

# Great Ponton Church of England School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120602
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339728
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Sadler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	43
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Yvonne Dickinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jon Clack
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Mill Lane Great Ponton Lincolnshire
<b>Telephone number</b>	01476 530306
<b>Fax number</b>	01476 530306
<b>Email address</b>	jon.clack@greatponton.lincs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. Eleven lessons were seen and seven teachers and practitioners were observed. The inspector held meetings with governors, staff, parents and groups of pupils. The school's work and a wide range of documentation were reviewed. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's improvement plan and also pupils' work. In addition, 11 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' progress, particularly in writing
- the improvements made in teaching since the previous inspection
- the role played by teachers in the school's monitoring and evaluation processes.

## Information about the school

Great Ponton is a very small school. About half the children live in the village and the remainder in surrounding villages and towns. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils that have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils find learning hard.

Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught separately in the mornings, part of the time in the infant classroom and partly in a separate area. In the afternoons, the Reception aged children are joined by Nursery children. The school has gained the International Schools award and Healthy Schools award.

**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

Great Ponton is a good school that has improved considerably since its last inspection. Pupils are happy, feel safe and their behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is outstanding. Parents are unanimous in their support of the school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage children, both in the Nursery and Reception Years, are supported well to achieve a thorough grounding in literacy and numeracy. They have good opportunities to progress in their personal and social development because the staff create a warm and welcoming environment for them. Activities are planned well, particularly for the indoor spaces, although opportunities for outdoor learning are less well developed. This is because staff do not always ensure that all areas of learning are provided for children when they learn outdoors. Nonetheless, children make good progress. Most achieve the expected learning goals and some exceed them when they enter Year 1. Good progress continues in Years 1 to 6 because the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Although attainment at the end of Year 6 varies according to the abilities of the small year groups, currently these pupils' attainment is above the national average. In addition, some Year 5 pupils are already attaining standards above those expected at the end of Year 6. Progress is particularly strong in reading and science. Improving pupils' writing skills is a central feature of the school's strategic plan. The school is rightly focusing on lifting attainment in writing to match that of reading and ensuring that writing tasks are consistently challenging for pupils.

There has been a marked improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Teaching is consistently good and the recent focus on strengthening the pupils' independence in learning is paying dividends. Teachers invariably ensure that lesson objectives are clear and that pupils understand what is expected of them in order to meet the lesson's success criteria. They take particular care to ensure that the teaching and learning styles that are used match the pupils' interests and preferences. This results in classrooms that have a warm and positive atmosphere in which pupils enjoy learning together.

There have been significant improvements in the quality of leadership and management. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. There is a clear determination to improve the school that is shared by all the staff. The additional rigour in the school's procedures for checking provision and pupils' progress means that self-evaluation is accurate and that the right priorities for improvement are identified. Furthermore, they are tackled in a determined and yet sensitive manner with all staff making a good contribution to improvements. The improvements in pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching and learning are a clear demonstration that the school is well placed to improve further.

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**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise attainment in writing by providing consistently challenging opportunities for pupils' writing.
- Enhance provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by extending the use of the outdoor area to support the development of children's skills in all areas of learning.

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

Because cohorts are so small, attainment on entry varies considerably each year. Overall, it is broadly in line with national expectations. Good progress is now made in all year groups. There has been a concerted and successful action undertaken to address some underachievement in Years 3 and 4. These pupils now achieve as well as those in the other year groups because the quality of teaching has improved and there is now a good level of challenge for these pupils. Attainment in writing is not as strong as in mathematics and science. The school is keenly aware of this and the target to improve attainment in this area is well-founded. It is also beginning to bear fruit because Year 5 and 6 pupils' writing is of a higher standard than previously found. However, there is still work to be done because some pupils, particularly those of lower ability continue to make satisfactory rather than good progress in their writing. In mathematics, reading, science and information and communication technology (ICT) progress is good for all groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive well-targeted in-class support.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is clearly reflected in their excellent behaviour and good attendance. They are very keen to take on the many opportunities that are available for them to take responsibility, such as helping younger pupils by hearing them read and helping them with their spellings. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to conduct a healthy lifestyle, and this is reflected in the Healthy Schools award recently gained. The school council is proud of the money that is raised for charity and for school resources. Pupils say that they trust all the adults in the school to help and support them. By the time that they leave the school, Year 6 pupils develop into secure and confident young people who have good social skills and are prepared well for their move to secondary school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is now consistently good and is characterised by excellent relationships. Pupils are managed well by teachers and support staff and this promotes the consistently excellent behaviour evident in all classrooms. Teachers plan lessons well and provide interesting and exciting activities that help to interest and engage the pupils. They are skilful in using interactive whiteboards to enliven learning and this also helps the many pupils that like to learn with a visual stimulus. Teachers encourage pupils to talk to a partner about their ideas and pupils enthusiastically exchange their views before responding to the rest of their classmates. Teachers generally ensure that work is pitched at the right level for the wide range of skills and abilities that are present in all classes, although, on occasion, work is sometimes too easy for the most able pupils. Previously, there was a weakness in the marking of pupils' work and the use of ongoing assessments. This is no longer the case, with assessments being used well to gauge future work. Pupils are clear about what they have to do to improve because marking is very thorough and invariably focuses on the success criteria for the unit of work being studied.

The school provides a good quality curriculum that is matched well to the needs of the pupils in the mixed-aged classes. There is an appropriate and strong focus on the development of the skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Learning is made interesting and meaningful because topics are carefully chosen that link subjects together and build well on the pupils' interests and first-hand experiences. The school makes good use of specialist teaching in physical education, dance, drama and music. There is an excellent range of additional activities, including many after school clubs which pupils say that

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they particularly enjoy. Pupils also say that they enjoy the many opportunities that they have to make educational visits including a residential visit for older pupils. The school is currently reviewing the curriculum in order to ensure that pupils develop their skills as well as their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils are well cared for. All the pupils are known well and are treated as individuals and staff are particularly adept at helping pupils to overcome barriers to their learning. In addition, they take care to ensure that any vulnerable pupils are included in the wide range of opportunities that the school offers.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher's determination and commitment to the school's development is a key reason for the improvements in the school. With the support of the staff and the governing body, he is pivotal to the school's success. Successful action has been taken to tackle the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection, particularly in the monitoring and evaluation of provision and the tracking of pupils' progress through the school. All the teachers take joint responsibility for ensuring that improvements are carefully tracked and they take their subject coordination responsibilities seriously. There are suitable systems in place to ensure that the pupils' safety and well-being are protected, with arrangements meeting regulatory requirements. Staff work well with outside agencies to support the pupils' progress and they also work in close partnership with nearby schools.

Staff morale is high, and the adults work closely as a team. Great care is taken to ensure that all forms of inequality are tackled and in developing the pupils' understanding of cultural diversity, such as by the visit to the Peterborough Mosque. The school provides a cohesive community and plays an important part in the life of the village by becoming involved in a wide range of community events and festivals. In addition, pupils are prepared well to develop into responsible caring citizens because a good emphasis is placed on ensuring that they have a good understanding of life beyond the village and the United Kingdom to include global awareness. This is recognised in the gaining of an International Schools award. For example, there are good links with a school in Uganda as well as email links with a school in the United States.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery and Reception varies each year though it is generally in line with what is expected for the children's ages. The children are taught separately from the Year 1 and 2 pupils for some of day. The practitioner teaches them well and provides them with a good range of activities which enables them to make good progress, particularly in their literacy and numeracy skills. There is a good balance of tasks led by an adult and those that the children choose for themselves. Their speaking and listening and social skills are developed particularly well because there is a good daily routine in which the children have to plan their own activities and then later review what they have learned. This helps the children to choose their resources with confidence and helps them to work and play very happily with each other.

Great care is taken to ensure that children's achievements and progress are noted and this aids the teacher and practitioner when setting out new activities. However, the outside area is not fully utilised to the children's benefit. Not all areas of learning are consistently planned for outdoors and there is an overemphasis on children's creative and physical development. Nonetheless, children achieve well, particularly in their personal and social, literacy and numeracy skills. By the time that they join Year 1, many children exceed the expected learning goals in these areas.

Apart from the weakness in outdoor planning, leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children are very well cared for.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

Parents and carers are unanimous in their support of the school. Inspection findings confirm their positive views about the school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Ponton Church of England 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 11 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 43 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	82	2	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	6	55	5	45	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	8	73	3	27	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	73	2	18	1	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	73	3	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	64	4	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	45	6	55	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)	5	45	5	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	64	4	36	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	5	45	5	45	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	45	6	55	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	64	4	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	73	3	27	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

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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



3 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Ponton Church of England School, Great Ponton, NG33 5DT

I enjoyed meeting with you and listening to what you had to say about your school. I particularly enjoyed watching your celebration assembly and was pleased to see how many of you received your pen licence!

Yours is a good school and this letter is to tell you what I found when I visited.

I can understand why you enjoy school and learning because all the adults look after you well and make sure that you are happy and safe and that you enjoy your time at school.

Your headteacher is doing a good job and, together with the staff, he makes sure that your school runs smoothly and well.

You work hard, behave outstandingly well, and your teachers make sure that you make good progress by making lessons interesting. Teachers also make sure that there is a good range of things for you to do both in lessons and during the many clubs that you enjoy.

You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. You told me about what you like to eat and the sports you like to play.

Even in such a good school like yours, there are things which could be improved. I have asked your teachers to make sure that you make as much progress in writing as you do in reading and mathematics. I have also asked that the children in the Reception and Nursery Year have more chances to play and explore all the areas of learning when they are outside.

I hope that you will all keep on working hard and continue to enjoy your time at school.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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