

Swineshead St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 120558 |
| Local Authority | Lincolnshire |
| Inspection number | 380060 |
| Inspection dates | 22–23 September 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Sue Hall |

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

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| 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 | 231 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Claire Tunnard |
| Headteacher | Robert Little (Executive Headteacher) and Linda Baldwin (Head of school) |
| Date of previous school inspection | 25 November 2008 |
| School address | Abbey Road Swineshead Boston PE20 3EN |
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|---------------------------|----------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 16 lessons taught by eight teachers and two higher level teaching assistants. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They also talked informally to parents and carers. They observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress, child protection and safeguarding procedures. They looked at samples of pupils' past and present work and scrutinised responses from 58 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 112 by pupils and 15 by staff.

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

- Do all groups of pupils, especially boys and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make consistent progress, particularly in writing?
- Has attendance improved to at least the national average?
- Do teachers make full use of assessment information to provide interesting and challenging activities that meet the needs of all groups of pupils?
- Is the monitoring of the work of the school sufficiently rigorous to accurately identify the areas for further improvement?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school in rural Lincolnshire. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average although the proportion with a statement of special educational need is below that seen in most schools. There is a small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups, mainly of Eastern European heritage, with a few speaking English as an additional language. There is more mobility of pupils than seen in many schools, including a group of pupils from a closing school who were admitted in 2010. The school is part of an established federation with another local setting. There is an executive headteacher working in both schools and a head of school based on a day-to-day basis in the two individual schools. St Mary's has gained recognition as a Green Flag Eco school and holds International School Bronze and Food for Life awards.

The children's centre which opened on the school site in 2010 is inspected separately.

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

This is a school that provides a satisfactory quality of education. It has some notable strengths, particularly in pupils' good moral and social growth and their outstanding spiritual development. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe and of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. There are good procedures for safeguarding everyone including very careful checks of all those who work with the pupils. The large majority of pupils say that they enjoy coming to school, they like their teachers and particularly enjoy practical activities and using the spacious outdoor areas.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress after a sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and typically reach average standards by the time they leave the school. However, standards have fluctuated, particularly in writing. The current picture is far more positive, with strong evidence to show that most pupils are back on track and are working at the levels expected for their age. This is, in part at least, because of better quality teaching and the impact of early work on sounds and letters. Throughout the school, progress and attainment are stronger in mathematics than writing, chiefly because pupils' understanding of numbers and problem solving is securely based. Occasionally, the progress made by boys dips when writing tasks do not capture their interest and motivate them to write imaginatively. Some of the more-able pupils make slower progress, because at times the level of challenge for them is not high enough.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some features of good teaching, especially for older pupils. In the most successful lessons, assessment information is used well to provide activities with the right level of challenge for pupils of different abilities. The feedback given to pupils in these lessons makes clear what they need to do to improve. However, there is a lack of consistency and not all teaching ensures good learning for all groups of pupils. Marking is not always used effectively to move pupils on to the next step. There are, sometimes, not enough opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas before they write. This results in some pupils not developing a wide vocabulary because they have to listen inactively to lengthy explanations. It also means that pupils sometimes become very passive learners. The curriculum is satisfactory with an effective programme of enrichment. The levels of care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory including for those pupils with additional needs.

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The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The newly appointed middle managers are keen to develop their roles, including in using data to drive improvement further. School self-evaluation is very detailed but at times too generous. The monitoring of pupils' learning is adequate but lacks evaluative rigour in identifying the areas for improvement. The governing body is supportive of the school and well informed about pupils' attainment. Governance is satisfactory, as is the school's capacity to improve further. Links with parents and carers are satisfactory but a number of those who responded to the inspection questionnaire do not think their views are taken into account and have concerns in several areas, including with aspects of leadership and management.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be 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?

- Accelerate pupil's progress to raise attainment especially in writing by:
 - planning more opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas in order to extend their vocabulary
 - providing more reasons to write that motivate the boys.

- Ensure the quality of teaching and learning is more consistently effective by:
 - making full use of the range of assessment information to set work that is challenging for all groups of pupils and particularly the higher attainers
 - ensuring that feedback to pupils, including the marking of their work, identifies what can be improved
 - providing activities that encourage pupils to take an active part in finding things out and limiting the amount of time spent listening to explanations.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the monitoring of the work of the school is rigorously evaluative and involves all staff with management responsibilities
 - extending the links with parents and carers so that they feel confident their ideas and concerns will be taken into account.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Attainment on entry to the school has risen since the last inspection following the development of pre-school education in the area. It is now in line with the expectations for children's age but was lower when pupils in Key Stage 2 entered the school. Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with the skills expected. There is growing evidence to show that, although progress is satisfactory overall, an increasing number of pupils make good progress because of the improving quality of teaching. A large majority of pupils in

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Year 2 and 6 are on target to achieve at least the national average in their basic skills, although higher-attaining pupils do not always make all the progress they could. Data indicates that boys have not done as well as girls particularly in writing. Senior staff and class teachers are now tracking the progress of specific groups more carefully. The greater involvement of pupils in assessing their own level of competence makes a sound contribution to the development of skills that equip them for their future lives. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least satisfactory progress because their specific needs are identified well and appropriate support provided. The small number of minority ethnic pupils who speak English as an additional language are warmly welcomed by the school and often make rapid progress including through effective early support.

Pupils work steadily in lessons; where activities capture their interest, they work with enthusiasm. An excellent example of this was observed in a Year 5 lesson, when pupils of all abilities enjoyed success through using their actions for 'Kung Fu' punctuation that were highly effective in helping them to remember the appropriate way to punctuate their work. This was followed by a successful game on the interactive whiteboard where they enthusiastically learned how to use connectives to add a clause to their sentences. Pupils throughout the school enjoy using the extensive grounds and facilities that promote a very active lifestyle. Pupils grow their own vegetables and an increasing number enjoy good quality school meals, with a commitment to encouraging healthy packed lunches.

Pupil's behaviour promotes their learning satisfactorily, but at times some are very passive and offer few ideas in discussions because the work set does not always motivate them. Pupils enjoy taking on roles of responsibility with opportunities to work with the local community, including as members of the local Silver Band. However, few can recall how their ideas have made a significant impact on the work of the school. There is a very strong emphasis on spiritual development including imaginative and highly stimulating acts of collective worship and numerous opportunities to reflect on the lives of inspirational people. Pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity present in modern Britain is satisfactory and growing. Although attendance has very recently improved, it is considerably affected by a number of families taking holidays in term time.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|--|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 3 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |

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

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' behaviour | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with no unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection, and several examples of good and very occasionally outstanding teaching. Throughout the school, teachers have good relationships with pupils, epitomised in an informal discussion in Year 1 about the pets staff own. This topic caught pupils' attention, resulting in them listening well and joining in the discussion with enthusiasm. This good start to the lesson was then built on when pupils learned how to retell a familiar story and focus on what they knew of the setting and events in the story. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes are met appropriately and lessons are well resourced. Additional staff are deployed effectively, particularly to maximise the learning of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Target setting is well established and group targets are known and referred to by pupils. In the most effective lessons, teachers enable pupils to assess their own work and marking is clear and precise so that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work, but this is not consistent across the school. The use of time in lessons is variable and as one pupil said, 'School would be better if the teachers would let us get on with it a bit more, instead of explaining all the time.'

The curriculum is satisfactorily matched to the needs of most pupils, although the further development of higher-level skills is a key priority. Various subjects are combined into topics that promote cross-curricular links and there is good use of enrichment activities to promote learning. The school's commitment to raising pupils' environmental awareness includes the careful recycling of a range of items by the youngest children. The school provides every pupil with a brass instrument for three years' tuition and this makes a considerable impact on the development of musical skills. However, at times staff do not take much account of pupils' interests and ideas. For example, older pupils wrote a persuasive letter to the headteacher about making the car park pedestrian free but as this has not been a concern in school, pupils are not really motivated to write with passion. This particularly impacts on the progress of higher attaining pupils and especially some boys.

Pastoral care is effective in ensuring that the specific needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and those who find learning difficult, are identified and met. Support and guidance provided from within school and external

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sources contribute well to pupils’ personal development and make a satisfactory impact on learning. The assistant special educational needs co-ordinator manages the day-to-day organisation of provision well and since appointment has improved systems to meet pupils needs. Transition arrangements to other schools are managed carefully, but some parents are concerned that transition within school is not as effective and activities at the start of the school year do not build on what pupils already know. Recently improved and more rigorous procedures to check and follow up absences and discourage holidays in term time are improving attendance.

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 executive headteacher has an overview of provision with the head of school having responsibility for day-to-day management. The recent extension to the leadership team, through the appointment of an assistant headteacher and the allocation of new subject leadership responsibilities, is developing well, but is at a very early stage. Strategic planning identifies areas in most need of improvement and is increasingly underpinned by careful analysis of data about pupils’ achievement. The school has dealt effectively with the many challenges associated with moving it further forward since federation but action to bring about the necessary changes identified at the last inspection has not been entirely consistent. This is, in part, because the monitoring of the work of the school has lacked evaluative rigour and areas for improvement have not been pursued in a focused enough manner. The governing body is committed to the school and has a secure grasp of a range of information provided. Its members recognise that there is more work to do in holding the school to account for its performance.

The safeguarding procedures in place meet requirements. In particular, the school’s very careful checks of information and training in how to protect children follow good practice. The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being is satisfactory, especially through links with the federated school partner. This allows movement of staff between the schools and much valued joint training activities. The school ensures that no pupil is discriminated against and that curricular experiences are open to all groups of pupils. Even so, the promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory, rather than good, because the progress of the more-able pupils and of boys is variable. Links with the local community, including groups in the village, are well established and effective although the steps to reach out to communities which are set in a different social and cultural context to the local area are more limited.

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

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 | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |
| 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 enjoy their time in the Reception class and in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class and often work together as one Reception group. Early assessments have already been made of the children entering this term, with information being used to inform the extensive planning of activities. Children make satisfactory progress, with particular gains in personal and social skills. Activities combine an appropriate mix of adult-led and child-chosen activities. The facilities are of high quality, with a spacious outside area that is imaginatively laid out and very stimulating. The deployment of staff to care for and support the children is satisfactory. However, when most children choose to play outside, this sometimes presents challenges for teaching assistants covering lessons to ensure effective supervision of groups with sometimes excitable behaviour. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In one session, children were observed enthusiastically looking at, touching and smelling a variety of local fresh vegetables. However, although the task was appropriate, it was unclear what the children were expected to learn and opportunities were missed for them to discuss their ideas further. While most children listen attentively and some are keen to answer questions, others are quite passive and say little. Leadership and management are satisfactory with a senior leader monitoring the work of newly qualified staff.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Taking into account: | 3 |

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

| | |
|--|---|
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

All of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are satisfied with several aspects of the school's work. The large majority think that their children are kept safe and that the school helps them lead a healthy lifestyle. Some parents and carers speak with warmth about how well they feel their children are cared for and note there is 'good extra-curricular input from the school therefore my child is getting a well-rounded education'. Most think children enjoy school and overall are happy with their child's experiences. However, an unusually large proportion of those who responded to the questionnaire do not think that the school takes sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns. Several do not think the school is led and managed well. Some of these concerns overlap and are at times related to the organisation for mixed-aged classes with which parents and carers disagree. These difficult decisions are made by the governing body based on age and numbers, but leave some parents and carers feeling unhappy. Inspection evidence indicates that parents and carers have a satisfactory range of information, daily opportunities to bring their children into school and liaise with staff and are consulted through questionnaires. Some parents and carers also have concerns about variability in the quality of teaching and whether this meets the needs of their children, which reflected some of the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Swineshead St Mary's 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 231 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|----|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 23 | 38 | 33 | 55 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 29 | 48 | 30 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| The school informs me about my child’s progress | 16 | 27 | 31 | 52 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 5 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 13 | 22 | 28 | 47 | 9 | 15 | 2 | 3 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 13 | 22 | 33 | 55 | 8 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child’s learning | 15 | 25 | 36 | 60 | 6 | 10 | 1 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 21 | 35 | 34 | 57 | 3 | 5 | 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) | 14 | 23 | 32 | 53 | 6 | 10 | 3 | 5 |
| The school meets my child’s particular needs | 13 | 22 | 31 | 52 | 8 | 13 | 2 | 3 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 9 | 15 | 41 | 68 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 3 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 7 | 12 | 23 | 38 | 25 | 42 | 1 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 9 | 15 | 28 | 47 | 19 | 32 | 4 | 7 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school | 18 | 30 | 35 | 58 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 2 |

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 | 43 | 47 | 10 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 46 | 42 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 36 | 41 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 30 | 48 | 19 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 50 | 31 | 5 |
| All schools | 10 | 44 | 39 | 6 |

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 08 April 2011 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.



26 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Swineshead St Mary's Church of England Primary School,
Boston, PE20 3EN**

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. A special thank you goes to the group of pupils who met one of my colleagues and shared views about the school. I particularly liked seeing the youngest children enjoy learning outside and was impressed with how you grow your own vegetables and learn about sustainability. The inspection team judged your school to be satisfactory. This means that it is doing some things well and there are things it could do better.

This is what we found out about your school.

- Most of you make at least satisfactory progress.
- A large majority of you achieve expected standards by the time you leave.
- Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured well and your spiritual development is outstanding.
- You and your parents and carers believe that you feel safe at school.
- You know how to stay healthy and say you like coming to school.

To improve your school further, I have asked those in charge to make sure that:

- you all have more opportunities to discuss your ideas so that you can make better progress in your writing
- your lessons are always as challenging and interesting as they can be
- senior leaders check the work of the school more thoroughly to see how you are doing and ensure your parents and carers feel they are listened to.

You also have a part to play in helping your school by encouraging your parents and carers to make sure you attend regularly and trying even harder to take part in discussions.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall
Lead inspector

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