

Great Steeping Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120451
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339698
Inspection dates	8–13 October 2009
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elizabeth Drake
Headteacher	Mrs Alison King
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school development plan, minutes of meetings, records of progress monitoring, and safeguarding and welfare arrangements.

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

- how much progress pupils make throughout the school and the current levels of attainment
- how well the progress made by pupils is recorded and used to ensure that extra support is provided when necessary
- the opportunities that are in place for pupils to understand what life is like in different communities around the world
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a small primary school where almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. The school has a below average percentage of pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities but there is considerable variation between year groups. The school was awarded the Active Mark for 2007-2009. A subject survey inspection in March 2009 found the overall effectiveness of physical education to be good. A privately managed after school club provides extended care for pupils each day, this provision is inspected and reported 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an extremely caring school, which successfully promotes every aspect of pupils' development. The pupils' characteristics, including their academic abilities, vary considerably between year groups. Pupils' progress has improved, so that virtually all pupils now make good progress. However, because many start with below the expected level of skill, standards of attainment overall remain broadly average. The good progress results from good teaching and good support within the classroom. All groups of pupils, from the most able to those who find learning difficult, make good progress because staff are vigilant in identifying pupils' needs and providing effective support. Historically, writing has been the weakest subject but standards are rising in response to improved teaching strategies. Currently pupils are making good progress in all key subjects. Progress is strongest in English because staff have monitored pupils' performance more closely than in other subjects, since writing has been a focus for improvement. The school intends to extend this close monitoring to other subjects.

Pupils are very happy and staff work as an effective team to support them. Behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils have good relationships with each other and with adults. Parents are very satisfied with the school. This was typified by a parent who commented that, 'The open and friendly atmosphere of the school encourages social development and respect with an overriding emphasis on good manners.'

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective because children make good progress as a result of good teaching and support for learning

Leadership and management are good overall. The approach to safeguarding is outstanding and as a result, pupils feel exceptionally safe and well cared for. Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because their self-evaluation is accurate. This has enabled them to improve the quality of teaching. They have also developed good partnerships beyond the school that support pupils' learning and promote their well-being effectively. Senior leaders ensure that all staff play a part in raising standards and in decision making. This approach to leadership has ensured that the progress of learners has moved from satisfactory to good and demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve the school further. The school is a cohesive society and works well with the local community to extend pupils' understanding of issues within society. However, the leadership team has not yet formulated a clear plan for promoting community cohesion beyond the local community or for systematically increasing pupils' understanding of the national and global communities.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall but their cultural

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understanding is a relative weakness. This is partly because the otherwise good curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for teachers to develop pupils' understanding of other cultures or issues that affect the wider world.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in key subjects by:
 - building on recent improvements in writing
 - extending the close tracking of pupils' progress used in English to all key subjects.
- Strengthen the school's drive to promote community cohesion by:
 - developing a clear plan of action for building links with schools and communities in England and overseas in order to give the curriculum a more global perspective
 - ensuring that pupils learn more about beliefs and traditions that reflect the diversity of modern society.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils achieve well in the classroom and enjoy their learning across all subjects. In 2008 and 2009 the overall attainment was low because the cohorts contained almost a third of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities. Classroom support is good which helps pupils who find learning difficult make as much progress as others. The progress being made in lessons by the current Year 6 is consistently good with standards above those normally expected at this early point in the school year. All pupils are well prepared for their future well-being because they develop good attitudes to learning and a secure understanding of key skills, including information and communication technology.

Pupils' behaviour is good, both in and out of lessons. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Attendance is above average and punctuality is good because pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils' excellent respect for others' points of view is reflected in the extent to which they feel safe and well cared for. Pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles is also outstanding, as illustrated by their keenness for healthy eating and by the high levels of participation in sport.

The contributions made by pupils to the school and the local community are good. Within the school they have many responsibilities such as being members of the school council, helping in assembly or supporting others at break time. In the local community pupils visit and entertain local residents. . Although the pupils are part of a harmonious community within school, they have limited opportunities to experience the diversity of British society beyond the local community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Joint observations carried out with senior staff show that teaching is typically good and that leaders accurately judge the quality of learning. Good features in the teaching include subject knowledge, classroom management, very good relationships and effective questioning strategies which ensure all pupils are sufficiently challenged. In the better lessons, but not in all, there is good use of short timescales to stimulate the pace of learning. Teachers use assessment information well to plan their lessons. This means the work set is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, including the more able. Teaching assistants provide good support and are used effectively in most lessons.

Much of the curriculum is topic based to stimulate interest and the school day is organised effectively to ensure there is ample time for learning across all subjects. Parents felt that this was a positive feature of the school as typified by one who commented, 'Learning opportunities are now presented in new and exciting ways'. Pupils benefit from at least two hours of physical education each week and also learn a modern foreign language. The curriculum is enriched by well supported clubs and sporting activities and there is a bi-annual residential trip to an activity centre for the older pupils. Partnerships, such as that with the local secondary schools, add to the overall quality of the curriculum and include thorough transition arrangements. Most aspects of the curriculum are good but there is not enough content to opens pupils' eyes to the diversity of faith and culture in modern society and in the wider world.

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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There are excellent arrangements to guide and support pupils in their personal development and their learning. All aspects of welfare and care are outstanding, including the quality of links with outside agencies to support the most vulnerable pupils. Excellent support is given to all pupils who need help, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Very effective procedures are in place to maintain good behaviour and improve attendance.. Pupils are given good information about their choices of secondary school so that they feel confident about starting the next phase of their education. Every pupil is well known by staff and special arrangements are made to support the transition for pupils who have specific worries.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The capable and determined headteacher has an accurate view of the quality and impact of current provision. She is well supported by senior leaders and the revised structure enables them to share responsibilities. Staff have the same high ambitions for the school and work well together to support the senior leaders. The leadership team is determined in its vision to raise standards, while supporting all aspects of the pupils' lives.

There has been good progress in many areas since the last inspection. The focus on improving writing has been successful. Although the monitoring of pupils' progress is good overall the school intends to make it as sophisticated as that used in English across all key subjects. The school's effective work to promote equal opportunities is demonstrated in the data it collects on pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds, and improvements to the achievements of all significant groups.

Governors are regular visitors to school and provide good support and challenge to the leadership team. They share the vision of raising standards and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have an effective committee structure and a range of skills to carry out their duties. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and provide a positive link between the school and parents. They have a good knowledge of safeguarding requirements.

Senior leaders have developed a good evaluation of the school's work with the local community and identified what needs to be done to increase pupils' understanding of the world. Curriculum content has not yet been revised to compensate for the lack of cultural diversity within the school. Governors have not yet become sufficiently involved

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in promoting community cohesion with more distant communities.

Safeguarding procedures are exceptionally good. All the required checks on adults who work in school have been made and recorded. Rigorous checks are made on security and on health and safety, which are clear priorities for leaders and governors. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and governors are fully involved in the regular audits of health and safety. Both parents and pupils complete regular questionnaires which include questions about safety in school. The school council also discuss safety around the school. Because this a small school where good relationships abound, the views of all parents and pupils are always taken into account.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage is immediately apparent from the high quality resources and the happy children. Effective provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage results in good learning and progress from children's starting points which this year are close to expected levels, though this varies from year to year. Children are keen to do well and benefit from plentiful resources both indoors and outside. Teaching is good because staff have a good understanding of how children learn and they work well as an enthusiastic team, taking full advantage of opportunities available within a mixed age class. They provide a broad range of activities to promote all areas of learning. Planning takes good account of children's differing needs and is based on building upon their interests. There is a good balance of adult-directed and child initiated activities. Staff make careful observations of children's progress and these build up into a helpful collection of information in each child's record. Assessment

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information is used well to modify plans to meet individual needs. The co-ordinator keeps good records of progress and clearly knows all the children well. The weakest areas on entry to Reception are communication, language and literacy but children make the necessary extra progress in these areas.

Behaviour is very good. All groups of children play and learn well together in a very safe and caring environment. Staff know the children well and are aware of any specific needs. Numbers of adults are sufficient to ensure safety and all welfare requirements are met. Leadership and management are good and effective systems are becoming embedded.

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	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school, commenting on how much their children enjoy their education. Questionnaire results indicated a very small minority of parents who had concerns about the progress their children. For all other questions there was no more than one parent who disagreed. The vast majority of written comments were very supportive, especially of the caring provision of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Steeping 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 112 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	76	10	22	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	82	8	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	47	22	49	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	58	16	36	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	73	12	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	56	17	38	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	64	16	36	0	0	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)	24	53	17	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	49	19	42	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	53	19	42	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	47	21	47	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	62	16	36	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	50	33	50	0	0	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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 pupils' 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.



12 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Steeping Primary School, Spilsby, PE23 5PT

We really enjoyed visiting your school and seeing you learning and playing so well together. Your school is a good school which is helping you develop well. I know everyone is very excited about getting a new classroom for Years 3 and 4. There are many good things about your school and these are a few of them:

You behave well and enjoy school.

You get on well with your teachers and with each other.

You have an extremely good understanding of how to keep safe, fit and healthy.

All the staff look after you and care for exceptionally well.

You all make good progress in your lessons because of good teaching.

Those adults who manage and run your school are working hard to help you improve your skills even more.

There are a few things we have asked the school to do to make the school even better:

Help you reach even higher standards in key subjects.

Improve the curriculum by building links with more schools and communities in England and overseas, so that you learn more about different beliefs and traditions.

You can help by carrying on working hard and helping your teachers.

Yours faithfully

John Horwood

Lead inspector

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