enables them to use their expertise to develop best practice. Some good local partnerships are also strengthening the overall provision and sustaining the place of the school at the heart of village life.

Since the governing body received training in the analysis of school data, governors are able to challenge the leadership far more effectively and are better equipped to carry out their curriculum support roles. The governing body is aware of its statutory responsibilities, such as those for promoting community cohesion. All requirements for the safeguarding of pupils were in place at the time of the inspection. The better use of data means that equal opportunities for all pupils can now be demonstrated. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in all the areas of learning and develop good personal qualities. They play well on their own, thoroughly enjoy their learning and grow in confidence. Their behaviour is excellent and they keep themselves and others safe.

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Observation and assessment of each child is maintained effectively, and children are encouraged to become young learners. However, the quality of outdoor learning is currently inadequate because the provision lacks a covered area so that children cannot go outside when it is raining and there is no access to a grassed area. The leader is very experienced and has a wider role in Early Years provision across the county. She uses her experience to very good effect so that the resources that are available are used well and focused on promoting the welfare and achievement of the children. This is at the heart of why they make such good progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

While there are a high number of positive responses to most areas covered in the questionnaire, there is significant disquiet about several areas relating to the school's leadership and management. In many cases, parents and carers commented that recent changes have been made and speak in positive terms about improvements. There is a general optimism about the future under the new school leadership.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Staughton Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 113 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	57	20	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	72	12	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	43	26	55	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	32	24	51	5	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	47	22	47	3	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	45	24	51	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	47	23	49	2	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	49	21	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	30	29	62	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	38	23	49	3	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	34	24	51	5	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	26	21	45	6	13	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	45	24	51	2	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



1 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Staughton Primary School, Huntingdon, PE19 5BP

I am writing to thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I enjoyed my visit and was impressed by your good behaviour and the way in which you get on so well together. I was pleased that you told me you were like a big family and I could see that you take care of each other and feel safe.

Over the last few years some pupils have not always done as well as they could, but I was pleased to find that your learning has improved and you are doing so much better. This is because your teachers are making better use of information on how well you have done in the past to give you work that will challenge you to do your very best. In all the lessons I visited pupils were learning and in the best your teachers were very good in helping you to make progress. Some of you also showed me how good you are at using computers in your learning.

So that you can do even better in future I have asked for several things to be done.

I have asked all teachers to try to mark your work in the same way, including suggesting ways in which your work could be even better, and setting you targets that challenge you to make the best progress you can,

I asked the new headteacher to make sure that she gets to know the teachers and their work very well so that she can help them to do their best for you and plan ways for making the school an ever better place to learn

I asked that the children in Reception should get better opportunities to play outside by improving facilities for them.

You can help the school improve by always doing your best, by listening carefully to your teachers, and by playing an active part in lessons and in the life of the school. I wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Groucutt

Lead inspector

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