

# The National Church of England Junior School, Grantham

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120598
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358801
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Miller

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	368
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Eric McDonald
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Gibbs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Castlegate Grantham NG31 6SR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 22 lessons and 16 teachers were seen. Inspectors held meetings with governing body representatives, teaching and non-teaching staff, the school council and a group of house captains. They attended assemblies and daily registration sessions, looked at pupils' work, and talked informally with many pupils. School documents were examined including policies, development planning, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, curriculum and safeguarding documents. Minutes of governing body meetings were examined, including the headteacher's reports to the governing body, and information provided for parents and carers. Inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 156 parents and carers, 33 members of staff and 100 Key Stage 2 pupils.

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

- The team examined the ways the school has been working to improve the attainment and progress of pupils in mathematics, to match the standards being attained in English.
- The inspectors analysed the development of the school's use of assessment, in order to improve both the quality of pupils' learning and day-to-day teaching.
- The ways the school's leaders, at all levels, work together to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress throughout the school were checked.
- The extent to which the pupils' personal development is an emerging strength of the school in the ways they are prepared for their future lives and well-being was reviewed.

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British ethnic origin. Overall, the percentages of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and of those who speak English as an additional language, are below average. The proportion identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school holds an International School award, a Gold Artsmark award, Healthy Schools status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The governing body runs a daily before- and after-school club during term time for up to 30 pupils aged 8 to 11.

The school has been federated with Harrowby Church of England Infant School since January 2008; the two schools share a headteacher and governing body. Harrowby Church of England Infant School was inspected separately by Ofsted in July 2009.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils enter in Year 3 with average attainment and leave at the end of Year 6 gaining above average standards overall. This shows that they make good progress during their time at the school. The school is led and managed well and, over time, this has ensured some consistently outstanding features which have contributed significantly to the school's good reputation locally. The school appreciates very well its role within its local community. This has led to the pupils gaining high levels of understanding regarding their responsibilities to others, from the local level to the international. Pupils' strong appreciation of their role as future citizens arises not only from the school's excellent approach to community cohesion but also from the pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school shows excellence in its promotion of equality of opportunity. This helps underpin the excellence of its partnerships with support agencies to ensure outstanding care, guidance and support for individuals and groups of pupils. The high quality of the care and guidance has also contributed significantly to the excellent ways pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and their outstanding understanding as to how to keep themselves and others safe. Good teaching, which has enabled the pupils' good achievement, has helped to establish a track record of success which supports the school's good capacity for improvement.

Good, cooperative leadership between senior and middle leaders has ensured self-evaluation is good. This has highlighted mathematics as the key area for further improvement. In the recent past, although attainment in national tests has been above average overall, standards in English have been much higher than in mathematics, where standards have been average. The inspection findings and school data show that attainment in mathematics is now higher across the year groups than it was at the end of the last academic year because progress is increasing rapidly. However, the school recognises that not enough has been done to secure consistent above-average outcomes in the subject. The subject's curriculum does not ensure a sufficient focus on investigation work, particularly through the attainment target for using and applying mathematics. The school's work to secure the necessary improvements is being led well by the mathematics coordinator. Consequently, professional development is continuing to increase staff confidence in the teaching and assessment of the subject. Staff have shown they have very effective levels of professional skills through the teaching of English and are working actively to adapt these skills to the teaching and assessment of mathematics. Similarly, there is often good planning and challenge for pupils in higher sets in English. However, although there is suitable challenge to higher Level 5 in mathematics, lesson planning does not always challenge pupils to achieve levels beyond this in the way that it does in English.

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

- Build on pupils' improving standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6, and ensure their achievement in the subject keeps rising throughout the school by:
  - developing staff confidence further in the teaching and assessment of mathematics, to match the level of professional skills they show in English
  - evolving the mathematics curriculum to ensure the improved teaching and learning of investigative work
  - enhancing lesson planning to provide increasing challenge for more-able pupils, to enable them to achieve above Level 5 by the end of Year 6.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Achievement is good and pupils enjoy learning. The above-average, and sometimes higher, standards pupils are gaining in English were exemplified in an outstanding Year 3 guided reading lesson. Here, the different groups of pupils made excellent progress in their understanding and appreciation of the key elements which typify, instructional writing. The pupils' comprehension skills were above expectations. Good achievement was epitomized in a Year 4 geography lesson. Well-targeted questioning by the teacher ensured pupils made good progress in developing their understanding as to why people may have, historically, settled in particular locations. This stimulated thoughtful group discussion, and promoted well the pupils' speaking and listening skills. In two equally good Year 5 science lessons, pupils' spiritual development was enhanced well through a sense of wonder as they dissected, drew and labelled the parts of a flower. Pupils collaborated well because they were engaged and enthusiastic. The improving picture in mathematics was seen across a range of Year 6 sets, from average attainment on calculations and problem solving in a lower set, to some above-average work on equations and probability in middle and higher sets. These improvements illustrate the much better progress being made in the subject, and reflect the school's very strong focus on improving performance.

School data confirm the continued good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Such pupils feel well-supported and develop confidence and competence across a range of subjects. Consequently, they attain higher in national tests than similar groups nationally. They are keen to learn because cooperative planning between teachers and teaching assistants, and consistent reference to targets in the pupils' individual education plans, mean they are challenged and supported well. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also make good progress because of similarly well-planned support both in and outside the classroom, and the willing help of their classmates.

The vast majority of pupils completing their questionnaires, and those with whom inspectors talked during the inspection, say they enjoy school and that it helps them to keep healthy. This is reflected in the pupils' enthusiastic promotion of healthy lifestyles, from growing food on the school's allotment to sporting prowess. Almost all appreciate how adults help them to know how to improve. They recognise that their teachers have a great deal to offer them. This contributes well to the pupils' good attitudes to learning and the good progress they make in lessons. However, in occasional lessons that are only satisfactory, some pupils can be too passive in their approach to learning. Behaviour is good overall, although it can slip occasionally in the playground. This is because outside

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space is limited with only hard surfaces and very restricted facilities for 'quiet' areas. The central courtyard playground in particular becomes rather overcrowded; pupils inevitably jostle together as, understandably, they expend their natural energy. Nevertheless, most pupils do show very good levels of respect for each other. Their understanding as to how to keep safe, including their use of the internet, is excellent. The school's ethos enables pupils to feel very comfortable, but not complacent, within the school community.

Pupils have a particularly well developed social and moral sense. They are reflective in lessons and appreciate very much their music, art and sporting activities. The success of the 'buddy' system, where pupils support each other, exemplifies the genuine concern they show for each other. This leads to good levels of cooperation in lessons. Almost all pupils are welcoming, willing to help and polite. They show a very well developed sense of fair play which is reflected, for example, in their religious and multicultural tolerance and lack of prejudice. Pupils feel they have an important stake in the school because they are listened to; the school council is influential in contributing to change and improvement. Pupils' contributions within the local community are valued highly, as is their reputation for good behaviour.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

The school has developed a good, well-organised curriculum, and teachers plan well to meet the pupils' individual needs. There are some outstanding features to the curriculum,

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although that for mathematics is still being evolved and refined. Links with partner schools, and through the federation, have significantly enriched curricular opportunities for pupils in drama, music, science and modern foreign languages. The international dimension of the curriculum is also enriched through links with schools in France, Norway, Poland and Russia. Excellent links with local colleges and universities help the school to keep up-to-date with curriculum innovation. There are wide and varied opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities. The daily before- and after-school club is managed well, provides a helpful service for working families and is a valuable contribution to the school's extended services.

Teachers and teaching assistants alike take in-service training very seriously. Consequently, they show good levels of professional expertise. This approach reflects the work currently being undertaken by the school to improve further the teaching and assessment of mathematics, and to ensure teachers have the confidence to challenge its more-able pupils beyond higher Level 5 in the subject. Most teaching is good, involves the pupils well and helps secure good learning and progress. In the few satisfactory lessons, pupils are not involved actively enough in their learning. In some lessons, which are outstanding, pupils are constantly challenged to think and explain their ideas through excellent questioning. The school has good tracking and assessment systems. These enable the effective monitoring of progress and ensure early interventions to prevent potential underachievement. The pupils themselves are also involved regularly in self-assessment. Good marking and oral feedback help pupils to appreciate well their next steps in learning.

Parents', carers' and pupils' views reflect the fact that this is a very caring school. Its work with families and support agencies is a real strength. The school often goes that extra mile when working with its families. Case studies illustrate the rigour and promptness of actions taken when supporting pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Links with agencies for the support of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very strong. Parents and carers contribute well to the review of individual education plans and very positive working relationships ensure they feel confident in confiding in the school. There are excellent transition arrangements for pupils when joining or leaving the school. The school provides an extremely welcoming environment and friendly staff.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

Good leadership and management are ensuring good outcomes for the pupils. All staff responding to their questionnaire indicate they are proud of their school and appreciate what it is trying to achieve through its improvement planning. Discussions with staff confirm good teamwork and expertise, particularly at middle and senior leadership levels. The issue of mathematics is a relative weakness, as the pupils' attainment by Year 6 in the subject in the 2010 national tests was average and progress satisfactory. However, the school's ethos and very strong commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity has ensured concerted action to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics. School data show the gap in performance between mathematics and English is now closing rapidly. Staff are clearly ambitious to ensure this continues in order to improve further the school's effectiveness; hence their work on evolving their teaching skills and refining the mathematics curriculum. Parents and carers are encouraged to become involved actively in their children's learning, as illustrated in the good uptake for a recent workshop on mathematics; this reflects the school's productive partnership with its families. The school undertakes regular surveys of parents, carers and pupils as part of its approach to self-evaluation and improvement. There is an excellent approach to enabling its pupils to make the best use of their talents.

Governance is good. Members of the governing body contribute well to the school through their individual skills and professional expertise. Safeguarding procedures are good. This aspect of the school's work is given a suitably high priority; this is reflected in the good quality of its record keeping and documentation. In view of the age of the school's buildings, its approach to risk assessment goes beyond basic requirements. There is particularly good provision for pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. The school has an excellent approach to the promotion of community cohesion, and takes very seriously its role and responsibility for this aspect of the pupils' development. Through their curriculum reviews, each subject has considered very well how it may promote the pupils' community, citizenship, multicultural and multi-faith understanding and development. There has been clear analysis, action planning and on-going review and evaluation of the impact of the school's work. This underpins securely the pupils' understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and the excellence of their contribution to the school and wider communities.



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers responding to the questionnaire was above average. The very large majority, including those with whom inspectors talked at the school gates, are very happy with the school and responded affirmatively to all the questions. Parents and carers are particularly positive when they say their children enjoy learning and that they are safe in school. The inspection findings reflect these views. In their written comments, a few parents and carers mentioned matters they would like to see improved relating to the 150 year-old buildings. These issues are largely out of the hands of the school itself as they are the responsibility of the Diocese, and the school is situated in a conservation area. The school ensures it follows fully the advice and guidance of the local building and fire authorities. However, there are plans in place for new primary school building for the federation schools to resolve these matters. A few parents and carers indicated concerns about their children's preparation for the future. Such comments expressed a wish that the school would do more to prepare children for the local, selective 11+ examination. The inspection shows that the school fulfils its central roles effectively in preparing its pupils to achieve well in national tests and assessments, and for their future well-being through the pupils' individual personal development.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The National Church of England Junior 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 156 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 368 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	49	73	47	4	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	73	47	77	49	5	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	34	93	60	9	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	40	76	49	14	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	68	44	82	53	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	36	92	59	4	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	31	96	62	9	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)	53	34	80	51	11	7	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	35	87	56	11	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	30	88	56	11	7	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	28	90	58	12	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	66	42	79	51	7	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	49	71	46	6	4	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The National Church of England Junior School, Grantham, NG31 6SR**

We would like to thank you for the warm and friendly welcome you gave to us when we visited you recently. We enjoyed talking with you and appreciated very much the ways you shared your experiences of life at your school. Yours is a good school.

These are the things we found are best about your school.

There are important aspects of your personal development which are excellent.

Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

You are enabled to feel safe in school and are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The adults at your school take good care of you and look after you very well.

You make an excellent contribution to the school and its wider community.

Your school works well with your parents and carers to help you learn.

Your school gives you excellent opportunity to achieve well.

Your headteacher, other senior teachers and governors lead your school well.

Many of you are achieving very well in English, but not quite as well in mathematics. We have therefore asked your teachers to continue their work to help all of you make even better progress in this subject. They have already started to do this through the ways they assess your work. They have also been developing the ways they teach investigative work in mathematics. Finally, those of you who are in higher mathematics sets will be given that extra element of challenge to enable you to attain even higher levels by the time you leave at the end of Year 6.

During one of your assemblies you all had great fun considering the old saying: 'A true friend is one who thinks you are a good egg - even if you are slightly cracked'. You showed the strength of your understanding when nearly all of you grinned as you put up your hands to admit that at times you may be 'slightly-cracked'. Being friendly and helpful to everyone and enjoying each other's success are the first two aims of your own Pupils' Charter. Please continue to ensure yours remains a friendly school and work hard at your mathematics to achieve further success.

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller

Lead inspector

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