

Thurlby Community Primary School

Crown Lane, Thurlby, Bourne, PE10 0EZ

Inspection dates

30–31 October 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Good teaching helps all groups of pupils to make good progress in English and mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because of the effective teaching of letters and sounds (phonics).
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute well to the school's calm learning atmosphere.
- Pupils feel safe and well looked after at school, and the vast majority of parents and carers agree.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they have well-focused individual support.
- The taught subjects are enhanced by a good range of sporting and other activities beyond lessons.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school is led and managed well. Senior leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching and raised achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, teachers' explanations are too long. This limits the work of teaching assistants and the time pupils have to work on their own.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always provide clear guidance on how it can be improved.
- Occasionally, teachers do not match work closely enough to pupils' abilities.
- Not all staff in leadership roles have the skills needed to make a strong impact on school improvement.
- Some governors do not fully understand what differences in pupils' attainment and progress reveal about the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, several of which were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also observed two assemblies and made a number of other short visits to classrooms.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff and pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and some parents at the start of the school day.
- A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- An inspector heard groups of pupils of different ages reading.
- Account was taken of 51 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies, teachers' planning of learning, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety, together with samples of pupils' work. Tracking documentation of individual pupils' progress, documentation on how leaders manage teachers' performance and records of meetings held by the governing body were also examined.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christopher Birtles	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a below-average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well below average. This is additional government funding for particular groups such as pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make all teaching good or better by ensuring that:
 - lesson introductions and teachers' explanations are not too long, so pupils have more time to work on their own and full use is made of the support available from teaching assistants
 - the work set in lessons is suitably challenging for all ability groups, but particularly for more-able pupils
 - the marking of pupils' work provides clear guidance on the standard achieved and how it can be improved, and pupils respond to the advice given.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all staff with leadership roles have the skills needed to identify and tackle weaknesses in their areas of responsibility
 - governors are provided with training on understanding data so they are able to interpret information about pupils' attainment and progress to draw accurate conclusions about the effectiveness of teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that are generally typical for their age. Because of improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are now making good progress. As a result, the attainment of those children who most recently moved up to Year 1 was above expectations in all areas of learning.
- Good progress continues as pupils move through the school. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2, which have been average over recent years, rose to above average in 2013. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 have generally been above average over a number of years.
- Reviews of pupils' work and school assessment information show that current pupils are making good progress and that above-average standards are being sustained. However, occasionally, more-able pupils do not work as hard as they might because they are not challenged enough in lessons.
- Standards in reading are above average because the systematic teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) ensures that pupils acquire secure basic reading skills. This is seen in the results of the Year 1 reading check, which are regularly above those found nationally.
- Although achievement in English is good, attainment and progress in writing are not quite as strong as in reading. The school has correctly identified, and is tackling, raising standards in writing as an improvement priority.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are well known and good support from teachers and teaching assistants enables them to achieve their individual learning targets.
- There are too few pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium to comment on their attainment without identifying them. However, the progress of these pupils in English and mathematics is often better than that of their classmates. This is because of the effective way in which the funding has been used to provide the support necessary to meet their learning and personal needs.
- The school has a history of success in sporting activities, including a successful appearance at Wembley Stadium in the final of a national football tournament. It uses the new primary school sports funding well to employ additional sports coaches to work alongside and develop the skills of class teachers, as well as increasing the range of sporting activities for pupils both during and after school hours. These initiatives promote the development of healthy lifestyles effectively.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good and occasionally outstanding teaching ensures that all groups of pupils achieve well.
- Good classroom management, coupled with high expectations, ensures that teaching takes place in a calm and purposeful learning atmosphere. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' good progress.

- Teachers make good use of 'talk partners' so pupils can share ideas and learn from each other. This effectively develops their speaking and listening skills and promotes their respect for the views of others.
- Teachers ask questions skilfully to check pupils' understanding as lessons proceed. In Reception, good use is made of the indoor and outdoor areas to develop children's skills. Adults take every opportunity to extend their language and numeracy skills by regularly asking them about the things they are doing.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is generally good across the school. Reading is particularly well taught. Daily sessions, which follow a structured programme, are challenging and well paced. Pupils make good progress in learning the sounds that letters and groups of letters make.
- Occasionally the teacher talks for too long, and all pupils are given the same explanations of what they are to do next. This restricts opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves and slows the pace of learning.
- Teachers generally plan work that is at the right level for pupils of different abilities. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils made rapid progress in developing their understanding of the key features of a newspaper report because the learning tasks were carefully planned to challenge all ability levels. In a few lessons, however, the work set for the most and least able is too similar and is not sufficiently demanding for those capable of working at higher levels.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to ensure that the work given to disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and others who need extra help, is carefully sequenced so that all make good progress towards their learning targets. However, when teachers talk for too long they do not make the best use of the support available from teaching assistants, who spend time passively listening to the same explanations as the pupils.
- Some marking of pupils' work provides clear pointers for improvement, but other marking does not help the pupils to improve enough. In some instances where pupils are given such guidance, they are not required to follow it through and so learn from correcting their own mistakes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school places a strong emphasis on the development of good behaviour from entry to Reception onwards. As a result, the vast majority of children quickly learn and accept the school's expectations of behaviour in lessons and around the school. Teachers, pupils and parents told inspectors that behaviour is good.
- Pupils report that they feel safe, secure and happy in school. Parents agree that their children enjoy coming to school and that it is a safe place. Pupils display a good sense of how to stay safe, and are knowledgeable about risks and danger.
- Pupils are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. They understand the difference between bullying and falling-out, and know about different forms of bullying including physical, emotional and cyber bullying. Pupils say that while there have been isolated instances of bullying in the past, they are not aware of any current issues. They are confident that were there to be any incidents, these would be quickly dealt with by adults.
- Pupils willingly take on responsibility and play a constructive role in the life of the school through

the school council or as 'play leaders' in the playground, for example.

- From an early stage, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and a willingness to try their best. Sometimes, however, where whole-class introductions are too long or the work is not well matched to their needs, pupils' attention wanders and they are not fully involved in learning.
- Attendance is average. It is adversely affected by family holidays taken in term time, even though the school discourages this practice.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, with the strong support of his deputy, provides a clear direction for the school based on the rigorous analysis of pupils' progress and accurate evaluation of the school's work. For example, following a review of provision in the Reception class, children's learning has benefited from improvements in the outdoor learning area.
- Teachers' performance is checked through the observation of lessons and reviews of pupils' progress. Teachers are well supported through training to achieve the targets set for them to improve their practice. For example, training in the teaching of phonics has had a positive impact on reading standards. There is a clear understanding that decisions about promotion and pay increases will be based on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.
- Several staff have only recently been appointed to subject and other leadership roles. While they are all fully committed to supporting the continuing drive for improvement, they do not, as yet, have the skills to accurately evaluate the impact of teaching on learning in their areas of responsibility.
- The school has rigorous systems for checking the progress of all groups of pupils. Care is taken to ensure that those eligible for the pupil premium are able to take part in all the school has to offer. The progress of these pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is checked to ensure that the variety of support provided for them has a positive impact on their progress. This reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and to ensuring that there is no discrimination.
- Subjects and topics are enriched by visits to places of interest, residential visits for older pupils to Norfolk and the Lake District, and visitors to the school. Through experiences such as these, assemblies, music, art and the development of pupils' understanding of different cultures, the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- The school has a longstanding commitment to sport and has made appropriate plans to measure the impact of the way sport funding is being used.
- The local authority provides good support, for example by supporting developments in Reception and providing training for staff and governors.
- The school engages well with the vast majority of parents. This is seen in the school's own surveys of parental views and supported by the views of those spoken to by inspectors. A very small minority of parents indicated, through Parent View, that they have concerns about some aspects of the school. Senior staff and governors are keen to explore the reasons for these concerns.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is very supportive. Governors ensure that they meet their duties, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils. Governors manage finances well and seek assurances that the income received through the pupil premium is spent for the purposes intended. Governors oversee the management of teachers' performance and know how the school's performance compares with that of other schools. They understand that teachers' pay and promotion must be justified by the impact of teaching on pupils' progress, but they are less secure in their understanding of the use of assessment information to recognise good teaching and challenge underperformance.

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	120390
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	425085

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	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Hayball
Headteacher	Graham Clegg
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2008
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