

# Boston West Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	120426
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380018
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	309
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andy Fisher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mike Schofield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 November 2008
<b>School address</b>	Sussex Avenue Boston PE21 7QG
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas

Additional inspector

Sonia Bosworth

Additional inspector

Paul Heery

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 26 lessons and 12 teachers were observed teaching. The inspectors also made shorter visits to several other lessons, observed an assembly and looked at pupils' work. They heard pupils read and analysed the school's data on their progress. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including procedures for keeping pupils safe. Responses to the 125 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as those completed by staff and pupils, were analysed.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. About 11 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is also below average. The school met the 2011 government floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Eco-schools Green Flag, Woodland Trust Green Tree Gold and Artsmark Gold Awards as well as Healthy School Status.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

### Key findings

- This is a good school. The inspirational headteacher has successfully developed a strong sense of teamwork, and ambition amongst staff that all pupils should succeed. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive. As one commented, 'I couldn't ask for a better school for my child.' The school is not yet outstanding because teaching is not consistently of a high enough quality to ensure that pupils make excellent progress.
- Achievement is good and all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good overall progress. As a result, standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. The good teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is having a positive impact on pupils' reading skills, which are well above average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is clearly demonstrated by their above average attendance and exemplary behaviour. They willingly take on responsibilities and contribute much to the school community. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and their parents and carers agree that they are kept very safe.
- Pupils' good progress is due to much good and some outstanding teaching. There are, however, a few inconsistencies. Sometimes pupils spend too long listening to lengthy introductions and occasionally not enough time is left at the end of lessons to review and consolidate learning. The marking of pupils' work does not always provide enough guidance on what they must do in order to improve.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are good and the school has good capacity to improve further. Imaginative curriculum planning, particularly for outdoor learning, means that learning is purposeful and enjoyable. The development of pupils' interest in the world around them makes a strong contribution to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, topic work does not always ensure that pupils make continual advances in the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To raise achievement further, raise the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
  - teachers' explanations are not too long so that full advantage is taken of pupils' capacity for independent learning
  - enough time is allowed at the end of lessons to review and consolidate learning
  - there is consistency in the marking of pupils' work so that they are given clear guidance on how to improve and that they respond to the advice given.
- Ensure that the planning of the different subjects taught through topic work provides continuity and progression in the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in those subjects.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children's skills on entry to Reception are generally in line with expectations for their age. Because provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved markedly since the last inspection, children make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1, most exceed the goals expected for their age. Children become confident learners and this is reflected in their well-developed speaking and listening skills, and their excellent social skills. The regular teaching of reading underpins above-average standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Reading resources are interesting for all pupils and they show considerable enjoyment in their regular reading opportunities. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are above average and most pupils achieve well. In 2011, girls' attainment in Year 6 was better than that of boys, particularly in writing. Inspection evidence shows that this was specific to that year group and there are no consistent differences in attainment between boys and girls in English. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve equally well.

During the inspection the good learning of the overwhelming majority of pupils in lessons was evident throughout the school. They respond well to interesting and challenging activities and demonstrate the ability to work effectively, both independently and collaboratively. This was exemplified in an excellent mathematics lesson where Years 5 and 6 pupils made rapid progress in solving problems with missing brackets because they rose to the challenges the teacher presented to them. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because their needs are carefully assessed and they are sensitively supported with good challenge in class, or receive specialist individual or small group support. Almost all parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire agree that their children make good progress, and their views are endorsed by pupils and inspection evidence.

## Quality of teaching

Parents and carers say that their children are taught well and inspection evidence confirms this view. Strong teamwork between teachers and support staff ensures the needs of all pupils, including those in the mixed-age classes, are met well. Teaching assistants are deployed to good effect to ensure that pupils who need additional support make good progress in their learning. All lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between teachers and pupils. Because pupils readily meet teachers' high expectations of behaviour, lessons proceed at a good pace and without disruption. This contributes significantly to pupils' good progress and achievement. A good example of this was observed in an English lesson with Years 3 and 4 pupils in which pupils were developing their understanding of how sentences can be lengthened when writing reports. Every pupil was actively engaged because the learning tasks were carefully planned to meet the needs of pupils' differing age and attainment levels. However, in some lessons, not enough time is left at the end for teachers to check that all pupils have made progress. There are examples of the very effective marking of pupils' work, but this is not always the case. In some instances written comments are restricted to encouragement rather than detailed feedback on what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the effective teaching involves a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning both indoors and outdoors, and an appropriate focus on letters and sounds. Adults know children very well and the effective use of assessment to monitor their progress ensures the needs of each child are met.

Pupils' personal and academic development is also supported by a good curriculum that places appropriate emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Creativity is also fostered well through, for example, art and design and technology. However, some other aspects of topic work are not sufficiently linked to ensure that pupils have the most effective learning experiences across a wider range of subjects. A particularly innovative feature of the curriculum is the excellent opportunities provided for pupils to learn through the natural environment. These make a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. By the time pupils leave school, most are mature individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly into school, and rapidly learn what is expected of them. This establishes the foundation for the excellent behaviour observed in the rest of the school. Records, comments from pupils and responses to the questionnaires from staff, pupils, parents and carers show that high standards of behaviour are the norm. Pupils overwhelmingly say they feel exceptionally safe in school and they are confident that they can turn to an adult if they have any concerns. They have a clear understanding of what might be seen as bullying, including name-calling, and all were adamant that no bullying of any kind takes place. As one pupil said when asked about bullying, 'If there was any, teachers would be down on it like hawks!'

Attendance is above the national average and pupils arrive punctually to school.

Through their excellent attitudes and behaviour, pupils contribute much to the harmonious and supportive nature of the school. For example, older pupils regularly listen to younger pupils read and act as buddies at playtime. Excellent relationships are apparent throughout, with staff acting as very positive role models. This has a clear impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are well looked after, and this ensures that they also make good progress in their learning and personal development.

## **Leadership and management**

The clarity of vision and determination of the headteacher to provide the best possible education for all pupils receive the full support of staff and the governing body. This view was echoed in many of the comments made by parents and carers. As one, typical of many, said, 'Boston West has an exceptionally good headmaster whose enthusiasm and work ethic is absorbed by the children.' Staff morale is high, and the strong sense of shared vision was clearly illustrated in the highly positive staff response to the inspection questionnaire. Good quality professional development has a strong impact on all aspects of the school's work. Strategies for improving the quality of teaching are based on teamwork and trust, and include peer support, coaching and mentoring and the use of performance management. These are helping to tackle areas of weakness. For example, all of the issues identified in the last inspection report have been fully addressed. In particular, the Early Years Foundation Stage now provides children with a good start to school life. Data are used effectively by leaders and teachers to track pupils' progress and identify where additional support may be needed.

Curriculum provision benefits from a rich learning environment. Pupils enjoy the wide variety of equipment in the playground and the extensive forest area provides an excellent outdoor learning environment where pupils engage in a wide variety of practical learning tasks. This adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies also make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

The governing body is well structured and provides the school with a high level of commitment and expertise. It has good first-hand knowledge about the school's strengths and weaknesses and is not afraid to question or challenge. Safeguarding procedures are secure and meet government requirements. The school is a very inclusive community where staff know individual pupils and their families well. This underpins the school's clear commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. Staff work hard to ensure that all groups of pupils make equally good progress and discrimination in any form is not tolerated. This is recognised by parents and carers. Virtually all who replied to the inspection questionnaire expressed total satisfaction with their children's experience at the school. One, capturing the views of many, said, 'I have nothing but praise for the dedicated teaching and support staff. My son absolutely loves school. I feel Boston West is giving him the best educational start in life.' Strong school leadership, the good record of raising achievement and the firm commitment to continued improvement indicate the school's good capacity to improve further.

## 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](http://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.**



26 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Boston West Primary School, Boston, PE21 7QG**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. Your views were very helpful and we enjoyed our discussions with those of you we spoke to in lessons, in meetings and around the school. Thank you too, to those of you who completed the questionnaire. The school provides you with a good quality of education and your attainment is above average at the end of Year 6.

You told us how much you enjoy school. I saw how you listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work really hard in your lessons. Your excellent behaviour is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons you are achieving well. In order to raise achievement even further we have asked your teachers to make sure that you do not spend too long listening to explanations and that they check what you have learned at the end of all lessons. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and we have asked them, when they do this, to always give you clear guidance on what you have to do to improve it. You can all help yourselves to make more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

You told us how much you enjoy the many opportunities provided to develop and display your creative abilities and we observed how well these opportunities contribute to your excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that there are clear links between the different subjects you cover in your topic work. You also told us how adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. We think that everyone at Boston West can work together to do these things, and that you will all want to play your part by continuing to look after each other and working really hard in all of your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Thomas  
Lead inspector

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