

Walcott Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120391
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339677
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Christopher Parker

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	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Wells
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Sewell
Date of previous school inspection	0 June 2007
School address	Pinfold Lane Walcott LN4 3SX
Telephone number	01526 860400
Fax number	01526 860400
Email address	andrew.sewell@walcott.lincs.sch.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Half of the inspectors' time was spent in lessons observing learning. Ten lessons, taught by four teachers, were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, teachers and representatives of the governing body. Brief discussions were held with a parent support adviser. The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation and a sample of the pupils' work. Questionnaire responses from pupils, staff and 21 parents and carers were analysed.

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

- the steps the school is taking to increase the rate of progress and raise attainment in English
- how well pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are learning and making progress
- the effectiveness of the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than average. The school population is falling because of the number of families moving out of the area, although intake into the Reception class is buoyant. The school is located in a rural area and some pupils live in isolated locations. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is almost double the national average. The school is part of a soft federation with Mrs Mary King's Church of England Primary School.

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

Over the last few years the school has made sustained improvements. The teaching, curriculum and support for pupils have all improved. The pupils have greater opportunities to work independently, solve problems and carry out investigations. As a result pupils, including most of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good progress as they move through the school and reaching the targets set for them. These improvements have been achieved through the headteacher's realistic yet determined leadership of the staff who share his desire to provide all of the pupils with a good range of opportunities to make good progress and with surroundings in which they can enjoy learning.

Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. There are fluctuations from year to year because cohorts are small and in some year groups the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is high. Nevertheless, there is a trend of improving attainment. Pupils are doing well in mathematics and science. In English progress in writing is not as fast as it is in reading. The school is working to improve this but currently marking of the pupils' writing is not giving them enough help to improve the range of words they use or to develop the structure of their writing.

To give pupils a greater understanding of the world beyond their rural location the school organises a good range of trips and visits to enhance the curriculum which incorporates, for example, the study of distant places and good opportunities for art and design. However, the school is at a relatively early stage of developing links with other communities nationally and internationally in order to foster greater community cohesion. The school has developed productive partnerships with parents and carers and other schools. The greater involvement of parents and carers is proving particularly effective in helping some pupils who face difficulties, to make better progress.

The school has well targeted plans for further development and is in a strong position, given the successes to date, to continue to make sustained improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment in writing by improving teachers' marking so that it:
 - provides pupils with an opportunity to correct and improve their work
 - helps them to use a much wider range of words
 - guides them to structure and organise their work effectively, and

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

- sets out the next steps in their learning.
- Extend developments in community cohesion by creating more opportunities for pupils to gain a greater understanding of other communities nationally and internationally.

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

The pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well. The number of pupils in each class is relatively small, and the teachers and teaching assistants take advantage of this to give carefully focused support to small groups and individuals. The pupils' contribute fully to discussions and are eager to answer their teacher's questions. During lessons they concentrate well. The work recorded in their exercise books shows that most are doing well and making secure gains in writing, and good progress in reading and mathematics. The school is working to accelerate pupils' progress in writing, but many of them are not using the range of words or organising and structuring their writing well enough to reach higher standards. Discussion with some older pupils about the high quality classroom displays of their work in art and design and design and technology shows their enjoyment and pride in what they have produced.

In some cohorts there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are well supported in lessons and the work they are set is matched well to their needs. This is resulting in most of them making progress on a par with that of their peers over the last year.

The good progress evident in pupils' work is verified by the results of tests and assessments. Over the last few years the overall trend in the results of national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has improved, particularly in mathematics and science. Results in English, and specifically writing, are slightly lower. Results now fluctuate around the national average. Variations in results reflect the small number of pupils in each cohort and the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's own assessments show that while fluctuations in attainment are likely to continue, most pupils are making good progress.

Behaviour is almost always good. This allows pupils to concentrate on their work. They say they feel safe and that they enjoy school. This is reflected in the way they approach all that the school offers them and in their positive relationships with adults. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 have recently produced some very interesting short films on the environment. Their enthusiasm for the task and their concern for the issues, captured in their narration, illustrate very well how their information and communication technology and speaking skills are developing successfully, in tandem with their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The pupils appreciate of the importance of staying fit and healthy. They enjoy the sporting opportunity the school provides for them. Attendance is broadly average, having dipped in the last year as a result of the number pupils taking holidays in term time.

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

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	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	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	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In lessons, interesting tasks are carefully matched to the ages and abilities of the pupils so that they are engaged and motivated. The teachers carefully question the pupils to check how well they are progressing. This was the case in a Year 5 and 6 lesson in which the pupils were investigating probability. Similarly, in a science lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils were formulating questions to investigate, for example, whether children with longer legs could jump further. The teacher's questioning identified weaknesses in some pupils' understanding of how to construct a fair test. This was discussed and clarified. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance learning. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils used digicams to record their use of time connectives to order the stages of the growth of a seed into a fruit-bearing plant. The pupils' work is marked very conscientiously but they are not given clear enough guidance on how to improve some aspects of their writing. Much of the marking of writing is related solely to current targets and the purpose of an individual lesson. Over the last term marking focused heavily on punctuation with little reference to vocabulary or the structure of the text. While teachers discuss possible improvements with the

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

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

pupils, they do not require them to correct or improve their writing and therefore miss opportunities to accelerate progress. In all other respects assessment is good and teachers have an accurate view of what the pupils know and understand and what they need to learn next. This fosters good progress in all other areas of their work.

The curriculum is of good quality and the productive links made in lessons often combine key elements of more than one subject. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of trips, which pupils appreciate and enjoy very much. The school arranges visits to broaden the pupils' horizons beyond their very rural location. For example, the pupils recently attended a problem-solving day at Lincoln University, and visited the London Eye and a Hindu temple in Leicester. After-school clubs - such as model making and choir - contribute to the pupils' well-being, personal development and considerable enjoyment of school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given very well considered support. The school seeks expert external advice from a range of agencies when it is necessary. Those pupils who sometimes present challenging behaviour are well managed, and relationships are strong throughout the school.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has moulded a team of teachers and teaching assistants who are committed to giving every child the opportunity to do well. They work together effectively and have been successful in securing continuing improvement. Monitoring arrangements are rigorous, and self-evaluation provides a considered view of the school's performance. Records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, for example, are accurate and provide helpful points for development. There is a comprehensive development plan that clearly outlines areas for improvement.

The governors hold the school to account and are rigorous in evaluating, for example, the school's safeguarding arrangements. As a result, the school has good procedures in place to keep the pupils as safe as possible. Governors make frequent visits to school, visiting lessons to keep themselves informed of the school's performance. The school has made considerable strides forward in not only keeping parents and carers well informed, but also in involving them in their child's learning. A parents' council operates to provide feedback to the school, family learning sessions provide parents and carers with ideas in how to support their children at home and the parent support adviser is working with parents and carers and the school to give vulnerable pupils better

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

opportunities to do well.

The school's wider partnerships, not least with its federated partner school, contribute strongly to the activities available to pupils and to the training of the teachers. This partnership allows both schools to, for example, arrange trips and visits that would be too expensive for each to undertake alone. Consequently, the resources available to the school are used well to achieve good outcomes for pupils, and provide good value for money.

The school has taken steps, based on its rural context, to develop a cohesive community within the school. Within the curriculum it promotes an understanding of religious and ethnic diversity, but has only recently begun to promote engagement with groups and communities in contrasting areas, both nationally and internationally.

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	2
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 good provision for the youngest children has been maintained since the last inspection. The children's learning and progress are successfully developed through a range of interesting activities. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, but is generally low, particularly in communication, language and literacy. An analysis of the performance of the children in the Reception class last year shows that they made good progress although only a few reached a secure level of development. The children who entered school this year have made a confident start. This is because links with the pre-school play group provide a well managed transition to primary school.

The children respond well in teacher-led activities. These activities are effective because

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

they are well planned, thoughtfully prepared and carried out in a manner that engages the children. For example, good use of the interactive whiteboard helped the children to recognise the sound for 'c' as part of a game to match the initial letter to farm animals in a story. Similarly, the range of activities available for children to choose themselves is carefully planned and well supported. The adults develop the children's learning well in the outdoor area and activities flow freely from indoors to out. This was the case when the children were asked to find pieces of simple shape jigsaws in the outdoor area before assembling them in the classroom.

Good support is provided for the very small number of children who do not speak English as their first language. As a result their confidence in speaking English is growing. The children play and work well together and are happy to pursue their own interests. They are well versed in daily routines such as snack time and are keen to clean the tables afterwards - which they do vigorously! The adults monitor the children's choices carefully, and develop conversations through thoughtful interventions that extend use of language. They carefully record the children's learning and progress. The notes they collect form a comprehensive assessment of the progress made by each child.

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 large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are very satisfied with the school's work and the progress their child is making. A few parents and carers made additional comments recognising the benefits of individual support their child had been given; for example, to improve their spelling and, in the case of a child who did not speak English when they started school, to gain confidence in using the language.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Walcott 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 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 69 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	62	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	52	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	48	9	43	2	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	52	9	43	1	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	57	9	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	52	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	52	10	48	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)	7	33	12	57	2	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	38	13	62	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	38	11	52	2	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	43	12	57	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	43	12	57	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	48	11	52	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 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.



28 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walcott Primary School, Walcott, LN4 3SX

This letter is to tell you about what I found out during the recent inspection of your school and to thank you for taking the time to talk to me about your work and your school. I am grateful to those of you in Years 5 and 6 who took part of their lunchtime to talk to me about your films about the environment. They have made you very thoughtful about the environment.

Almost all of you all said that you enjoy school, and many of you said how much you enjoy the trips and visits you go on. You attend a good school which is very caring and keeps you as safe as possible. You all said that you feel safe at school, and those of you I spoke to told me that you found lessons interesting.

The headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants are helping you to make good progress. The teachers always mark your work but they don't always let you know what you have to do to improve. You don't have the chance to respond to the teachers' comments or make corrections or improvements. That's why I have asked the headteacher and teachers to look very closely at how you can get the most benefit from their comments when they mark your writing.

The school is led well, and the headteacher is constantly checking how well it is doing so that improvements can be made to the opportunities that the school provides for you. The school's plans for improvement include making links with other communities in this country and abroad. I have asked the headteacher to make sure these plans are put into place fully.

I hope that in the future your school is even more successful in helping you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Parker

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.