

The North Cotes Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120579
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358793
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Lynne Blakelock

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	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Petchell
Headteacher	Anna Coney (Executive)
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who visited seven lessons and observed four teachers. The inspectors held meetings with a group of pupils, representatives of the governing body and members of staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at information about the achievement and attainment of pupils, samples of their work, the minutes of the governing body and a range of policies, guidelines and plans. The responses to the questionnaires from 31 parents and carers, together with those from pupils and staff, were also analysed.

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

It investigated the evidence for an improving picture of pupils' achievement through the school, to support the school's grading of learning and progress as good.

- It explored the capacity of middle leaders and senior staff to secure and sustain improvement.
- It determined the quality of provision for pupils of all abilities in the school's drive to raise standards.

Information about the school

This small, rural school serves the village and surrounding areas. Most pupils are of White British heritage. About 19% belong to the New Tribes Mission, which is an evangelical missionary organisation that has its United Kingdom base in the village. An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities or are at the early stages of speaking English. A higher proportion of pupils than is typical, join or leave the school at other than the expected times.

The school has achieved several awards, including Healthy Schools status, the Activemark, and the Bronze International Schools Award.

From September 2008, the headteacher has also been the executive headteacher of Marshchapel Primary School, with which the school is federated. The two schools work closely together and the governing bodies meet jointly six times a year. The school is also in a collaboration with Grainthorpe Primary School, which the executive headteacher is currently leading.

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 quality of education. Pupils reach average levels of attainment overall in English and mathematics and make satisfactory progress. Some aspects of the school's performance are strong. Pupils feel exceptionally safe in school, backed up by a rounded programme about being taught how to stay safe, good care and support, and outstanding safeguarding procedures. The range of opportunities for pupils to become involved, by for example taking-on responsibilities and participating in after-school clubs, promotes their enjoyment of school, their good behaviour, above average attendance and good personal development.

The satisfactory achievement of pupils from their variable levels of knowledge and skills when they start school, is due to overall sound teaching. While some teaching is good, pupils' progress is not as quick as it could be in a few lessons because activities do not always match pupils' diverse needs, have a clear purpose, or give pupils enough practice to refine their learning. This is particularly so in writing but also, to some extent, in reading and mathematics. Children enjoy learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially learning for themselves. Lessons though do not always ensure a good balance between direct teaching and child-led learning. Resources are not always chosen carefully enough to underpin the range of opportunities to learn, with the indoor area having less choice than outdoors. Attainment is rising by the end of Year 6, because of individual specific support and fewer gaps in pupils' learning. Where there is effective teaching, learning accelerates for pupils of all abilities. Marking is a strength because it gives pupils accurate knowledge of their skills and the next steps in their learning.

The executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher have made effective use of the federation to extend opportunities for staff development and pupils' learning. New and useful initiatives to raise attainment have been introduced, such as personal learning programmes for individual pupils, which have not had time to impact fully on achievement. Monitoring of the school's strategies to raise achievement is thorough; evaluation of their impact is less so. As a result, the school does not find out early enough whether practices are effective. The impact of subject leaders in driving improvement has increased since the last inspection. Although most of them are new, they are making their mark and, through their quite comprehensive monitoring, have an accurate picture of priorities for improvement. The governing body's good knowledge of the school's performance, through their monitoring, is enabling them to make an important contribution to what the school needs to do to move further forward. Overall, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English, especially in writing, and in mathematics by ensuring that:
 - tasks provide a good level of challenge and have a specific focus that pupils know and understand
 - there are regular opportunities across subjects to practise skills, particularly in writing.
- Strengthen the accuracy of the school's assessment of its performance by making sure that all initiatives are evaluated frequently and thoroughly for their impact, in order to adapt practices where necessary and raise pupils' achievement.
- Increase children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that:
 - there is a suitability balance of child-led and teacher-directed learning
 - resources are carefully chosen to enhance the range of learning and challenge
 - there is a good variety of learning opportunities indoors.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Boys and girls make satisfactory progress, with tasks suiting both genders equally well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who join the school partway through their education also make sound progress because they are supported appropriately with their specific needs. Where targeted support is well planned, pupils' progress is accelerating. Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language make quick progress due to well tailored, individual support that promotes their learning. Pupils are constantly encouraged to learn, through interesting activities and computer-generated tasks. When this is combined with opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they have learnt, at the appropriate level for them, progress quickens. This was the case in an English lesson, where higher-ability pupils showed good progress in writing instructions. Pupils enjoyed comparing thoughts and ideas with each other and as a result, moved forward in developing their critical thinking skills. Learning that was less effective did not provide a clear enough pointer to the specific skills that were being practised, so that pupils were less engaged and made slower progress. In particular, in some groups, spelling was a weaker aspect of pupils' work and was not regularly corrected.

Pupils work together well in this closely-knit school where they are all valued for who they are, and their contribution. They develop a range of personal and inter-personal skills, from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards. This extends to enterprise activities which encompass fund-raising. Through the school's ethos, pupils develop a strong awareness of the importance of caring and respecting each other, and celebrating their similarities and differences. It has been the starting point for the school's international status. As part of learning and daily routines, pupils develop a good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The school's focus on healthy lifestyles ensures that pupils are enthusiastic about keeping physically fit and eating nutritiously, supporting their healthy school's status and award of Activemark. Together with regular chances to collaborate in

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learning, and their average levels of attainment, they are soundly prepared for secondary education.

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	1
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	2
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?

Positive relationships between staff, and pupils and teachers' good management skills, set the scene well for learning. The introduction to lessons regularly helps pupils to recall their prior learning. Planning to suit the needs of all pupils is well thought-out in a few lessons but too often the same task is common to all. Over time, exercise books show more examples of different tasks to suit the range of pupils' abilities but not regularly enough. Challenge for pupils including for the more able, is not always evident. In good lessons, questioning is used carefully to extend learning. There is consistently good practice in marking, which almost always tells pupils what they have learnt and identifies their next steps for improvement. Targets are regularly a focus for pupils in lessons, including more regular chances for them to assess for themselves what they have learnt.

The curriculum provides a variety of opportunities for pupils to develop as learners and citizens. Through a sports partnership, and the federation, a broader curriculum is being promoted, in lessons, visits and in daily and popular after-school clubs. Joint visits promote well pupils' personal development and their broadening view of the world, through tasks which promote team-building and pupils' questioning of the world and their role in it. Increasingly, these are across subjects. The school incorporates creative

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learning, through activities, including music, art and drama, which are taught in all year groups. Provision for pupils' variable needs is sound, including for pupils identified as gifted and/or talented, which is through links with a local feeder school.

Staff know all of the pupils well in this friendly, supportive school. Communication between staff is good, ensuring that they can respond to any issues that pupils have, promptly. Parents and carers are seen as vital partners in their children's education and involved from the start in any discussions about their child's needs. The positive relationships are significant in pupils' well-being and the capacity for pupils to settle to learning quickly. The school uses its close links with a range of outside agencies to provide specialist help. Links with secondary schools encourage pupils' confidence in moving on to the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 headteachers' clear direction is matched by the shared ambition of the staff and members of the governing body. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and of the performance of pupils are integral to the school's work as it strives to raise attainment and to achieve its targets. However, the school's evaluation of findings, especially of the quality of planning for learning, has not been a routine feature of the school's work, and can lead to a sometimes inaccurate and over-optimistic judgement of the school's impact. The school's sound all-round understanding of pupils' needs and their involvement in activities promotes satisfactory equality of opportunity and enables it to address any discrimination. The governing body's independent knowledge of the school's performance has increased significantly since the last inspection and is good. It now uses its wide understanding to help to determine the school's direction, including its partnerships and the curriculum. Governors demonstrate exemplary practice in their overseeing of safeguarding (care and protection of pupils), which runs through every aspect of school life, and excellent practice, such as in staff training. Regular communication with parents and carers, including advice for supporting learning, are examples of the school's valuing of home and school links and help to explain parents' and carers confidence in the school. Community cohesion is promoted effectively because the school is providing opportunities across socio-economic, religious and ethnic aspects to promote pupils' understanding of society in the United Kingdom and abroad. While there is some unevenness in impact, pupils have benefited well, for example, in the quality of their cultural understanding.

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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	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

While children's levels of knowledge and skills vary from year to year when they start school, they are generally below in their personal, social and emotional development, communication skills and numeracy. The school is well-aware of children's needs because of good links with pre-school providers and discussions with parents and carers.

The inside accommodation is shared with Year 1 pupils and the range of indoor activities is smaller and less diverse than those provided outdoors. Outdoor learning provides a varied range of activities, in what is quite a small area, but which is put to good use, ensuring that the children can achieve in all areas of learning. There is scope to give a greater focus to the topics, through careful choice of resources, in order to motivate children further. An example of how this can be done resulted in the children's great enthusiasm for learning as they searched for, discovered, and counted the eggs laid by Chicken Licken. In doing so, they practised a myriad of skills. The children are increasingly enjoying learning for themselves, and also co-operating well with other children as they discover for themselves and use their imaginations to learn further. Occasionally there are not enough opportunities for children to develop independence and teaching requires them to listen for too long. The staff regularly question children about what they are finding out, encouraging them to make further progress. They record what the children have learnt on a daily basis. The good recording is continued by parents and carers, who are invited to add their own comments about their children. By the end of the stage, children make satisfactory progress overall towards the early learning goals.

The children behave well because expectations are clear. Safe and healthy practices are promoted daily within a secure and caring environment.

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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 Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Of those parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, all or almost all supported every aspect of the school's work. A small minority added comments which mainly focused on the warm and caring approach of the staff and how much their children enjoy school and have opportunities to learn new skills. One response raised concern about the lack of emphasis on reading and writing. While the inspection team found no evidence of this, its findings include a need to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The North Cotes Church of England 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 75 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	58	13	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	84	5	16	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	74	8	26	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	58	12	39	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	77	5	16	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	61	11	35	0	0	0	-0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	68	10	32	0	0	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)	19	61	8	26	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	74	8	26	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	58	13	42	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	55	13	42	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	74	7	23	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	84	5	16	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.



28 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The North Cotes Church of England Primary School, Grimsby, DN36 5UZ

I enjoyed the two days that I and the other inspectors spent with you recently. Thank you for your helpfulness in showing us round and for giving us your views about the school. They have been taken into account in the judgements that we have made. We are pleased that your attendance is above average. You told us that you enjoy school and that behaviour in the school is good. We agree with you.

Your school is satisfactory. Teaching leads to you making satisfactory progress reaching levels that are average in English and mathematics for your age. You can do better, especially in writing, where attainment levels are lower than in reading and mathematics. On behalf of the inspection team, I have asked your headteacher to make sure that all of you are given work that is at the right level for you, so that you can make quicker progress. You must also be clear about what you are meant to be learning and have plenty of opportunities to practise what you learn. Younger children also enjoy school. I have asked that you are given more opportunities to choose your own learning activities, more activities are provided for you inside, and resources are always chosen carefully to encourage you to learn.

The staff care for you well. They are giving you more opportunities to learn, often through the federation and sports partnership. The school keeps you extremely safe because of excellent arrangements and thorough and regular checking of them. All of the staff want the school to be as good as it can be. The headteacher is going to assess how well the school's plans are working to see if anything needs changing, in order to improve it further.

We hope that you will help the school to make these improvements by always working as hard as you can.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Blakelock
Lead Inspector

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