

Cuckney CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122757
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	340209
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Terry Elston

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	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Little
Headteacher	Chris Powell
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors spent the large majority of their time looking at learning; they observed all five teachers and visited eight lessons. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, curriculum planning documents, examples of the ways the school promotes community cohesion, evidence of lesson observations and information from questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 41 parents and carers.

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

- the progress of girls in Key Stage 2
- the achievements of more-able pupils, and whether they attain the high standards of which they are capable
- whether pupils make equally good progress in all year groups.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school with the vast majority of pupils coming from White British families. Most pupils travel from outside the local village. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these have difficulties with basic literacy and numeracy skills. The school has recently gained the Healthy Schools and International Schools awards. A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.

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 a good school where pupils do well in all aspects of their development and leave well-prepared for the future. They attend regularly and enjoy being part of a small school where adults support and care for them exceptionally well. One pupil echoed the views of many when saying, 'I love it here because you know everybody and people always have time for you'. Pupils feel extremely safe, and take very good care of anyone who is lonely or upset. Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is excellent and gives them every opportunity to learn. In lessons, pupils listen carefully, remaining utterly focused when the teacher is talking.

Pupils make good progress in all year groups. At Key Stage 1, pupils build well on their good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, by Year 2, attainment is above average in reading and mathematics. Attainment is average in writing, although, compared with pupils nationally, few of the more-able pupils excel. Good progress continues throughout Key Stage 2 so that attainment by Year 6 is well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. Attainment is lower in mathematics and science because not all of the more-able pupils attain the high standards of which they are capable. Throughout Key Stage 2, boys make rapid progress. They compete enthusiastically to be the first to answer questions, and their attainments are higher than those of girls in most subjects.

Teachers are really good at making learning fun. They are skilled at using the interactive whiteboards to illustrate their teaching and pupils find these fascinating. Teachers explain work clearly and give pupils good opportunities to work in groups to tackle problems, although pupils are not always given clear guidance on how to do really well. Some of the teaching is outstanding, and pupils make exceptional progress. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning as they support those who need extra help. Teaching does not always provide sufficient challenge to extend the learning of more-able pupils.

The curriculum is planned well to provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills within broad topics. For example, in one topic they wrote eloquently about conditions in the Amazon rainforest and produced accurate graphs of the rainfall in that area throughout the year. The school is now rightly looking at topics that will capture the imagination of girls as much as boys.

Good leadership and management and close links with parents are important reasons for the school's success. The headteacher has successfully put together a team of staff committed to improving the school. He is supported effectively by other leaders who play an important role in improving the school. The school provides good value for

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money and has made good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in pupils' attainment in English and the effectiveness of assessment. It has maintained its many strengths and developed further through accurate self-evaluation based on close and effective monitoring of teaching and learning, showing that it has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of girls in Key Stage 2 by:
 - including more topics in the curriculum that capture their imagination
 - ensuring that they take as full a part in class discussions as boys.
- Ensure that more-able pupils make the best possible progress by:
 - providing them with clearer guidance on what they need to do to attain the higher levels
 - giving them more challenging, open-ended tasks that make the most of their talents.

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

Pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. In Key Stage 1, they learn quickly in lessons and say how they look forward to school every day. They read confidently, and show particularly high attainment when they compare the plots of similar stories. While they write interesting stories, some could do even better by writing longer pieces of work and creating more complex sentences. In mathematics, they develop a feel for number and learn to calculate quickly in their heads. They persevere well when set challenges and are proud to show off their work. In Key Stage 2, pupils are starting to take responsibility for their own learning, but do not always appreciate what they need to do in order to move on to higher levels in their work. Their good progress in English and mathematics shows in the way they read with expression, write poignant stories and calculate quickly. In science, pupils achieve well, but the older ones sometimes struggle when asked to plan their own investigations. Throughout Key Stage 2, boys tend to attain higher standards than girls because they show a greater interest in the topics and extend themselves more in lessons.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly those with basic literacy and numeracy difficulties, make good progress. They gain much from the quick phonics (linking letters and sounds) and mental mathematics sessions and grow in confidence.

Pupils enjoy learning, develop an excellent sense of right and wrong and grow into mature individuals. Their exceptional awareness of how to live healthy lives is evident in the way they talk knowledgeably about the best foods to eat and how regular exercise strengthens the heart. This is reflected in the achievement of the Healthy Schools award. Pupils' economic well-being is well provided for because of their good progress, strong sense of teamwork, good personal development, and enthusiastic involvement in

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enterprises that raise funds for the school. They contribute effectively to their community and enjoy helping to improve their school as members of the school council and 'eco' committee. Their good spiritual development is evident in the way they think so deeply about issues, such as the emotional upheaval experienced by children who were evacuated in the last world war.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	1
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?

In typical lessons, pupils learn quickly because the teachers provide a good balance between teaching new skills and providing opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves. Teachers make the rules for behaviour clear, and quickly gain pupils' attention. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work are generally high, although occasionally the older or more-able pupils in the class find the work too easy because it does not extend their learning sufficiently. Teachers are good at setting time limits for the work to be completed, and this helps to focus pupils' attention clearly on their learning tasks. Teachers ask searching questions to make pupils think, but often let the more assertive boys provide most of the answers. Assessment systems are thorough,

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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although at times pupils are not given clear enough guidance on how to reach higher levels.

The school has developed a rich curriculum with a good balance of academic work and topics to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is enhanced by many visits and visitors that enhance learning in topics. The school makes very good use of the local area to teach pupils about, for example, life in the industrial revolution, and pupils are very proud of the school's own water mill. The many extra-curricular clubs are popular and help pupils develop their skills in sporting and creative activities.

Parents and carers say how much they appreciate the exceptional care, support and guidance offered to their children by all staff. A typical comment was, 'It's a pleasure to bring our children to such a school.' Pupils, whose circumstances make them vulnerable, benefit from sensitive support and flourish as a result. The systems for ensuring good behaviour are applied consistently so that all pupils know the rules. Pupils are prepared very well for the next stages of their education by strong and effective links with other schools. The school works very closely with parents and outside specialists to provide very effective support for pupils with learning and emotional difficulties, which is why some parents choose this school for their children.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has helped create a happy school where pupils have every opportunity to learn in a safe and harmonious community. He leads the way in ensuring that any form of discrimination is tackled vigorously. The headteacher is supported well by others with leadership responsibilities who share his high expectations and ambitions for the school and are helping to drive forward improvements. The leaders analyse individual pupils' performance rigorously in order to see what further improvements are needed to raise standards. These systems have yet, however, to rectify shortcomings in the achievement of girls and more-able pupils. The leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning regularly, and give teachers clear guidance on how to improve their work. Safeguarding is taken seriously and all systems are robust. The school benefits from effective partnerships with the church, other schools and local organisations that do much to enhance provision for pupils' spiritual development, sport, music and literacy. In order to promote community cohesion, the school invites many visitors representing

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different faiths, and has developed strong links with children in other countries that give pupils a good awareness of how other people in the world live and worship. The International Schools award recognised the good quality of this provision. The governing body supports the school well. It plays an important role in evaluating the provision and is not afraid to hold the leaders to 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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision is good, and parents and carers say how much their children enjoy coming to school. Good teaching, with a strong emphasis on developing children's language, writing, numeracy and social skills, ensures that they achieve well in all areas of learning. Children choose happily from the range of activities on offer. For example, they enjoy using the interactive whiteboard to hone their numeracy skills and equally like ordering pizzas by telephone in the role-play area. The adults observe children's learning and development carefully and make detailed assessments of their achievements to plan further work. Learning opportunities are planned well so that the young children learn from the older ones in the class and still have time to play and explore for themselves. They enjoy the exciting outside area, but are not always given sufficient opportunities to use it.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Although some younger ones lack confidence and seek adult support, the sensitive encouragement and guidance they receive help them to become happy and independent learners. Children behave well and learn to play with and help each other. The provision is led and managed well,

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and staff work very well as a team.

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

The vast majority of parents and carers are pleased with the provision, and really appreciate the way their children are cared for so well in this small school. They nearly all believe that the teaching is good and that their children make good progress. These views reflect the inspection findings. A very small minority of parents and carers are unhappy about the behaviour of a few pupils with emotional difficulties and the impact this has on their children's learning. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cuckney CofE 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 117 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	54	17	41	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	39	22	54	3	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	22	26	63	4	10	2	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	24	24	59	3	7	4	10
The teaching is good at this school	11	27	25	61	5	12	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	22	25	61	5	12	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	32	27	66	1	2	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)	10	24	24	59	3	7	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	20	26	63	4	10	2	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	17	29	71	4	10	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	17	26	63	4	10	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	12	29	21	51	4	10	3	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	29	23	56	3	7	2	5

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 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.



15 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cuckney CofE Primary School, Mansfield, NG20 9NB

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when they visited your school. It was a pleasure to see you working hard in lessons, getting on so well with each other and playing happily outside. I especially enjoyed having lunch with you because you told me so much about what you liked about school. You think yours is a good school, and you are right.

What we found out about your school:

You make good progress because you behave exceptionally well and always try hard to do your best work.

You take really good care of each other, make good friends and always make up if you fall out.

You know a lot about how to live healthy lives and stay safe.

You think carefully about people in the world who are not as fortunate as you.

The leaders know how to improve your school and they help it run smoothly.

The activities provided for you are interesting, and you enjoy the many clubs at lunchtime and after school.

Your teachers make learning fun and help you when you find things difficult.

All staff at the school take excellent care of you and keep you safe.

This is what we would like your school to do now.

Help the girls do just as well as the boys. You girls can help by trying to be the first to answer questions in class, and not letting boys do all the work.

Make sure that those of you who find learning easy are given work that makes the most of your talents and are shown how to do really well.

Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston

Lead inspector

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