

The St Gilbert of Sempringham Church of England Primary School, Pointon

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120606
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358802
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2010
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Celia Paterson
Headteacher	Emma Hunt
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2008
School address	West Road Pointon, Sleaford NG34 0NA
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Email address	admin@pointon.lincs.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2010
Inspection number	358802

Registered Childcare provision	St Gilbert's Extended Services
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	25
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	Not previously inspected

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed seven lessons and saw five teachers. Meetings were held with staff, representatives of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including pupils' work, minutes of governing body meetings, the school development plan, progress monitoring records and school policies. The responses to 36 parental questionnaires were scrutinised.

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

- How well does teaching enable all pupils to make progress in the mixed-age classes?
- What has been the impact of the action taken by the school to raise standards in pupils' writing?
- What is the impact of the extended services available within the school?

Information about the school

This is a small primary school where most pupils are from White British backgrounds. None speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than in most schools, and the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The St Gilberts' Extended Services operate a Kindergarten and extended day provision on the school site. This was privately managed until August 2010 when it changed to be under the control of the governing body. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made within the Reception/Year 1 class and through the extended services for the younger children. During the past year there has been significant staff absence through maternity leave, but staffing returned to normal in September 2010. The school has obtained National Healthy Schools Status and has been awarded the Activemark.

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

The school provides a satisfactory education. Attainment at the end of Year 6 varies widely because of the small year groups, but is average overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress from starting points that are around expected levels, as a result of satisfactory teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and work hard to improve the progress of all pupils in the mixed-age classes. Targeted training and support, has resulted in teachers' developing their skills in helping pupils improve their writing, and current work shows that attainment is now the same as in other subjects. Assessment systems are not used consistently to ensure work is sufficiently challenging for all pupils to enable them to work independently, or for the more-able pupils to make greater progress. Marking of pupils' work has improved since the previous inspection with advice usually given on how to improve. However, marking does not clearly show pupils which National Curriculum level at which they are working or how to progress to the next level. Similarly, although pupils have targets, these are not always linked to the small steps they need to attain at a higher level. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been revised so that most of it is now provided within the classroom, and it now ensures that these pupils make progress in line with their peers.

Relationships are excellent throughout the school and pupils are polite and friendly to visitors. Within classes and around the school the behaviour is good. There is a good partnership between the school and parents and carers. Their suggestions led to new fencing around the school and improved security, clearly contributing to the pupils saying they feel very safe.

The school has a very accurate awareness of its own strengths and weaknesses, and the school improvement plan is focused on the right issues to raise attainment. Tracking systems clearly identify the progress of each pupil and this information is shared with parents and carers. The headteacher sets a clear direction and staff work well with her. Teaching is improving and more lessons are now good, although monitoring has not yet ensured consistency in practice. All teachers now identify what pupils are going to learn, although the use of specific criteria to help pupils monitor their own success or progress in meeting these learning intentions is inconsistent. Taken together, these features mean that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The extended day provision helps to ensure continuity in learning and support which benefits all pupils. The outstanding care within the provision contributes well to the whole-school ethos. The closer links with the Reception class ensure children are very well prepared for their move into the main school.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that by July 2011 the majority of lessons are good or better, by:
 - ensuring that teachers make consistent use of assessment data to set challenging work for all ability groups, especially the most able pupils
 - developing a consistent approach to identifying success criteria for groups of pupils in lessons that are realistic and able to be monitored by pupils
 - improving the quality of marking and the use of targets so that pupils always know the levels they are working at and how to get to the next level
 - improving monitoring procedures to ensure that best practice is shared.
- 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.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils and staff have excellent relationships, ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning and achieve satisfactorily. They really enjoy practical work, as was seen in a science lesson when they used a range of materials to investigate solutions. The younger children also enjoyed creative activities such as colouring and making crowns. Pupils have good opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning, for example for research into unidentified flying objects. The additional support provided for pupils who need extra help, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensures that all make satisfactory progress. There is a wide ability range in most lessons, and not all pupils are challenged sufficiently to make the progress of which they are capable. This is particularly the case for the most-able pupils, who sometimes finish their tasks quickly but are not stretched with extension work so they can reach higher levels of attainment.

Pupils say they get on well together and that they all give each other good support. They enjoy school and are very clear that they feel safe because adults look after them and the site is 'so secure you cannot get out'. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles by eating fruit and drinking water as well as participating regularly in sport, reflecting the school's Healthy Schools status and its Activemark award. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community by helping in class, through the school council and with duties such as monitoring late arrivals. In the wider community they join in sport competitions, entertain local residents around Christmas time, support or organise local and church activities as well raising funds for charities.

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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	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	2
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

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?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons which are enjoyable and interesting. They make satisfactory use of assessment data on pupils' prior attainment so ensure the work is set at the appropriate level for the class. However, within groups the work is not always sufficiently challenging for all pupils. In most lessons, teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to engage pupils during the introductory part of the lesson. In one lesson the teacher used other resources including large prepared sheets of paper which supported the teaching strategy she was using particularly well.

The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs and interest of pupils, and particularly to ensure their enjoyment. It is modified well for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities but does not always give the more-able pupils the opportunities to extend their learning in lessons. There are a good range of well-supported activities during the extended day. The school's remote location and the small year groups limit the opportunities for pupils to have trips, but an annual residential visit is arranged through collaboration with other local schools. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about world faiths and cultures within the curriculum, and some links have been developed whereby pupils can send e-mails to children in a London school where pupils come from very different backgrounds.

Procedures to promote improved attendance and good behaviour have been effective. Transition arrangements are good, especially for those joining the school. Health and

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safety are given high priority throughout the school. There are good arrangements to support pupils with specific needs with teaching assistants trained well and used effectively. In the extended provision setting, well trained and conscientious staff ensure that pupils are always well supervised and have a good range of enjoyable stimulating activities to join in with.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is supported by staff and the governing body in her drive and vision for improving the school further. Improvement is particularly evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met and provides satisfactory support and challenge to the leadership team. Leaders know what to do to improve standards and provision, as shown by the improving standards in writing. Some systems, such as assessment and tracking, are new and not yet fully embedded in practice.

Every pupil's progress is monitored carefully and analysed to identify any differences in achievement, and action is taken where necessary. The school's sound work to promote equal opportunities and avoid discrimination ensures that variations in progress between groups are eliminated and the school is generally calm and purposeful.

Leaders have developed the school as a cohesive community. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the community their pupils come from. There are purposeful partnerships with many local schools and the church. Leaders have good plans to develop meaningful and regular links further afield, but these are at an early stage. Parents and carers are regularly consulted through questionnaires. Several come into school to support learning and others support the school as parent governors or members of the parent teacher association. The day-to-day management of the extended services provision is good and staff are all fully involved in supporting learning.

Safeguarding procedures meet national requirements, although some are generic local authority procedures which are not fully identified as school procedures. The review of documents is not planned sufficiently. All aspects of risk assessment are secure and the required checks on adults who work in school are carried out. The curriculum ensures that pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. The school works well with external agencies when necessary to support pupils, and staff are well trained in child protection procedures.

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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	2
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	3
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

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's education. Children start in the kindergarten with varying skills but many below those expected for their age. They make good progress towards the early learning goals as a result of good teaching in a stimulating environment. At the age of four most children stay at the school and move into the Reception class. Within the mixed-age class the children work well with the Year 1 pupils and mature quickly in their personal skills following the examples set by the older children. Children enter Year 1 with skills and understanding in line with national expectations.

Teaching and learning across the provision are good, although sometimes less effective in Reception where the demands of the wider ability range present a greater challenge. The environment and curriculum promote children's progress well in all six areas of learning. All children have good opportunities to choose their activities which are very well planned and supervised. Within the classroom children behave very well and are polite and sensible. They enjoy the activities such as the use of computers and role play activities. The younger children, including those aged two, are effectively supported by the well-qualified and caring staff. The outdoor area has recently been improved and gives exciting and stimulating opportunities for all children especially the younger ones.

Assessments of individual children's progress are used well to feed into their 'learning journals' and the Early Years Foundation Stage profile. Welfare provision is outstanding and the classrooms and the playground are secure and safe areas. Children are taught how to stay safe and there are well established routines to ensure hygiene and health and safety procedures are followed.

The leaders of the two areas work extremely well together and good continuity of provision is supported by children working and playing together at times during the week.

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Also the staff at all levels interchange as required during the week and children get to know them all. Leaders have a good awareness of the strengths of the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as the areas for development. Strong and effective partnerships with parents and carers and with the local authority support ongoing improvement.

The registered childcare for children aged from 0-3 complies with the requirements for registration. The quality of provision, outcomes and leadership and management for these children are all outstanding.

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 proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was above average, and the overwhelming majority say that they are very happy with all aspects of the school. As one parent commented, 'The children are offered a caring and nurturing environment, staff are approachable and respond to any questions or suggestions we have, the children are caring of each other and show respect to all in the school environment.' A very few parents or carers raised individual concerns. These were taken up with the school, but followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The St Gilbert of Sempringham Church of England Primary School, Pointon 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 65 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	78	8	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	75	9	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	64	13	36	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	53	17	47	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	58	15	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	72	8	22	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	69	9	25	2	6	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)	16	44	13	36	2	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	56	14	39	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	47	17	47	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	72	8	22	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	72	9	25	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	75	9	25	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. 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 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.



25 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The St Gilbert of Sempringham Church of England Primary School, Pointon, Sleaford, NG34 0NA

Thank you for welcoming us and helping us when we came to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you in lessons and around the school. Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. You are making satisfactory progress in your work and reach average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you reach the end of Year 6. There are many good things about your school and these are a few of them.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Kindergarten and extended day facilities provide outstanding care for you all.

You are happy and enjoy being at school because the adults look after you well.

You all get on well together.

You told us you feel very safe in school.

There is a good partnership between the school and your parents and carers.

There are a few things we have asked your school to do to make it even better.

Ensure that teachers make consistent use of assessment data to set challenging work for you, especially for those who find work easy.

Always give you clear learning aims in lessons that make you think hard but reachable, and encourage you to monitor your own progress against them.

Improve the quality of marking and the use of targets so that you know the levels you are working at and how to get to the next level.

You can help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead inspector

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