

Gedney Drove End Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120410
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380012
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Worth
Headteacher	Karyn Wiles
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2009
School address	Main Road Gedney Drove End Spalding PE12 9PD
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons or parts of lessons; two of these in partnership with the headteacher and one with the Head of school. In total, four teachers were observed. The inspector heard pupils read and spoke with them about their reading. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Planning documents and school tracking data were analysed. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at: documents concerning safeguarding and child protection; the most recent school improvement plan; records of teaching observations; headteacher reports to the governing body; and the reports written by the local authority advisory team. Questionnaires from 28 parents and carers were analysed, and those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

In this very small school, pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. The school serves the local community and neighbouring villages. Most pupils are of White British heritage and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just below average. The overall percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average. An average proportion are at 'school action plus', but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than in most schools. Pupils' needs include speech, language and communication, and moderate learning difficulties. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school is federated with Holbeach St Marks Church of England Primary School under a single governing body and led by the same headteacher. Both schools were inspected at the same time. Since the previous inspection the federation has entered into a collaborative partnership with Westmere Primary School.

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	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Strong leadership and management has ensured that the issues from the previous inspection have been tackled well. It is not outstanding because teaching is not consistently strong enough to promote outstanding progress, and pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their writing skills in different subjects.
- Achievement is good. From low starting points, pupils' progress is good throughout the school. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average in all subjects, although higher in reading and mathematics than in writing. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress, thanks to careful monitoring and individual support.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers make clear what pupils will learn and regularly check their understanding. Typically they ensure that learning moves along at a brisk pace. On a few occasions the pace of learning slows, for example when not enough time is given to allow pupils to work independently.
- The school provides a secure, safe environment for learning and pupils are well cared for. The behaviour of pupils in lessons is consistently good and they confidently talk about their school and the exciting activities they do. Attendance has improved as a result of the school's robust actions to reduce absence.
- The headteacher's purposeful guidance for staff, including the management of their professional development, has been successful in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' performance across the school. The development of wider leadership through the federation, training of leaders and strong governance has created an effective partnership that is clearly focused on making the school even better. The good curriculum provides pupils with enriching spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move teaching and learning from good to outstanding and accelerate progress across the school by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their writing skills in all subjects across the curriculum
 - ensuring the right balance in all lessons between teacher talk and pupil activity, so that pupils have more time to work independently.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers strongly agree that their children do well at the school. From starting points that are below those expected for their ages, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly gain skills that help them develop socially, have positive attitudes to learning, and speak well. Good visual prompts promote their good learning and independence. Activities are well planned in both the outside and indoor environments, and this leads to good engagement. An activity to build a garden linking to a wilder area provided a good opportunity for children to learn to work together, to think about what classroom resources they could use to represent garden and wild area objects, and to recreate the story of the hunt they had been reading.

Levels of attainment at the end of each key stage vary considerably due to the different characteristics of each small year group, but are broadly average. School data and pupils' books show that current school improvement work is being successful in improving progress, which is securely good and rising. There remains some variability in the quality of pupils' writing in different contexts.

Typically, pupils have excellent attitudes towards learning and are keen to take part in small group or whole-class discussions. Pupils settle quickly to work and respond well to the good teaching that stimulates their learning. They enjoy being actively involved in finding things out for themselves and respond positively to challenging activities. A typical example was in an upper school lesson where pupils demonstrated high levels of contribution, cooperation and participation encouraged by well-paced teaching as they retold a Greek myth with a high level of excitement and actions. In the few lessons that move more slowly, pupils' progress slows as pupils wait patiently to be allowed to start activities. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are supported effectively, both in class and through individual help.

A strong emphasis on literature and the effective teaching of phonics (linking sounds and letters) ensures that pupils' attainment in reading is average at Year 2 and

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above average at the end of Year 6, and that their attitudes towards books are highly positive.

Quality of teaching

Careful planning, based on good knowledge of both the interests of pupils and their levels of attainment, means that lessons are successful in promoting good learning and progress. Teachers are careful in the way they set different levels of challenge for the different ages and abilities of pupils in the mixed-age classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from being taught alongside older pupils, while still having access to a range of activities appropriate to their own age group.

Relationships are strong and lessons are conducted in a calm, friendly way that promotes good concentration. Small classes mean that teachers are able to give pupils good individual help and support, and this actively promotes pupils' personal development. The pace of learning is good overall because teachers use observations and questioning effectively to assess pupils' ongoing understanding. Where teaching is less strong, introductions are too long, and pupils do not have enough time to work independently as they have too little time to get on with tasks matched to their abilities.

Strong use of data to identify any pupil in danger of underachieving ensures that each pupil receives appropriate additional support. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to teaching and learning, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Marking is used well to tell pupils how to improve their work. The planned curriculum makes a good impact on learning, and work on topics such as the Olympics develops pupils' understanding of history and geography. There are many interesting activities to develop reading, mathematics and information and communication and technology skills in subjects across the curriculum. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop and practise writing skills across a range of subjects. Well-planned enrichment activities, including visits to museums, visits from chamber groups and theatre groups and links with other schools help to develop pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures and have a good impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Parents and carers are highly positive about the quality of teaching their child receives, and pupils cited teaching as one of the things they thought was best about the school.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' good behaviour has a positive impact on their learning. Almost all parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire agree that the standard of behaviour is good, although a small minority expressed concerns about behaviour. The inspector investigated this thoroughly. Exemplary behaviour was sometimes evident in lessons observed during the inspection and around the school. The school's records of behaviour over time and discussions with many pupils during

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lessons, at break times and more formally in group discussions, showed that behaviour is typically good.

Pupils show high levels of engagement in their learning. They collaborate well and assist one another when they see someone struggle. Pupils appreciate going to a small school where they know everyone and feel valued by staff. They say that bullying is very rare. When it happens, it is dealt with quickly and effectively, as is evident from school records. Pupils learn about various forms of bullying, such as name-calling, prejudice-based bullying or cyber bullying, through their good personal and social education programme and through special events such as an annual anti-bullying week. Wide-ranging sporting and adventurous activities across the federation provide excellent opportunities for pupils to learn about how to assess risk. Parents and carers strongly agree that the school keeps their children safe.

Pupils respond to the school's relentless efforts to improve attendance and this has shown a sustained improvement to reach a broadly average level. Considerable efforts have been made to reduce the numbers of pupils whose attendance was low, and the school is working successfully in partnership with parents and carers to improve this even further.

Leadership and management

The skilful leadership of the headteacher, together with the high expectations and ambition of all staff and the governing body, underpins the school's good capacity for sustained improvement. A notable feature of the school is the strong teamwork and the shared drive to tailor the provision and to provide the best possible learning experiences for each child in this small community. As a consequence equality of opportunity is promoted well and the school ensures that pupils learn in a safe, secure and supportive environment without fear of discrimination.

The school team works well together, both for the benefit of pupils at Gedney Drove End and others within the federation. This also enriches the experiences of the pupils. Over the last four years, robust systems have been developed to underpin this. Rigorous self-evaluation ensures that the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Good development planning leads to well-judged actions. Careful checking of the progress made by each individual pupil means that interventions are appropriately matched to need. The regular checking of the quality of teaching in lessons has correctly identified aspects of provision that needed improvement. Staff professional development is linked well to individual and school needs, and has led to raised pupils' progress.

The curriculum is planned in response to the needs and interests of the pupils, and has a strong link to real-life contexts. Although writing skills are not developed fully through a wide range of subjects, generally links between subjects are exploited well to extend pupils' basic skills and support their social, moral and spiritual development which is good.

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Strong governance has successfully supported the school's improved effectiveness through the federation and through wider links with other local schools. Partnerships with parents and carers are strong, and they are highly appreciative of all aspects of the school. An overwhelming majority of those who responded to the school survey strongly agree that the school helps them to support their child's learning. Leaders and managers ensure that the safeguarding of pupils is strong and focused on the well-being of all.

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.



21 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gedney Drove End Primary School, Spalding, PE12 9PD

I really enjoyed my time in your school and one of the highlights was talking to you. Your views, including those given in the questionnaires some of you completed, helped me to make my judgements. You will be pleased to know that I agree with you that yours is a good school.

These are some of the things I liked best.

- You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You are well taught. Your teachers are successful in making you interested in your work so that you want to learn.
- You behave well, work hard in class and want to succeed. I was particularly impressed by the way that you look after each other.
- Staff know each of you really well and take very good care of you. This makes you feel very safe and secure.
- School leaders, other staff and the governing body are working hard to make sure that your school gets even better as quickly as possible.

To make things even better I have asked your headteacher, governors and teachers to do these things.

- Provide you with more opportunities to use your writing skills when you are learning in other subjects.
- Give you more time to do the activities teachers set you in class.

All of you can help by continuing to work as hard as you can, and making sure that you attend school every day.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce
Lead inspector

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