

Caythorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120373
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
Inspection number	313592
Inspection date	7 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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 on roll	
School	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Rickard
Headteacher	Mrs Nicola Bradley
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	High Street Caythorpe Grantham Lincolnshire NG32 3DR
Telephone number	01400 272600
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. It focused upon the standards achieved, particularly in mathematics, curriculum planning and the quality of teaching and learning. The school's monitoring and evaluation of its work was also examined. Evidence was collected from scrutiny of assessment data, samples of children's work, lesson observations and discussions with senior staff, governors and children. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This smaller than average primary school serves a rural area around Caythorpe, near Grantham. The large majority of children are of White British heritage and all speak English as their first language. Fewer children than average are eligible for free school meals. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school holds Artsmark Gold, Basic Skills Quality Mark 2, Activemark and a National Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. There are strengths in many areas and particularly in how well the children enjoy learning. A group of pupils, when asked if they enjoy school, all replied, 'Yes'. Some said there was nothing they would change. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity to continue to improve.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills that are wide ranging but broadly in line with expectations for their age. Their personal and social development is often better than normally found. Children have good attitudes to learning, settle well to school and soon make rapid progress. At the end of their time in Reception, skills are often slightly above average.

Information from national tests and assessments at the age of seven and 11, indicates that in recent years standards have been above and sometimes well above average. However, in 2007 standards in both key stages dipped considerably and were below average in Key Stage 1 teacher assessments and average in Key Stage 2 tests. Data indicates that children in Key Stage 2 did not make the progress anticipated from their previously good start in Key Stage 1. Girls in both key stages did not do as well as boys and standards in mathematics were below other subjects. However, there are many factors that affected standards. There are small numbers in each year group and a significant proportion of pupils have moved in or out of the school, especially in Key Stage 2, interrupting their learning. Within Years 2 and 6 there were a higher proportion of children with learning difficulties, including those with a statement of special educational need. Information about pupils' progress indicates that while standards were not as high for these groups, most made reasonable progress, although better in English than mathematics. Children currently in Years 2 and 6 are on course to achieve better results and the standards they attain overall are above average. All groups, including boys and girls and those with learning difficulties, are making good progress.

The personal development of children is good with some outstanding features. Children's behaviour is usually excellent. They are polite and welcoming, as illustrated when one thanked a visitor for talking to her. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are countless opportunities for children to develop their social skills when working in groups both in and out of school. This is epitomised in a recent Enterprise Week when children worked as a card company and made and sold greetings cards. Such activities help them develop excellent links with the wider community and develop contacts with a wide variety of local organisations and services: this prepares them very well for their future. Their cultural development is good overall and children develop a satisfactory understanding of the multi-cultural aspects of life. Children understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle and benefit from the extensive range of sporting activities but many still bring unhealthy packed lunches.

Teaching and learning are good. Staff have good relationships with children, which ensures lessons are conducted in a calm and purposeful manner. In the Foundation Stage there are excellent briefing notes for support staff and students to follow when working with the children. However, overall planning is in a transitional stage with staff piloting different formats. The exact level of challenge for different groups is not always identified in planning and some tasks do not stretch the highest attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics. The curriculum is good with some excellent enrichment activities. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities,

including sports and the arts, is admirable. The curriculum for mathematics is generally satisfactory but is not always consistently challenging for all children.

Care, guidance and support are good. Pastoral care is excellent. Staff know the children very well. There are effective procedures to identify and support those with learning difficulties. The school works closely with external agencies to ensure that families are supported well. There are good health and safety systems. Child protection procedures are in place and are well understood by all staff. Children feel safe and secure. They are confident that there is always someone to talk to if they have concerns. The assessment and monitoring of progress is good, although staff do not always use such information effectively to improve planning. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and while there are good examples, some is very brief.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has brought about many improvements during her time in school. This is reflected in how well the children enjoy their education and in the awards attained. Subject leaders monitor and evaluate the quality of planning, teaching and pupils' work effectively to raise standards. Governance of the school is good. Most parents are supportive but a significant number think that they are not sufficiently well informed about what happens in school. For instance, they have concerns about mixed age classes and the quality of cover when teachers are absent from the classroom. Staff and governors believe they work hard to involve and inform parents but this is not always reflected in parental feedback.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is now good following recent staff and organisational changes. These are having a positive impact on learning. Children make good progress in the Reception class because teaching is well planned to meet the needs of those of differing abilities. Good use is made of the outdoor area. Children enter school with widely ranging skills and experiences. Some are quickly identified as needing additional support and others as potentially gifted and talented. Initially, their early reading and writing skills are no more than average but they make good progress. Trained reading helpers give good support. The younger children enjoy getting to know the older ones, which is helped by a 'buddy' system. Because staff have high expectations of their behaviour and achievement, children make good progress in all areas of their development and become confident young learners.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure consistency in planning to provide the highest level of challenge for all pupils in mathematics.
- Improve the communication and links with parents.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Caythorpe Primary School, Grantham NG32 3DR

Thank you very much for looking after me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed chatting to you in lessons, at lunchtime and when I spoke to the school council. I think your school is good and that there are lots of interesting things for you to do.

These are some of the best things about your school:

- You really enjoy coming to school and like making friends so that it feels like a large family
- Your behaviour is excellent and staff are proud of you when they take you out of school
- There are lots of opportunities for you to take on responsibilities in school and as part of the local community
- Most of you make good progress and achieve well
- Teaching is good and staff care for you well.

This is what that I think could be improved:

- The planning of activities, especially in mathematics, could be better to make sure work is hard enough for you.
- The staff and governors could inform and involve your parents more in the work of the school.

To help your school, keep trying hard all the time. Please remember to try to eat healthily. I would like to wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector