

North Scarle Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120385
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380005
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2012
Lead inspector	John Horwood

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Russell-Webster
Headteacher	Katherine McCann
Date of previous school inspection	13 February 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Horwood

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector used a number of strategies to observe learning. These included lesson observations ranging from 10 to 35 minutes. Over three hours was spent observing teaching which included nine lessons taught by three teachers. Meetings were held with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and groups of pupils. Informal discussions also took place with parents, carers and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings, the school's information on pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work. The responses to questionnaires from 40 parents and carers, seven staff and 23 responses from pupils were examined and analysed.

Information about the school

North Scarle Primary School is smaller than the average primary school. All pupils are taught in mixed-age classes with year group sizes varying from two to 12. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than that found nationally. The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils who are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs, are similar to those found in most schools.

The school has recently obtained the International Schools Award and the Artsmark. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Good leadership ensures that good teaching enables pupils to reach above average levels of attainment. Behaviour is outstanding. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly satisfied with the school. Typical comments included, 'This is a happy, friendly school where children and staff seem to care about each one,' and, 'North Scarle is a fantastic school where children become well-rounded individuals.' The school is not outstanding because some aspects of teaching are not consistently effective enough to drive outstanding achievement over a sustained period.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress in all subjects. Attainment has risen steadily over the last three years.
- Teachers make lessons interesting and set a good pace of learning. They adapt the activities well to meet the needs of all pupils within the mixed-age classes. They are good at extending pupils' knowledge in all subjects while making very good use of information and communication technology (ICT). They mark pupils' work regularly and set targets, but with varying effectiveness.
- Pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning and to other activities in school. They make an excellent contribution to keeping themselves and others safe through excellent relationships and the older pupils' help for the younger ones. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are taught how to keep safe and healthy.
- Leaders share a vision of enabling all pupils to achieve their full potential, both academically and in their personal skills. School performance is monitored closely and professional development provided for staff has ensured that the quality of teaching has improved, leading to greater achievement by pupils. The curriculum fully supports all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement by reviewing the systems for the marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets, to ensure that pupils are consistently given clear guidance on how to improve their work and reach the next step in their learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry to Reception varies between age-expected levels and below. Children join from a variety of playgroups and nurseries, and good teaching ensures that they make good progress across all the areas of learning. Attainment levels and progress are closely monitored and analysed. Children's social skills develop quickly because they work closely with the Year 1 pupils.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make good progress. Attainment levels vary from year to year because of the small year groups with differing ability ranges. Currently, in mathematics and English, including reading, attainment levels are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. All pupils make good progress in all lessons. There is no variation in the achievement of boys or girls. Individual progress by pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is good because they are given appropriate support in class or in short periods of withdrawal. They are always fully integrated into activities and well supported by adults. The most able pupils are given good opportunities to extend their knowledge through partnerships with other schools. Pupils' good progress is confirmed by the work seen in their books, and the responses of the overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires. Several pupils have excelled in their musical achievements.

Pupils enjoy their learning. This was typified in a Reception and Year 1 lesson, where they carried out activities associated with a giant and a beanstalk, and the older pupils designed a scarecrow. In a Year 2, 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were keen to learn about directions and routes through active involvement in field work, even though it had to be carried out indoors because of bad weather. In a Year 5 and 6 English lesson, pupils had excellent attitudes to learning and enthusiastically joined in the discussion about a balanced argument. This lesson also linked to environmental issues and showed how teaching supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Quality of teaching

Children in Reception benefit from a spacious and well-resourced area. Learning is linked between the indoor and outdoor areas and children have good opportunities to choose their own activities, moving freely between them. The small class size

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ensures that all aspects of children's emotional development are supported quickly. The teacher builds a comprehensive 'learning journal' for each child, reflecting time in Reception. Because children work closely with the Year 1 pupils there is a smooth transition into Key Stage 1 learning. The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is interactive, pacy and stimulating.

Throughout the school, teachers have excellent relationships with pupils. They adapt the curriculum very well to cater for the mixed-aged classes and ensure that all year groups are given sufficiently challenging work. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' academic ability and behaviour. The impact of the teaching is evident in the good progress pupils make. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well as a team to support both care and learning. All of the teaching seen during the inspection was good, and most had some outstanding features. Teachers always help pupils to understand what they have to do in lessons and how to improve. However, there is variation across classes and between subjects as to how well marking and targets help pupils know exactly how to get to the next level in their learning.

Teachers plan their lessons well and make excellent use of ICT to stimulate and support learning. They ensure that pupils use the ICT facilities to carry out research, for example, investigating different habitats across the country. Teachers also forward-plan alternatives, for example a mathematics lesson scheduled to include an outdoor activity had a contingency activity to carry out indoors if the weather was bad. Teaching has a good impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers are good role models and use curriculum content well to teach about other faiths and cultures.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour seen during the inspection was outstanding. Parents and carers, as well as pupils and staff, confirm that this is the normal situation in the school. The questionnaire responses about behaviour and bullying were very positive; many did not comment about whether bullying was dealt with well because they said there was none. This was reflected in pupils saying that they feel safe in school, a view shared by staff, parents and carers. There is no evidence of bullying of any kind in the school and pupils say any minor disagreements are quickly resolved. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are well cared for and feel safe. Pupils understand about internet security and no incidents of cyber bullying have been recorded. Pupils are very active in promoting good behaviour and safety. They willingly take on responsibilities within school and look after each other around the school. There have been no behavioural incidents or exclusions in recent years. The school is a very harmonious community with excellent relationships throughout. Attendance is above the national average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is very well supported by the senior teacher and the governing body. They all share the same vision for raising standards

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and improving the school. Since the previous inspection, they have made good progress in addressing the areas identified for improvement. They have developed rigorous tracking systems that have helped raise achievement, and extended the curriculum to include more enterprise initiatives and cross-curricular work. During this time, the behaviour and safety of pupils have risen to outstanding. The staff questionnaires confirm that all staff are supportive and appreciative of what the school provides. The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement. All teaching staff have targets set at performance management meetings and have access to training as required for their professional development. The governing body provides good support and challenge to the school. A nominated governor visits the school after each meeting, and this helps the governing body to develop a good understanding of the school and what needs to be done for it to improve further. The excellent relationships throughout the school mean that every pupil is well known by adults and any needs are addressed to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. The achievement of all pupils is similar and there is no evidence of discrimination of any kind. Members of the governing body and school leaders are all involved in monitoring the well-being of pupils, and ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met.

The school improvement plan clearly focuses on what needs to be done and is based on a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, with a wide range of well-attended extra-curricular opportunities for a small school. The school works well with partner schools to extend provision. Pupils say they all enjoy the clubs and activities available to them, including sport and art. The curriculum is adapted well to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as providing opportunities for the specific gifts and talents of pupils. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, not least through visits into the community. The multicultural element is supported by project work and effective use of ICT.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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



30 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of North Scarle Primary School, Lincoln, LN6 9EY

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking with you, reading the questionnaires some of you completed, and looking at the work you do. Your school provides you with a good education.

There are many things I admired about your school and these are a few of them.

- You all get on very well together and enjoy coming to school.
- You feel very safe and contribute well to helping others.
- Behaviour is consistently outstanding throughout the school.
- You are very well cared for in school.
- Your teachers make lessons fun and help you make good progress.
- The school is led and managed well.

For the school to improve further, I have asked your headteacher to review how teachers mark your work and set you targets, so that you always receive guidance and support on how to improve your work and reach the next step in your learning.

All of you can help the school to move forward by continuing to work hard. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

John Horwood
Lead inspector

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