

St George's Church of England Community Primary School, Gainsborough

Inspection report

Unique reference number	131490
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	381349
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2012
Lead inspector	Richard Marsden

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

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	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Pearson
Headteacher	Janet Sanderson
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2008
School address	Lindsey Close Gainsborough DN21 1YN
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Richard Marsden

Additional Inspector

Meg Hackney

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by eight teachers. They spoke with parents and carers, and held meetings with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and examined safeguarding documentation, attendance records, information on pupils' attainment and progress, the curriculum, the school's self-evaluation and planning, as well as responses to questionnaires from 44 parents and carers, 24 staff and 34 pupils.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. Most pupils are White British, with few from minority ethnic heritages and almost none who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost three times higher than the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at 'school action plus' or with a statement of special educational needs is double the national average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school partway through each year is also twice as high as the national figure.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It holds Healthy Schools status.

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 that is highly regarded by parents and carers. Good teaching captures pupils' interest and challenges them to achieve well. The school is not outstanding because pupils' progress in developing key skills is not as rapid in literacy as in numeracy, attendance rates are below average, and pupils' cultural development, though good, lacks breadth because they have few opportunities to experience communities beyond the immediate locality.
- From exceptionally low starting points, pupils make good progress across the school. In mathematics, attainment reaches the national average by the end of Year 6. In English, the gap against national expectations narrows markedly as pupils move up the school, but attainment is still below average at the end of Year 6.
- Teachers give pupils clear guidance about how to improve their work. They promote numeracy and computer skills particularly well across different subjects, but are not as rigorous in promoting literacy skills in lessons other than English. The most able pupils are well challenged in mathematics, but less so in English.
- Good behaviour and positive attitudes promote effective learning. Pupils are highly esteemed as individuals, and relationships display mutual respect. Pupils and their parents and carers rightly feel that the school is a safe place where pupils are well cared for and do not fear bullying or harassment.
- The headteacher and staff have been effective in bringing about improvements since the previous inspection. Better provision for mathematics and science has led to faster progress and higher attainment in these subjects. A strong emphasis on tracking progress and setting individual targets has improved pupils' achievement. School self-evaluation is accurate, and leaders and staff share a common vision to provide the best for all pupils.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By summer 2013, raise attainment in English to at least the national average at the end of Year 6 by:
 - extending regular opportunities for all pupils to develop literacy skills across the curriculum, not just in English lessons
 - increasing the level of challenge for more-able pupils so that more of them reach higher levels.
- Improve attendance rates by strengthening the school's engagement with the small number of families who do not yet see the value of their child's regular attendance at school.
- Strengthen pupils' cultural awareness by creating opportunities for pupils to have first-hand interaction with people from communities beyond the immediate locality.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children join the Reception class with starting points that are well below expectations for their age in English and mathematics, as well as in social development and knowledge of the world around them. They make rapid progress and are well prepared to move into the main school. In Key Stages 1 and 2 progress continues to be good, and the attainment levels seen in lessons and pupils' books in Year 6 were in line with the national average in mathematics although still below in English. Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires rightly said that their children achieve well.

There are no significant variations in achievement between boys and girls. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because their progress is meticulously tracked and they receive strong support in lessons and in small-group or individual activities with an adult nearby. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals also achieve well.

In the lessons observed, pupils responded well to lively and imaginative teaching. They enjoyed practical tasks, rather than having to listen to the teacher for too long. They concentrated well on their work and enjoyed the challenges they were given. The most-able pupils read fluently and with good expression, showing skills in line with those expected for their age. They read frequently at home and at school. Less-able pupils read with more hesitation but show a sound grasp of the 'sounding-out' techniques they have been taught in order to tackle unfamiliar words.

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Quality of teaching

The good quality of teaching found during the inspection was also reflected in the views of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires, and the pupils. Teachers explain things very clearly and question pupils skilfully to check their understanding. They reshape tasks and explanations to make sure that everyone learns at a good pace. From the Reception class onwards there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills. Topics are related to real life and are chosen carefully to engage both boys and girls. In a mathematics lesson older pupils used hand-held computers to practise quick-fire calculations. Their motivation was high and they were well warmed-up for the next part of the lesson, which involved complex mathematical and logical thinking. In an English lesson younger pupils were highly motivated because their writing focused on a nature reserve the class had visited. They were very proud to be making a book about the visit and the level of challenge was high for all pupils. In some other English lessons the challenge was not as strong, particularly for more-able pupils.

Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they convey high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. New methods for teaching reading and writing are used consistently by teachers and have been successful in raising standards. Teachers promote mathematical and computer skills very effectively across different subjects, although literacy skills are not consolidated and extended to the same degree beyond English lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and provide high-quality feedback, showing pupils clearly how well they are doing against their personal targets and how to improve their work. Pupils say they find these comments very helpful in promoting their progress. Pupils are encouraged to develop independence in their learning. Homework is used well. Early identification and good-quality support mean that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught effectively.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect, for example during assemblies or lessons which deal with personal and social development. They listen to the views of others with interest and respect and make thoughtful and sensitive responses. They learn about different beliefs and cultures, but do not have opportunities to meet at first hand their counterparts from communities beyond their own.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is typically good over time, and pupils feel safe. These evaluations match the views of parents and carers, and pupils themselves. 'Since being here the change in my child has been fantastic. She has grown in confidence and has learned how to behave towards others.' 'My son would not have overcome his difficulties without the school's invaluable help.' These comments were typical of those written on the parental questionnaires. Many said the school was warm and welcoming. Where there have been behavioural issues related to individual pupils, the school has taken

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decisive and effective action. Positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour are the norm, enabling teachers to teach effectively and pupils to learn rapidly. Pupils concentrate well on their work. They listen well to adults and to each other.

Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in various situations, including on the internet. They understand the different forms that bullying can take, but they, and their parents and carers, are confident that teachers take swift and appropriate action whenever such issues arise.

Pupils respond well to opportunities take on responsibility. For example, they serve as monitors and buddies supporting pupils who are new to the school, and they arrange collections for charities. In the Reception class there is a strong emphasis on developing routines. Children respond well to the warmth and encouragement shown by adults as they are introduced to the school's high expectations. Throughout the school, strong relationships reflect high levels of respect and cooperation.

The school gives strong support to pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Inspectors saw telling evidence of ways in which the school's support for these pupils and their families has enabled them to attend more regularly, maintain high standards of behaviour and work, and make progress in line with that of their peers. Attendance levels are below average because of the persistent absence of the children from a few families.

Leadership and management

The school is led well. Areas for improvement arising from the previous inspection have been tackled effectively. There is now better teaching in mathematics and science. A sharp focus on tracking pupils' progress ensures that any who are falling behind are identified swiftly and given appropriate support. Focused training has equipped staff to provide high levels of support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The impact of these developments has been to foster pupils' good achievement. The school has good capacity to improve further.

The governing body is well informed and well organised. Its members are closely involved in the life of the school and monitor its work carefully. They hold the school to account for its performance and are not afraid to ask searching questions and challenge the headteacher, in order to secure the best for pupils. The school has good support from most parents and carers and engages them well in their children's education, although a few families do not yet see the value of sending their child to school regularly or supporting their child's education.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of pupils well. It promotes good progress and fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Extra-curricular activities, which include sport and music, are popular and well attended. Special events such as Enterprise Week show pupils how learning is relevant to life. Pupils enjoy a range of visits, including residential visits, which broaden their awareness of the world around them.

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Staff are meticulous in ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities. No pupil, regardless of background or need, is excluded from any activity. Every pupil is known as an individual, and there is no discrimination of any kind. Leaders are highly diligent in discharging their duties regarding child protection and the safeguarding of children. They keep these aspects under meticulous review to ensure that statutory requirements are met and that good practice prevails.

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.



29 June 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St George's Church of England Community Primary School,
Gainsborough, DN21 1YN**

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school. It was a great pleasure to meet you. We came to find out what your school does well and how it might be improved. We listened to your views as well as those of the adults, and a special 'thank you' to those who completed questionnaires. Your school is good, and your parents and carers are right to be pleased with it. These are the things that particularly impressed us.

- Teachers and other adults in school know you well. They look after you and keep you safe.
- You enjoy your lessons and you concentrate hard in class.
- You make good progress and by the end of Year 6, the standard of your work in mathematics is in line with the national average.
- Your behaviour is good. You are thoughtful and polite, and you get on well together. You enjoy taking on jobs around the school.
- Your teachers mark your work regularly and show you clearly how to improve it.
- You enjoy lots of out-of-school activities and visits.

To make your school even better we have asked your teachers to help you make more rapid progress in English, and to give you opportunities to mix with children from places beyond Gainsborough so that you can learn from each other about how different people live. We have also asked them to make sure that the few pupils who do not attend school regularly start to come to school more often.

It was a great pleasure to visit your school. You can all help to make it even better by attending regularly, continuing to behave well, and always trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Richard Marsden
Lead inspector

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