

The Market Rasen Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120577
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380066
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead 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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	263
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Parkinson
Headteacher	Andrew Smith
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sue Hall	Additional inspector
Kim Bower	Additional inspector
Mike Williams	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed nine teachers in 20 lessons. They observed four guided group-reading sessions and heard 14 children of mixed abilities, from Key Stage 1 and 2, read individually. The inspectors also held meetings with groups of pupils, with senior leaders and with representatives of the governing body. They looked at data about achievement across the school and examined samples of pupils' recent work. They scrutinised documents, including the school's self-evaluation information, the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings and a sample of whole-school policies. They examined evidence regarding the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors took account on the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Inspectors analysed 96 questionnaires received from parents and carers, 15 from members of staff and 118 from pupils.

Information about the school

This is a larger than the average-sized primary school. A large majority of pupils are of White British background. A very small number speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below that seen in many schools. Most of these pupils have behaviour, emotional and social difficulties or speech, language and communication difficulties. A higher proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs than is typical, with most of these pupils having autistic spectrum disorders. The school meets the current government floor standards. There is provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in two parallel Reception and Year 1 classes. The headteacher was appointed in September 2010. The school has achieved the Artsmark Gold award and has Healthy Schools status.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. There has been considerable improvement during the last year and a half because leadership and management are now good with the drive and determination of the new headteacher being a key strength.
- All groups of pupils now achieve at least satisfactorily from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards. There is, however, a wider gap between the standards attained by girls and boys across the school than nationally. While the gap is narrowing, boys do not always achieve all they are capable of. Staff do not always demand enough of boys.
- Standards are in line with national averages. Pupils often read quite well, but their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and the strategies they use to work out unfamiliar words are variable. Pupils do not always use a wide or descriptive enough vocabulary, which has an adverse impact on their writing.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory and there is a growing proportion that is good. The planning of activities is variable and does not always ensure the best level of challenge for all. At times, pupils are not fully engaged in all activities and discussions. When they have to listen for too long, this affects their concentration.
- The behaviour of the very large majority of pupils is good and managed well. The school values all pupils. They say they feel secure in school and enjoy being there. Attendance levels are high.
- Parents and carers are pleased with recent changes, noting that, 'The school has made visible, beneficial improvements over the past two years.' The leadership team, staff and governing body are working well together and challenging each other, making sure that the school has good capacity to improve further.

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Close the achievement gap between boys and girls by:
 - ensuring that activities interest and motivate boys and girls
 - checking that all teachers demand as much of boys as they do of girls, especially in reading and writing.

- Extend pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills by:
 - providing more planned opportunities to discuss their ideas with others in order to improve their writing
 - making sure that pupils develop a secure knowledge of phonics in order to work out unfamiliar words.

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - improving the planning of activities to make sure the best level of challenge for groups of different abilities is achieved
 - checking that all pupils are fully involved in each part of the lesson and are not passive listeners.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start in the Reception Year with skills at the level expected for their age. Over several years the boys have not done as well as the girls and, as they have moved through the school, the gap has widened. The school now has detailed and regular assessment procedures that show the rate of progress for all pupils is increasing. The attainment gap between girls and boys is narrowing. Pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs and the very small number speaking English as an additional language, now make at least satisfactory progress. In 2011, there was considerable improvement and standards were in line with national averages. Lesson observations and samples of pupils' work confirm that pupils are on track to do even better this year. This includes the proportion of Year 6 pupils set to achieve the expected levels in both mathematics and English. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are average.

Pupils enjoy reading and like the many new books recently purchased. Most attempt to use a variety of strategies, including their knowledge of phonics, to help them read unfamiliar words. When they reach 'tricky' words though, not all have a clear idea of what to try next. Pupils' speaking skills are mixed and staff sometimes miss the opportunities to demand more in pupils' responses to questions, and extend their

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vocabulary in order to improve their writing.

There are good opportunities for pupils to work with a partner, or in groups, which helps develop their social skills. For example, older pupils enjoyed discussing their ideas and using what they knew about pioneers to write about their successes or failures. They referred to mini-biographies and focused on the use of imaginative connectives to create a biography. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage explored the properties of three-dimensional shapes, used their skills to build castles of wooden blocks and extended their use of mathematical language by discussing the number of faces and edges of the shapes.

Quality of teaching

Virtually all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire consider that their children are well taught. Lesson observations and the sample of pupils' recent work indicate, however, that there is some inconsistency. Staff use praise well to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Teachers are often enthusiastic in how they present tasks and a good pace of learning is maintained in the most successful lessons. Mid-task reviews are used effectively to check pupils' understanding. Reminders are given to make sure pupils know how much time is available to complete tasks. Teaching assistants are used effectively when working with groups of different abilities, including older pupils with behavioural difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders.

The best planning of activities shows very effective use of assessment information to provide challenging tasks for all groups of pupils. Other planning is, at times, too general and, for example, the purpose and aims of guided reading sessions are vague. The introductions to some lessons are lengthy, including for children in the Reception groups and Key Stage 1. Pupils then do not have sufficient opportunity to discuss their ideas with others. This affects their concentration and, sometimes, their behaviour.

Staff provide a curriculum that is based on real-life situations to interest and motivate the pupils, especially the boys. For example, older pupils produced non-chronological reports based on a busy place such as an airport or transport terminal. With good encouragement to focus on how their senses would be stimulated, pupils then made good progress in producing descriptive pieces of writing. Children in a Reception/Year 1 class also made good progress in describing life in a castle many years ago. They looked at illustrations and identified how the cook often had to sleep on the floor and got food from the garden, not a shop. Such opportunities help pupils develop their social and cultural understanding well. Pupils say they particularly like the activities taught by a specialist sports teacher.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

All parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are confident that the school keeps their children safe. Discussions with pupils confirm that most

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have a clear understanding of what bullying is, and know that it is not tolerated in school. They are able to explain what cyber-bullying is, and know that name-calling and racial stereotyping are inappropriate. Pupils of all ages and backgrounds get on well together. They willingly take on responsibilities in and around the school and are often keen to be elected to the school council.

Most parents and carers also believe that behaviour in school is good, although several have a perception that there is some bad behaviour and that this is not dealt with well. Inspection observations, pupil records and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that behaviour is typically good. There are effective measures to manage the small number of pupils with particular difficulties so that their behaviour has limited impact on the learning of others. The number of exclusions has been considerably reduced this year.

There is a clear focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is epitomised in very successful acts of collective worship focused on 'acts of kindness' where lively storytelling, coupled with opportunities to consider possible acts of kindness they could do, resulted in pupils' thoughtful contributions. Attendance is high and the school takes a clear stance to discourage holidays in term time.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has made a significant contribution to school improvement. His determination and drive are pivotal reasons for recent progress. The school has successfully redefined its aims with a greater focus on achievement. Extended assessment procedures have ensured that all staff now know exactly what levels individuals and groups of pupils are working at and where improvement is still required. There is now no teaching that is inadequate and a growing proportion that is good. These changes for the better demonstrate the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

The leadership team has been extended with an increasing role for literacy, numeracy and key stage leaders in monitoring and evaluation activities. This distributed leadership is ensuring all staff take more responsibility for standards across the school. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is new, but the recent sharp focus on the teaching of phonics indicates a clear grasp of priorities and a determination to improve provision. Staff express strong commitment to the clearly communicated vision for the future development of the school. They are working closely together to maintain the rapid momentum of improvement already established.

The school's self-evaluation procedures are good. The headteacher's evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning are accurate and are driving continuing professional development activities. The governing body is led well, and with a tight focus on standards and what contributes to improvement. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are carefully managed. Equality of opportunity

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is promoted appropriately with a strong focus on the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. However, boys still have further to go to close the gap between their attainment and that of the girls.

The school is a cohesive community that looks outwards to learn from other cultures within Britain and globally. The curriculum engages pupils' interests and promotes their spiritual, moral social and cultural development well, while reflecting the school's key values. Links with parents and carers are effective and most feel well informed of their children's progress. The school is developing links with other successful settings and learning from their effective practice.

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 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.

10 February 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of The Market Rasen Church of England Primary School, Market Rasen, LN8 3BL

Thank you very much for making my colleagues and me feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We all enjoyed talking to you and listening to your ideas, especially when chatting to groups of you, and at lunchtime. I liked seeing how children in the Reception groups enjoyed finding out about life in a castle and making model castles. I was also impressed by how pupils in Years 5 and 6 were keen to improve their biographies of famous pioneers

Your school is satisfactory. These are things that we like about your school.

- Your school is improving. In the last year and a half, your education has improved considerably.
- Your headteacher has lots of ideas about what still needs to be improved.
- All the staff and governors (who are the people who help to run the school) are working well together to check how things can become more consistent.
- Most of you behave well and are polite and friendly to each other and visitors.
- Your attendance is high, which shows most of you like coming to school.

These are the things we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- to help the boys make more progress so that they can catch up with the girls
- to help you improve your speaking and writing by giving you more opportunities to practise these skills
- make sure that the planning of lessons is always good so that activities are just hard enough for you and you do not have to listen to adults for too long.

You can also help by making sure that you always try your hardest, join in discussions and do not wait for other people to give their ideas first.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall
Lead inspector

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