

Spilsby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120477
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358769
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cathy Locke
Headteacher	Anne Pinnock
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, observing 8 teachers, many of them at least twice. They also observed some sessions where pupils were withdrawn for additional support. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's methods for tracking pupils' progress, at a range of school documents, including its policies, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring records, an extensive sample of pupils' work, and reports from the School Improvement Partner. Twenty-seven responses by parents or carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were received and considered, along with questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors explored whether teaching has become more consistent across phases since the last inspection.
- They clarified whether the progress being made by pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has improved since the last inspection.
- They investigated why there were differences in the school's self-evaluation of learning and of teaching.
- They ascertained the extent to which the leadership of the school has the necessary knowledge, drive, and ambition to secure any necessary improvements.

Information about the school

Spilsby is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of girls is well below that normally found. An average percentage of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is well below average. All pupils speak English at home. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average, though the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. A new headteacher has been in post since the previous inspection. An experienced acting headteacher is temporarily leading the school. The school has, in recent years, faced turnover of staffing and leadership. The school holds the Artsmark award and 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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It has taken successful action to address most of its recent staffing difficulties. Stability at senior leadership level has yet to be fully secured, though new appointments are imminent.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils join the school with skills very much as expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. Positive indications of improving academic progress are now clearly evident, particularly with younger children, but the legacy of previous underachievement is still apparent in older classes. Though the school now has an accurate picture of pupils' starting points as they change years, work is not always planned accurately enough to fully meet their learning needs. Inspection evidence shows that some pupils are now learning well and making good progress, but this is inconsistent across the school. Progress at present is best in Key Stage 1, and this is a clear improvement since the last inspection.

Pupils are well known by the staff. Strong support is given to those pupils who have additional, sometimes quite severe, needs and this helps them to benefit from school life. Teaching is satisfactory. It is now much more consistent between key stages. Teachers measure accurately what pupils know and can do. However, this information is not always used well enough to ensure work offers enough challenge to pupils, nor to guide them on what they need to do next to improve. This inaccurate planning, in particular, can cause the pace of learning to slow. In addition, opportunities are sometimes missed to set work which encourages all pupils to work independently in lessons.

School self-evaluation is largely accurate about pupils' achievement. However, much of the finer detail of the evaluation of learning throughout the school, and in different subjects, lacks precision. It does not always focus on the impact being made by the actions the school takes to improve the progress pupils make. This leads to a lack of sharpness in plans for further developments. The school, through close work with its professional partners, has already identified this as an issue. The school has satisfactory capacity to secure further improvements.

Up to 40% of the 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to set work which consistently challenges pupils of all abilities in lessons

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- ensuring that marking consistently informs pupils about what they need to do to improve, and is followed up to check that guidance has been followed
- providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently, thinking things through for themselves.
- Improve the quality of leadership at all levels by checking much more closely and objectively on the quality of learning taking place in lessons.
- Improve the effectiveness of development planning by
 - evaluating rigorously and succinctly the impact of different initiatives on improving the rate at which pupils learn
 - focusing sharply on achieving measurable success in a small number of actions.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils like being in lessons and are keen to learn. They willingly do as they are asked by teachers, and try hard with their work. When given opportunities to carry out investigations, or to work as a group to solve a problem, they apply themselves well, and are quite prepared to share and explain their finding with their classmates. They enjoy work that is interesting, well explained and which presents a challenge. Most quietly and politely persevere even when they find the work too easy, too hard or not engaging. However, on these occasions, some pupils of all abilities lose concentration, which further limits their learning. Pupils look at marking, but there is little evidence that they apply any guidance on how to improve. There is little difference in the rates of achievement across different groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates because of the good extra support they receive.

Pupils say they like school. They appreciate and respond well to the opportunities the school provides for them. They take a pride in their own achievements, and are always ready to recognise and celebrate the achievements of others. They have some awareness of different religions and cultures. The majority of pupils have good self-discipline, but a significant minority, girls as well as boys, do not always conduct themselves as well outside lessons, when some pupils become a little unruly when playing. Though pupils are quite adamant that bullying is rare, several have concerns about 'some children charging around, shouting, pushing and shoving'. Pupils make a helpful contribution to school life as school councillors or as peer mediators, and give generously to charitable causes. They take part in local activities and understand their immediate community, but their understanding of the wider world is more limited.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3

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

How effective is the provision?

All lessons are characterised by good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils work in well-organised and calm learning environments. In the best lessons, pupils are expected to take the initiative in solving difficult problems for themselves. This was seen in several lessons, but is best exemplified in a Reception class lesson when the small children were expected to take responsibility for getting themselves ready for physical activity. They fastened their own buttons, got their jumpers on and off, and put their shoes on the correct feet with minimal adult help. The smiles which followed clearly demonstrated their pride in their achievement. Some lessons do not move forward quickly enough when pupils have to sit and listen patiently to extended explanations from teachers. Accurate assessments regularly take place, but the information is not used systematically to inform teachers' planning. Consequently, lesson planning is sometimes concerned with the activities pupils will experience, rather than the skills they will develop to help them to move forward, and though pupils speak enthusiastically about what they are doing, they have much less confidence in explaining what they are learning.

The curriculum meets requirements, with some emphasis on the arts reflected in the Artsmark award, but has undergone limited development in recent years. Its structure is currently under review, including how subjects are linked together so that pupils can practise what they have learned in one subject in a range of others. Extra-curricular

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activities, such as visits to places of interest, competitive sport, gymnastics and choral singing are well liked and taken up with enthusiasm.

The care provided for vulnerable pupils is particularly strong, and is appreciated by parents and carers. Dedicated adults give good attention to detail in ensuring that all the relevant safeguarding procedures are fully adhered to. Guidance and support for pupils as a whole, especially concerning behaviour outside the classroom, has not been consistent, but recently introduced changes to management roles and responsibilities are addressing this issue.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of the other adults in the school. Staff work well together, they have ambition, and they are fully committed to promoting pupils' better progress and higher attainment. Due to the illness of the headteacher, and with no deputy headteacher currently in post, the drive to secure improvement has previously been limited. Leaders at all levels have not maintained a sharp enough focus on pupils' learning when they monitor lessons. Improvement plans cover a wide range of areas, but lack a precise identification of the most pressing priorities where success can be measured. Nonetheless, morale is good, and there is a positive team spirit within the school, shared with its local community.

Governance is satisfactory. Some members of the governing body give very generously of their time and provide a great deal of support to the school. Due to inexperience, they are only now holding the school sufficiently to account for its performance. The school takes its responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding very seriously because the promotion of pupils' individual interests is at the heart of its work. Safeguarding requirements are met well. There is no discernible bias or discrimination here because pupils openly recognise and celebrate diversity. Staff ensure that pupils have equal opportunity to make satisfactory progress.

The school's provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. Its internal and local dimensions are strong. The school is seeking ways to extend pupils' appreciation and understanding of other communities both nationally and globally. Parents and carers hold the school in good regard for the quality of its work in ensuring the welfare of their children. However, the school has limited success in securing parents' and carers' support for its work in raising pupils' awareness of the wider world in which they live.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with knowledge, understanding and skills that match those expected for their age nationally, though there can be variations from year to year. Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the solid links between parents and carers, and school. Their behaviour is good. They get on well together, whether helping each other to dress, or sharing their toys when playing. Adults are very attentive to ensuring that children are kept safe, and all welfare requirements are met. The children make satisfactory progress overall. There are clear signs of recent improvement as the impact of leaders' good work on day-to-day assessment, planning for the next steps of learning, and role modelling begins to take effect. All children have easy access to reading, writing and mathematics resources, so they grow in confidence in literacy and numeracy work. The balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning is not fully effective: children sometimes do not spend enough time working on activities of their own choice, and this does not allow them to become deeply involved in discovering and exploring new things. Some opportunities for learning are missed, particularly when children are working outdoors.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	3

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Stage	
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Views of parents and carers

A much smaller proportion of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire than is usual. They expressed strongly positive views about the school. All who responded said their children enjoyed school. They were also unanimous that they were happy with their children's experiences of school. Most felt that behaviour is good, although a few had concerns about behaviour outside classrooms. Inspectors saw boisterous play, but no bad behaviour, and the school is taking action to calm playtimes. Some parents or carers felt that the school does not help their children to have a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors found that children take plenty of exercise and eat healthily, and have a satisfactory understanding of the effects of exercise and diet on their bodies.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Spilsby 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	30	19	70	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	33	16	59	1	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	7	26	18	67	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	30	18	67	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	9	33	16	59	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	30	18	67	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	30	13	48	4	15	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)	8	30	16	59	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	30	18	67	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	15	19	70	2	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	19	15	56	3	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	5	19	16	59	4	15	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	41	16	59	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 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



9 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Spilsby Primary School, Spilsby, PE23 5EP

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to us when we inspected your school recently. We were really impressed with your good attitudes to learning in class, though some of you can get a little too excited outside the classrooms.

We found that Spilsby is a satisfactory school, which is helping you to make satisfactory progress. The adults in the school are fully committed to keeping you safe and happy. Your parents and carers recognise this because they all reported that you enjoy school, and that they are happy with your experiences here.

However, we also found that the school could do some things better, which would help you learn more than you already do, and so we have asked the adults in school to do the following:

- make sure that the work in lessons is set at just the right level, with nothing either too easy or too hard
- give you more guidance on how to improve your work
- give you more opportunities to carry out independent investigations so that you can find things out for yourselves, without being simply given facts to learn
- check more closely and more often that you are actually learning lots of new things, and making good progress in lessons.
- when planning improvements for the school, plan only a small number of actions that will make a difference to your learning, and are simple to check on.

You can help with the first of these by letting teachers know, very politely of course, if the work they have set for you is too easy or too hard for you. You can help with the second, too, by always acting on what teachers suggest you do to improve. Please continue to be the polite and sensible young people you already are in lessons, and try to behave similarly when out of the classroom.

May I give you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry McDermott

Lead Inspector

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