

Alkborough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117725
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	379460
Inspection dates	17–18 January 2012
Lead inspector	Roger Sadler

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Walker
Headteacher	Kristina Barrett
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Roger Sadler

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice by one additional inspector. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the other three classes was observed. All four teachers and the Early Years Foundation Stage manager were seen for either a whole lesson or part of a lesson. The inspector analysed pupils' work, particularly in mathematics and writing, and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, pupils and parents and carers. A discussion was also held with some pupils to ascertain their understanding of reading. The school's work and routines, including play times and an assembly were observed, and records from previous and the current school years were inspected. School documents, including the school improvement plan and safeguarding procedures and records were evaluated. The school's data in relation to pupils' attainment, progress and attendance were compared with national data. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to aid inspection planning. The inspector analysed the 28 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, along with questionnaires returned by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

All pupils attending this much-smaller-than-average primary school are of White British heritage and speak English as their main language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. An average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and the number of those with disabilities is also average. An above-average proportion of pupils has a statement of special educational needs. Since the previous inspection, the school has received Healthy School status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school has met the government floor standards for the last three years.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- This is an outstanding school. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard and pupils very much enjoy learning.
- Exceptionally effective leaders and managers and good governance have successfully built upon previous good provision and outcomes. All groups of pupils achieve exceptionally well and, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and a wide range of intervention strategies enable the school to identify those pupils who are not on course to meet their challenging targets and provide very effective support to accelerate their progress.
- Teaching is consistently outstanding. Teachers have appropriately high expectations of all pupils and motivate them to learn through well planned and highly stimulating activities. Relationships are excellent throughout this happy school.
- Pupils are punctual, behave exceptionally well and work and play together in a mature and sensible manner. Attendance is above average and still improving. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how they can keep themselves safe and act with careful regard for the safety of others. Pupils say that bullying does not happen but are confident that any incidents that might arise would be dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- Since the previous inspection, improvements to the curriculum have resulted in pupils having a good understanding of the diversity of ways of life in modern Britain. The curriculum is much better planned and considerably richer. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to deepen their understanding of the skills of writing and mathematics by using them in a wide range of subjects, for example in science, history and geography.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate learning and strengthen pupils' application of their basic skills of numeracy and literacy by:
 - providing even more opportunities for pupils to develop those writing skills that they acquire in English lessons to their work in other subjects, such as history or geography
 - using and applying their mathematical skills in a wider variety of subjects, including science.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

The large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires is happy with their children's progress. This is justified by inspection findings. As they move through the school, pupils make excellent progress. Positive attitudes to learning and excellent behaviour maximise the pace of learning during lessons. The number of pupils in each year group is sometimes very small and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities varies considerably from year to year. Children's skills when they enter the nursery are typical for their age. Children progress well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their strongest progress is typically in their personal, social and emotional development and this prepares them well for their future years at school.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils' attainment in reading is rising at a good rate due to the excellent teaching of reading. Pupils have a well developed knowledge of letters and sounds and use this effectively to decode unfamiliar texts. They show great enjoyment and understanding of the books they are reading. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress is good in Years 3 and 4 and excellent in Years 5 and 6. Attainment is significantly above average by Year 6, in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading is higher than in mathematics and writing because opportunities are occasionally missed to develop mathematics and writing skills in other subjects. Higher-attaining pupils are consistently challenged and supported to do their best. Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities make excellent progress throughout the school. This is due to high-quality support and very effective interventions based on the regular and rigorous assessments of these pupils' needs. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs strongly praised the support provided for their children's learning and personal development. Throughout the school, attainment in music and art is considerably above that expected for pupils of their ages.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is understandably rated highly by the large majority of parents and carers. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is invariably at least good and sometimes excellent. Assessment information is fully used to tailor provision to meet the needs of each individual child. Parents and carers are fully confident that their

children are being taught well and making good progress. Excellent and exciting learning opportunities are provided. The outdoor areas are exceptionally rich and provide stimuli for learning that the children thoroughly enjoy using, even in the very cold weather of the first day of the inspection. Children are taught to be increasingly independent and to behave well and the Early Years Foundation Stage unit provides excellent preparation for their next stage of education.

Excellent teaching continues in Key Stages 1 and 2. Strong attention is given in lessons and assemblies to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Well trained teaching assistants are invariably fully deployed, either in the classroom, or by withdrawing individual or small groups of pupils to ensure that teaching fully matches the wide range of ages and abilities in each class, especially those who have special educational needs or disabilities or those who have been identified as not fully achieving their potential. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge ensures that planning meets the needs of all pupils and that lessons are interesting and engaging and that expectations are high. Since the previous inspection, improvements have been made to deepen pupils' knowledge of their own learning and to help them work towards clear targets. The school is aware that there is more to be done to strengthen this aspect further in some classes. In lessons, all teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well and pupils regularly use and develop their ICT skills. For example, Year 6 pupils produced some excellent multi-media presentations on racism, following their visit to Glanford Park in Scunthorpe, when they were taught about the 'show racism the red card' project. They used these presentations to develop younger pupils' understanding of racism.

The school has worked effectively over the last two years to improve the curriculum and the teaching of reading, especially for younger pupils. Attention is now being turned to reviewing and improving provision for reading in Key Stage 2 classes so that any gaps in pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds can be filled. Guided reading sessions have improved this year; pupils are regularly heard reading independently by teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers, and the school's excellent home reading programme, results in many parents and carers having a very positive effect on their children's progress in reading.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Throughout the school, care, guidance and support and links with parents and carers are excellent. Strong induction arrangements and high expectations of behaviour mean that the youngest children soon learn to cooperate and behave well. There are strong and sensitive systems to manage pupils' behaviour and to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils, as they grow older, progressively learn to relate to one another and to adults and visitors in school exceptionally well. Behaviour during the inspection was excellent and pupils say that behaviour is always very good and none could recall any incidents of anti-social behaviour or bullying. They put this down to the school's family atmosphere and how well all adults in school care for them. Consequently, they feel totally safe and secure and enjoy working and playing with each other at school. Parents and carers say that behaviour in the school is consistently very good and that they feel that their children are very safe. They also speak exceptionally highly of the school and praise its 'family atmosphere'. All parents and carers indicated that they would recommend this school

to others. The caring ethos of the school is typified through older pupils acting as buddies to younger ones or other pupils who need additional support and attention. Pupils particularly enjoy the many special events provided for them at school, such as their participation in the Young Voices festival in Sheffield in December. They very much enjoy assemblies and singing and love to demonstrate their singing of their signature song 'I've got the power in me'. Attendance is above average and rising, due to the school's strong procedures to ensure good attendance and because pupils enjoy school so much.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's inspirational leadership and relentless pursuit of excellence are the main reasons why pupils' achievement has risen steadily over recent years and is now outstanding. The leaders and managers of teaching and learning are excellent. Staff training, monitoring and evaluation and performance management are carefully integrated so that teachers' skills are progressively developed. This results in consistency in matters such as how pupils' work is marked or how behaviour and relationships are managed. Each pupil's progress is meticulously assessed and regular meetings are held with staff where the performance of each individual pupil is discussed and planned. Any necessary additional support is provided and the effect of this is continually monitored. Strong systems for monitoring and evaluating and the school's track record in improving attainment and provision, indicate that the school has strong capacity to continue to improve in the future. Leaders other than the headteacher, such as the special educational needs coordinator and the Early Years Foundation Stage manager, carry out their roles effectively and have an important impact on improving provision and pupils' achievement.

The governing body has a clear understanding of its role. Members of the governing body show a clear understanding of the school's strengths and where further improvement is needed and are skilful in providing rigorous challenge and support to the school. The school improvement plan concentrates on very appropriate priorities. Safeguarding arrangements, including child protection, risk assessments, and internet safety are thorough and comprehensive and fully meet current requirements. Regular training ensures that all adults are fully up to date with how best to ensure the school is safe for all. Members of the governing body show strong understanding of their responsibility to safeguarding, and the chair of the governing body has recently undertaken a comprehensive review of the quality of the school's safeguarding procedures.

The curriculum is good. It is well planned and has been thoroughly overhauled since the previous inspection. The curriculum provides very strong support for pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All pupils are valued, the school provides equality of opportunity for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds and discrimination is not tolerated.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



19 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Alkborough Primary School, Scunthorpe, DN15 9JG

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when I inspected your school recently. I was very pleased to see the very sensible and grown-up way you behave and I liked the way you play happily together and work so hard in lessons. You told me that you feel very safe in school and that all the pupils behave exceptionally well. I was very impressed with how many of the older pupils help others at playtime.

You go to a school which has improved well since the last inspection and is now outstanding. You are making rapid progress in your reading, writing and mathematics. The headteacher and teachers have worked hard to make sure that your lessons are as interesting as possible. Those of you who went to the Young Voices festival at Sheffield told me all about the exciting time you had.

All the parents and carers I met on the second day of the inspection told me that all the adults in the school do their very best to look after you all, especially those who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. To make the school even better, I have asked that teachers help you to develop the work you are doing in literacy and mathematics lessons in other subjects. You can help too by continuing to work hard and helping each other all you can.

I shall take away many good memories of your school. Thank you again for being so helpful and courteous.

Yours sincerely

Roger Sadler
Lead inspector

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