

The Holbeach William Stukeley Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120596
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358800
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Lois Furness

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	264
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Nicholas
Headteacher	Karen Foster (interim)
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty-six lessons were visited and ten teachers observed. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, groups of pupils, leaders at all levels, the special educational needs coordinator and the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders. They observed the school's work, looked at the school development plan, pupils' work, assessment information, school and local authority monitoring information, lesson plans and safeguarding documentation. They analysed 113 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with questionnaires from staff and a representative sample from pupils.

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

- The team checked whether pupils' learning and progress are improving securely and quickly enough to overcome past underachievement.
- Inspectors investigated the impact of the recent actions to improve teaching and the use of assessment on pupils' achievements.
- The team examined the evidence for the sustained impact of leadership and management at all levels, including the governing body, on rectifying identified areas of weakness.
- The rigor and accuracy of self-evaluation in the Early Years Foundation Stage were analysed.

Information about the school

In this above average-sized primary school, the vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, and the proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for school meals free of charge is broadly average. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is in two classes which include both Reception children and Year 1 pupils. All other classes also consist of pupils from two year groups. In the morning pupils are grouped by ability for English and mathematics. There have been many staffing changes since the previous inspection. The substantive headteacher resigned in October 2010, when a local authority interim headteacher was appointed. She will continue working at the school until a new substantive headteacher is appointed. In January 2011, an assistant headteacher was employed for two terms.

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 Holbeach William Stukeley Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education. However, over recent months there has been a marked improvement in provision, and consequently attainment is rising in all year groups. Over the last three years, by the end of Year 6, attainment has been low. However, as a result of targeted support, including one-to-one tuition, assessment information shows that the majority of Year 6 pupils are now working at age-related expectations in English and mathematics. Positive indications of rapidly improving academic attainment and progress are now clearly evident, especially in reading. However, the legacy of previous underachievement is still apparent in Years 4 and 5. Inspection evidence shows that some pupils are learning well, and are making good progress, but this is inconsistent across the school, with some pupils making only satisfactory progress. Progress at present is best in Years 1 and 2, and in Year 6.

Progress is inconsistent because the quality of teaching is variable, ranging from satisfactory to good. Satisfactory teaching occurs when assessment information is not used carefully enough to plan activities that match the learning needs of all pupils, during all parts of the lesson. At times, teachers provide insufficient time for pupils to work independently, and to record their ideas. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of the amount of work pupils are able to do, nor of the quality of handwriting or of presentation. Ends of lessons are not used consistently effectively enough to review and extend pupils' learning. Although there is good teaching occurring, this practice as yet has not been shared with all members of staff. Strengths of teaching include good subject knowledge, good relationships and the use of strategies to involve pupils in their learning. Marking in some instances is good, especially in writing, but this is inconsistent.

Although provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory and Reception-aged children make satisfactory progress, the curriculum is too often more relevant for the Year 1 pupils. Too much time is given to teacher-directed activities, and children do not have enough time to select their own play. Children spend too much time listening to adults, who in turn spend too little time carrying out observational assessments to inform future planning. Although an outdoor area is available, this is not used effectively enough, and outdoor resources are not of good quality.

The school has gone through a period of change in the last eight months due to staffing turbulence and the lack of a substantive headteacher. However, under the determined leadership of the interim headteacher and with the enthusiastic support of the governing body, staff morale has improved and now there is a strong focus on improving teaching and learning. Meetings of staff to discuss pupils' progress are held regularly, and tracking and target setting are more rigorous. As yet, however, staff are not held fully accountable for the progress of pupils in their classes. Subject leaders also do not take sufficient

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responsibility for pupils' performance. The governing body is enthusiastic and is very visible in the school. However, in the past, it has not focused well enough on pupils' achievements or on the impact of actions to raise attainment in Years 3 to 6. However, the rapid improvements made since the interim headteacher's appointment, including rising attainment in English and mathematics in Year 6, an increasing proportion of good teaching and the willingness of staff to improve, demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching especially in Years 3 to 5, so that by December 2011, 75% of lessons are good or better by:
 - ensuring assessment information is used rigorously to plan activities that match the learning needs of all pupils during all parts of the lesson
 - raising teachers' expectations of the amount of work pupils are able to do and of the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work
 - using sessions at the ends of lessons effectively to review and extend pupils' learning
 - ensuring marking clearly identifies strengths and areas for improvement and giving pupils time to respond to the useful feedback given
 - sharing existing good practice with all members of staff.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - developing adults' understanding of a good Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and the place of observational assessment in planning children's learning
 - ensuring there is an appropriate balance between teacher-led and child-chosen activities
 - improving the outdoor environment including the quality of resources.
- Improve the impact of leadership at all levels by:
 - resolving the issue of unsettled leadership
 - embedding systems such as meetings about pupils' progress and holding staff accountable for the progress of pupils
 - ensuring subject leaders take responsibility for pupils' performance
 - developing the governing body's role of challenging the school, including evaluating the impact of actions taken.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children join Reception with skills and understanding that are slightly below the levels expected for their age. Attainment by Year 6, although low in the past, is improving

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strongly in both English and mathematics. This means progress is improving so that, in some year groups, it is good. This is because, in these year groups, teaching is consistently good. For example, in a good Year 1 and 2 mathematics lesson, pupils made good gains in developing their knowledge of number to 100 and then to 1000. In another good Year 6 English lesson, pupils learnt how to extend sentences in the context of a persuasive argument. In both these lessons, activities were introduced in an imaginative way which resulted in interested and well motivated pupils who clearly enjoyed their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in response to dedicated provision and targeted support. Rising attainment, and learning and progress which are improving securely, mean that achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils mainly enjoy school and their attendance is broadly average. Behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils behaved well and are polite and respectful to each other around the school. However, in lessons that are only satisfactory, pupils are given too few opportunities to demonstrate how their behaviour can contribute to their learning. When this occurs, a few pupils do not engage as well as they could with their work and the pace of learning slows. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of a healthy lifestyle and are confident that the rare cases of bullying will be quickly resolved. They know how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils are keen to take responsibility, as school councillors for example. Councillors are proud of the way they have improved things for their friends such as buying playground equipment and establishing the 'Tranquility Garden'. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is satisfactory because, despite some strengths in spiritual and social development, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their multicultural understanding.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

How effective is the provision?

All lessons are characterised by good relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to target support and improve pupils' learning. In all lessons, teachers share with pupils what they will be learning and how to achieve success. Praise is used effectively to build up pupils' self-esteem. Where teaching and learning are good, teachers regularly check to see how well pupils are doing, using this information to plan for the next stage of learning. This ensures that pupils are challenged and do not repeat work they can already do. In other lessons, when teachers do not give pupils enough chance to be actively involved, the pace of learning slows and pupils lose concentration. While some good examples of teachers' marking were seen providing good advice to pupils on how to improve their work, pupils are given insufficient time to respond to the useful comments made, and thereby improve their work.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is suitably focused on English and mathematics. Enrichment is good and extra-curricular activities, such as visits to places of interest, competitive sport and singing in the choir are activities which are liked well and taken up with enthusiasm by pupils. Pupils speak eagerly about the 'World Festival' day when eight schools met together to celebrate, music, dance and storytelling from around the world.

Guidance and support for pupils as a whole, especially concerning behaviour within the classroom, has not been consistent, but recently introduced changes are addressing this

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issue. However, the care provided for pupils whose circumstance might make them vulnerable is particularly strong, and is appreciated by parents and carers. Pupils are confident that any bullying will quickly be resolved and say the 'rainbow boxes' make sure that concerns or suggestions can be shared easily with adults.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The interim headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of staff, parents, carers and members of the governing body. Since taking up her post, and with good support from the deputy headteacher, she has quickly gained a clear idea of what needs to be done to raise attainment, although self-evaluation is overly generous. Staff are well motivated, have ambition, and are committed to improving provision. Much has been introduced, such as staff meetings about pupils' progress, performance management and an improved tracking and target setting system. However, there has been insufficient time for these strategies to show that pupils' progress and achievement are consistently good.

The drive for improvement is being strengthened by others learning to take responsibility for leadership and management. Middle leaders are responding well and becoming more involved in monitoring provision. The governing body now has a good understanding of the challenges the school faces. It is supportive and is beginning to develop the role of holding leaders to account for pupils' progress. Arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of pupils meet all requirements. The school has a positive relationship with parents and carers, and many comment on the improvements since the appointment of the interim headteacher. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory and improving. Statutory requirements are met as the school effectively monitors the performance of all pupils. The school's work to promote community cohesion is satisfactory, especially at school and local level. However, pupils' understanding of those who live in communities other than their own in the United Kingdom and more globally is less extensive.

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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

Children settle quickly into school life and happily work together. For example, two children shared ideas when sorting counting equipment, whilst others played imaginatively with construction toys. Consistent classroom routines and good relationships between adults ensure children's good behaviour. Teaching is satisfactory and at times good. For example, during the telling of 'Jack and the Beanstalk', expressive reading and the good use of puppets captured the children's imagination whilst developing their interest in stories and in books. Although staff try hard to plan activities which will engage children, activities do not give enough attention to children's prior learning or their interests. For example, although a castle role-play area had been established, during observations children did not use this area. Also, at times, the classroom organisation is more appropriate for Year 1 pupils, and children spend too much time in teacher-led activities. This means children's progress is satisfactory rather than good. Observational assessments are carried out regularly but, too often, these record the activities carried out rather than the learning achieved. The outside area is underdeveloped and does not provide a sufficient range of focused activities across all six areas of learning. Resources are of a poor quality. The Early Years Foundation Stage leaders are aware of these weaknesses and a satisfactory action plan is in place to rectify them. Welfare requirements are met satisfactorily.

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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 the proportion of parents and carers who returned the Ofsted questionnaire, most felt their children enjoyed school, were kept safe and they were kept informed of their children's progress. Also, almost all felt the school helped them to support their children's learning. There were no areas that a significant number of parents and carers had concerns about, apart from the management of behaviour. During the inspection, some challenging behaviour was observed but it was managed satisfactorily.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Holbeach William Stuckley Church of Engand 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 113 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 264 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	57	42	37	5	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	60	53	48	42	3	3	2	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	50	44	59	52	3	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	40	54	48	12	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	42	37	58	51	5	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	30	71	63	3	3	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	30	65	58	14	12	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)	21	19	74	65	7	6	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	27	69	61	4	4	3	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	26	48	42	25	22	7	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	26	69	61	11	10	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	30	27	63	56	10	9	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	46	41	53	47	5	4	3	3

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).

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Holbeach William Stukeley Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Spalding PE12 7HG

Many thanks for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school for its recent inspection. You are very polite and many of you made us feel really welcome by saying good morning at the start of the school day. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all the things that you do. We think that your school is satisfactory, but it is improving quickly. We agree with you when some of you told us that since the appointment of your new 'interim headteacher' there have been changes which are helping you to learn faster. We could see that many of you throughout the school are getting much better at reading. In Year 6, more of you than in the past are attaining the levels expected for your age.

Although we think there is good teaching happening, we have asked your interim headteacher to try and make sure that more good lessons are taught. To do this we think teachers need to use information about what you know already to ensure you all learn as fast as you can. Also, we have asked them to give you help in improving your handwriting and presentation skills. When your work is marked we have asked teachers to tell all of you exactly why your work is good, and how to make it better. Those of you in the Reception and Year 1 classes make satisfactory progress, but we think it should be better. We want you to have more opportunities to explore and find out things for yourselves, as too many activities are led by adults. We have also asked for the outdoor area to be used better to help you learn. Your interim headteacher, all the staff and governors are determined to improve things in your school. To help with this, we have asked that all leaders check carefully that you are all learning as fast as you can.

Thank you again for your help with the inspection, and you can also help your teachers by asking them to give you time to reply to their useful marking comments.

Yours sincerely

Lois Furness

Lead inspector

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