

The North Cotes Church of England Primary School

Sea Lane, North Cotes, Grimsby, DN36 5UZ

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From joining Reception with skills below those expected for their age, pupils achieve well throughout the school. The progress made by pupils has been improving steadily over the last three years.
- Teaching is consistently good in all parts of the school, and some is outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic and inspire pupils to learn through exciting lessons.
- The headteacher has led the improvements to teaching and achievement since the school's last inspection. She is very well supported by senior leaders.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning are important features in their success.
- Pupils say they thoroughly enjoy reading all kinds of books by different authors. Letters and sounds are taught well, so Reception children are eager to start reading as soon as they can.
- Pupils say they feel very safe, and are well aware of how to avoid unnecessary risks. They are extremely happy in school and get on well with each other.
- The subjects taught offer pupils a wide range of exciting experiences. They are enhanced by clubs after school, local visits, and travelling further afield and staying overnight.
- Effective teamwork has enabled the school to successfully tackle the issues from the last inspection, showing that it has the capacity to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the quality of teaching is improving, not enough is outstanding.
- Work planned for pupils is not always hard enough and when pupils are working alone, adults do not always check to find out how well they are doing.
- The outdoor areas for Reception children have not been developed enough to include plenty of activities for children to explore writing and mathematics.
- Pupils do not get enough chance to use the skills learnt in mathematics in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four teachers and visited nine lessons or part lessons. Six lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher, and one with the deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the English and mathematics subject leaders, pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed pupils' work and listened to them read.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, information on pupils' progress, and documents regarding safeguarding and key policies.
- The inspector took account of responses to the school's most recent questionnaire for parents and 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and analysed 14 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- North Cotes Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding provided in this school for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school meets the government’s current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school offers breakfast and after-school clubs, which are not managed by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection.
- In September 2012 The Fenland Federation of Schools was formed by North Cotes, Grainthorpe and Marshchapel Primary Schools, with an executive headteacher but shared deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. The three schools are managed by the same governing body. The Fenland Federation forms a collaborative partnership with Utterby and North Thoresby Federation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching outstanding, and so further improve pupils’ progress, by making sure that:
 - pupils regularly use their mathematical skills in other subjects
 - the work planned in lessons is set at the right level of difficulty for all pupils, but particularly to stretch the more-able pupils
 - teachers insist on consistently high levels of presentation for pupils’ work in all subjects
 - when pupils are working alone, adults still probe their thinking to extend their learning even further.
- Develop the Reception outdoor areas so that children have plenty of opportunities to practise their early writing and mathematical skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- For the last three years children have joined the Reception class with skills below the levels expected for their age, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress in reading is consistently good across the school, because teachers and other adults skilfully teach letters and the sounds they make. Extra support is available specifically for pupils who find reading difficult. Pupils say they enjoy reading at home as well as at school because a love of reading is fostered right from the start in the Reception Year.
- As a result of good teaching and a wide range of activities, children in Reception make good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of both the indoor and outdoor areas. As part of their work on 'Cold Places', children learnt well about polar bears and other animals when there was snow on the school field. They pretended to be Artic explorers, using the classroom igloo to spark off their imaginations. Such activities led to good developments in children's writing skills, as well as their creative and social skills.
- The outdoor areas are used frequently for a wide range of activities. Even when the weather is poor, the school provides children with outdoor clothing so they can continue to enjoy learning outside. However, children do not have as many opportunities to practise their early writing or mathematical skills outdoors as they do indoors.
- The latest school checks on pupils' progress and the sample of books seen during the inspection show that good progress continues for older pupils. The additional funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium has been well spent, for example by providing staff to help on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. This has enabled these pupils to make similar progress and reach the same standards as their classmates, as shown in their test results in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language, all make good progress. They receive help from teachers and teaching assistants who are well trained and skilled in adapting work to their individual needs.
- The 2012 Year 6 mathematics results were not as good as in English, particularly for the more-able pupils. However, the school responded quickly to tackle this, and recent information on pupils' progress indicates that the 2013 results will be higher.
- The school has concentrated on improving writing, particularly for boys. The wide range of good-quality writing displayed throughout the school shows how successful this focus has been. Writing is woven through other subjects; however, mathematics is not. As a result pupils do not get enough opportunities to sharpen their mathematical skills in other subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good and this is why pupils are making good progress. Typically, the pace of lessons is good so pupils learn new skills and gain knowledge quickly and no time is wasted. A very positive atmosphere encourages pupils to learn well.

- Teachers generally plan lessons well, so that activities match the different needs of pupils. On some occasions, though, work could be harder, especially to challenge the more-able pupils to reach higher levels.
- The marking of pupils' work has improved. Pupils know how well they are doing, as well as what they have to do next to improve their work further. This is linked well to pupils' individual targets, which are checked not only by teachers but also by pupils themselves. Pupils say they like to know what they have to aim for next, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The pupils' books reflect their good work and show how successfully their handwriting develops. However, the presentation of their work is not always of the same high quality.
- Teachers are skilled in developing pupils' understanding by asking them to talk about and share their ideas and methods with the class. A good example of this was seen in a Year 2 English lesson, where pupils were working with a partner or in groups discussing the words they could include in their shape poems. They shared their thoughts, often questioning each other's thinking until they were happy with the suggestions.
- Teachers often ask pupils probing questions to deepen their understanding. However, when pupils are not working with adults this questioning does not always take place, and the pace of their learning can be slower.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. Staff have good relationships with pupils; they offer lots of praise and encouragement and successfully raise their self-confidence and self-esteem. This helps pupils to be enthusiastic and very willing to learn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour was exemplary throughout the inspection, in lessons as well as around the school and at break time. Pupils, staff and parents indicate that outstanding behaviour is the norm.
- Staff and pupils share excellent relationships that support pupils' outstanding attitudes, impeccable conduct and manners, and enjoyment in learning. Pupils are respectful and attentive, work very hard and willingly share ideas to help each other, and this underpins their good achievement.
- Pupils have a good understanding of all forms of bullying, and know that words can hurt as much as physical acts. They say there is no bullying in the school, only 'occasional silliness' that is dealt with swiftly by staff. School records show that there have been no recent exclusions. Consequently, pupils also say they feel very safe at school, 'because all adults at the school get along well together and are kind and friendly towards us'.
- Pupils on the school council, and others when acting as monitors, fulfil their responsibilities diligently. Pupils also make very good contributions to the life of the school by raising funds, for example for the 'Junior Diabetes Fund' in support of a pupil in the school, and for 'Reg's Dream', a charity that supports families of children who are ill.
- Pupils get on very well together. They are respected and valued as individuals and there is no

discrimination. For example, when describing how they deal with any falling out by following the school's core value of respect for dealing with occasional disagreements, the 'peer mediators' said, 'If anyone gets upset during playtimes we help and care for them.'

- Attendance has improved steadily and is now above average. Punctuality is very good and so learning starts promptly in the morning and after breaks.
- Pupils are keen to be involved in improving the school. They appreciate the system of rewards and really enjoy getting the 'Privilege Cards' for good work or helping others, which they can exchange for small items they can use in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides good leadership. She has high expectations that are shared by all staff, ensuring a strong sense of teamwork. Leaders have successfully tackled the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection. As a result standards in English, the quality of marking and the way pupils are shown how to improve their work, and progress in Reception have all improved.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school to help leaders check how well pupils are doing. This has helped to make sure all pupils make good progress, supporting a firm commitment to promoting equal opportunities. Regular meetings are held to look at pupils' work as well as teachers' marking. Thorough monitoring systems are now established, with a sharp focus on observing teaching regularly.
- Leaders at all levels know the school well, and this underpins the successful actions taken that continue to bring about improvements. Accurate reviews of staff skills lead to well-focused training that has been effective in raising pupils' achievement. For example, specific training across the Fenland Federation, and in collaboration with Utterby and North Thoresby Federation, has improved the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. They value the times before school and at the end of the day to talk to staff about their children. Also, at these times, pupils have good opportunities to socialise and play together in a safe and caring environment.
- Staff are committed to their work. The staff questionnaires reflect strong team spirit.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is supported well through the rich range of learning opportunities provided for them. For example, to inspire pupils to write, the school provides 'real-life experiences', usually outdoors, such as visits in the local area to study its history. Activities outside the normal school day are organised for children from Reception to pupils in Year 6. For example, pupils can learn to cook or play a musical instrument as well as develop sport or art skills.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is committed to providing high-quality support and questioning the school. Since the last inspection governors have improved their skills, which in turn has helped to improve the school. Governors have a clear understanding of their tasks and responsibilities. They know the school well, and including how its performance compares to that of other similar schools. Arrangements for safeguarding meet national requirements for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being. They visit the school regularly in order to work closely

with senior leaders, staff, pupils and parents, as well as to check teaching and the performance of pupils. Governors hold the headteacher to account through setting performance targets that are linked to pupils' progress, and if appropriate they make sure that teachers' pay is linked to their performance to help pupils achieve well. The governors rigorously manage the school's finances. They know how the pupil premium is spent, and check to make sure that eligible pupils benefit from it by making better progress.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	120579
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	405943

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	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marilyn Bell
Headteacher	Anna Coney (Executive)
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2011
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