



Great Paxton C of E Primary School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 110815
Local Authority Cambridgeshire
Inspection number 288785
Inspection dates 29 - 30 January 2007
Reporting inspector Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Mount Pleasant
School category	Voluntary controlled		Great Paxton
Age range of pupils	4 - 11		St Neots
			Cambridgeshire
			PE19 6YJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01480 472132
Number on roll (school)	113	Fax number	01480 471735
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Graham Hughes
		Headteacher	Mrs Val Manning
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2002		

Age group	Inspection date(s)	Inspection no.
4 - 11	29 - 30 January 2007	288785

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school. Most pupils come from the village though a few come from beyond the school's catchment area. Almost all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils are from a mix of economic backgrounds and the number entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The number with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The full range of ability is represented in the intake, with children's mathematical development being particularly strong. Overall, attainment on entry is broadly in line with levels expected.

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 that is on an upward trend. There is a positive and supportive atmosphere throughout in which pupils' progress well in developing their personal and academic skills. As one parent said, 'A warm welcome greets you when entering school.' Another said, 'We feel that our daughter is learning each and every day and, above all, she enjoys school.'

Due to the good teaching and learning in Foundation Stage children settle well, are confident, achieve well and are well prepared for more formal learning. By the time that they enter Year 1, almost all achieve the expected goals and a significant minority exceed them, particularly in mathematical development and in communication, language and literacy. Due to the consistently good teaching in the other three classes pupils continue to make good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics, and they achieve well. Standards in tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated from well above average to average over recent years. Currently pupils in both Years 5 and 6 are attaining standards that are well above the national average in English and mathematics. Standards in science are not so high. This is because teachers do not check their pupils' progress in science sufficiently well as they move through the classes. As a result, teachers' plans for science are not closely enough matched to the differing learning needs of the pupils.

Pupils' personal and social development is good. This is due to the very good relationships that all the adults have with the pupils and which are based on the school's Christian ethos. Pupils have positive attitudes, behave well in lessons and around the school and their enjoyment of school is reflected in the very high levels of attendance. As one parent said, 'My son enjoys all aspects of learning; teachers are focused and positive and have great respect for the children.'

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are almost unanimous in saying that their children enjoy school, make good progress due to the good quality teaching and learning and that they are safe and well cared for. Inspection findings confirm these views. However, although pupils are exceptionally well cared for and supported, teachers do not review the pupils' targets in mathematics and English often enough. As a result, pupils are not always clear what their targets are and how they can improve.

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher is effective and has a clear vision for the school. She has a detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and because of her thorough and rigorous methods of checking the school's provision, the school has been able to develop an accurate and appropriately detailed plan to make further improvements. She is assisted well by the deputy headteacher and other members of staff, who all take their

responsibilities seriously and contribute well to the school's development. As a result, the school has shown good improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the development of the curriculum. This is now of good quality. The school is well-set to make further improvements and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science by ensuring that pupils' progress in developing scientific skills are regularly assessed and used to amend future plans.
- Make sure that individual targets for improvement in English and mathematics are set and reviewed more regularly so that pupils know what they can do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and pupils are on course to achieve well above average standards in the national tests at Year 6. Over recent years the school has been successful in ensuring that a greater proportion of pupils attain at least the nationally expected levels but too few have gained the higher level particularly in science. Things have improved in English and mathematics, but science still lags a little behind. The rigorous focus that has been placed on improving the performance of more able pupils is bearing fruit and all groups of pupils now achieve well. Because of the good provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, they make good progress against the targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes. Their personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Relationships are excellent between staff and pupils. A very consistent approach throughout the school ensures that pupils behave well. Their well-being is developed effectively and pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy life style. They can explain which foods are healthy and they enjoy the tasty and nutritious meals they eat at lunchtimes. They participate enthusiastically in sports and show a good understanding of why it is important to take part in them. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking responsibility and have plenty of opportunities to do so. They delight in being family leaders and supporting younger children, helping with the play equipment shed at lunchtimes as well as being members of the

influential school council. They show concern for the needs of others and are proud of the support that they have given to a partner school in Kenya. Pupils' positive attitudes and good achievement in basic skills prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good in all classes and there are some strong features. Teachers enjoy positive and supportive relationships with pupils. They value their views and listen well. This leads pupils to being confident in expressing their opinions. Teachers' planning for both mathematics and literacy is good. Teachers take care to ensure that the differing learning needs of the two year groups in each class are catered for well in these subjects. The school has also placed a very good emphasis on improving the pupils' learning. Teachers generally ensure that lessons are adapted to meet the preferred learning styles of their pupils. The interactive whiteboards, for example, are used well to engage and interest pupils – particularly the boys. These improvements in learning are having a positive impact on the pupils' achievement particularly in English and mathematics. In science, teachers' assessments are not sufficiently thorough to ensure that work is as well matched to pupils' learning needs as in other subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and has shown very considerable improvement since the previous inspection when there were significant weaknesses. All requirements are met, and the school now has a good quality long-term plan that outlines very clearly all the areas to be studied. In consequence, the curriculum is well balanced and meets pupils' needs well. The school has worked hard to plan a more creative and exciting curriculum that encourages pupils to think for themselves and stimulates their curiosity. Staff are keenly aware of the need to prepare pupils to live in a multi-cultural society and the provision for developing the pupils' understanding of other cultures is particularly strong. This includes making visits to a mosque and temple as well as developing very close links with a number of schools around the world. The school continues to provide a good range of additional activities. Good use is made of visits to enliven the curriculum. Many visitors enhance pupils' learning, particularly in the arts.

Care, guidance and support**Grade: 2**

Pupils are well cared for in a safe and happy environment where it is clear that every child matters. There are excellent procedures for safeguarding pupils. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. In addition, support for personal development is outstanding and children get along together exceptionally well. Arrangements for assessing how well pupils are doing academically are good for English and mathematics, though less secure for science. Although targets for improvement are set for English and mathematics, these are not checked often enough. As a result pupils are sometimes uncertain what these targets are and their knowledge of how they are improving is limited.

Leadership and management**Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The school has good systems for checking how well it is doing and this involves all staff and governors. As a result of the good understanding of the school's provision and pupils' achievements, improvement planning is effective and accurate. The school has tackled the issues raised in the previous inspection report effectively. Governors play an important role in checking progress against targets by frequently visiting the school and asking helpful and useful questions about how improvement targets are progressing. A real strength of the school is the high quality of teamwork and commitment which ensures that everyone plays a part in moving the school forward.

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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 behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	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.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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



31 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Great Paxton C of E Primary School, Mount Pleasant, Great Paxton,
Cambridgeshire, PE19 6YJ

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school. You told me that you enjoy school and I can see why! Here are the things that I found out:

- Your school is a good one because almost everyone makes good progress and you enjoy all that the school has to offer.
- Your teachers work hard to make sure that lessons are fun.
- Your behaviour is good. You know how to keep yourselves safe and you enjoy helping younger children and taking responsibility such as in your family groups in assembly.
- You have a good headteacher. Along with the governors and other teachers, she leads and manages the school well.

I have asked your teachers to make two improvements:

- To help you to attain higher standards in science by regularly checking your progress in science skills and making sure that the work is challenging for all of you.
- To make sure that you have a better understanding of your targets for literacy and mathematics and to talk with you about how well you are doing to meet your targets.

You can help to make the school continue to be successful by working hard and meeting the targets set for you.

With best wishes



Keith Sadler
Inspector