

The South Hykeham Community Primary School

Wath Lane, South Hykeham, Lincoln, LN6 9PG

Inspection dates 10–11 December 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.

- Pupils now make consistently good progress because they are taught well.
- Some teaching is outstanding and pupils make excellent progress at these times.
- Teachers check thoroughly on each individual pupil's progress. They give praise when it is deserved and effective support if pupils need some additional help.
- Good teaching in Reception helps children settle quickly and gives them a good start to their school life.
- Pupils learn to love reading from a very early age and so make good progress in reading.
- Pupils' attitudes towards their work are exemplary; they are eager to learn and to do well.
- Pupils behave extremely well and are safe whilst in school. They are proud of their school and talk about it enthusiastically.
- The headteacher provides effective leadership of a small staff team, which has successfully improved teaching and raised achievement since the school was last inspected.
- The governing body plays an effective role in improving the school through good support and constructive challenge.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The work set for pupils is sometimes too easy or too hard for groups of pupils in the mixed-age classes.
- The good marking system is not used consistently well across all subjects to help pupils improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven teachers and visited 10 lessons or part lessons. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector had a discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed pupils' work, looked in their exercise books 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, school policies, and documents regarding safeguarding and reports from the local authority and governors.
- The inspector took account of the 49 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and analysed 13 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- South Hykeham Primary is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils attend from the village and surrounding area.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage caters for Reception-aged children. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes: Years 1 and 2, Years 2 and 3, Years 4 and 5, and Years 5 and 6. In these classes pupils are grouped by ability.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs 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 known to be eligible for additional government funding through the pupil premium is well below average. In this school it supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The governors appointed two new teachers from September 2013. At the same time two new subject leaders for literacy and numeracy were appointed. A new special educational needs coordinator has been appointed since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding in order to further improve pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring work is pitched at the right level for pupils in mixed age classes
 - using the marking system consistently so that pupils know how to improve their work in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- There is a small number of pupils in each year group so the results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 vary from year to year, but they are typically at least average and in some years above average. In 2013 some factors beyond the school's control, including illness during the test period, affected the Year 6 results. As a result, some pupils' performance in the tests did not reflect the good quality of their previous work in class.
- Pupils make good progress across each year group in reading, writing and mathematics because of consistently good teaching. By the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils having made nationally expected progress is above average. The proportion exceeding expected progress was also affected by illness in the school during the testing period. The current Year 6 pupils' books and the work seen in lessons show pupils make good progress and a high percentage are on track to exceed expected progress.
- Children enter Reception with attainment which is usually in line with that expected for their age, but it varies from year to year. As a result of good teaching and a range of well planned activities, children learn and make good progress. They make particularly good progress in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and use this knowledge to start reading and writing well. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in the 2013 Year 1 phonics screening test was above average.
- Improvement in reading standards since the previous inspection is particularly good. Pupils at all ages read well, with a majority achieving the higher Level 5 in the Year 6 national tests. Pupils actively promote reading in the school themselves, and librarians read to younger pupils. This encourages pupils to read more and to think about what they are reading.
- Since the last inspection pupils have been given more opportunities to write at length, and improvements can clearly be seen in their written work. Pupils discuss in depth what they are going to write about, and by studying examples they write good descriptive sentences which they improve as they think about how they can make their writing even better. They produce lengthy pieces of writing which are well constructed and show good skills in grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Progress in mathematics accelerates in Years 5 and 6 because teaching is good and pupils have secure basic mathematical skills on which to build. All pupils make similarly good progress, regardless of their different starting points. More pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in the Year 6 national tests than the average in 2013.
- Teachers monitor carefully the progress of all pupils, so that support can be quickly provided where it is needed. The support is delivered by skilled teaching assistants who work with the pupils on individually tailored programmes. Therefore, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils supported by pupil premium grant benefit from additional adult assistance. This grant is used effectively to include them fully in the range of school activities. As a result, these pupils make similarly good progress to other pupils in the school in English and mathematics. The very small number of pupils involved means that any comparison of attainment levels is unreliable. However, the overall picture is one of closing the gap.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is now consistently good in reading, writing and mathematics. This profile has improved over the past year due to the introduction of regular checks on the work of teachers by leaders and with an increased focus on monitoring how teachers promote learning of different groups in mixed-age classes. The sharing of expertise across the school has helped to increase the rate of improvement in teaching. With pupils' excellent attitudes to learning, this leads to good achievement for almost all pupils. There are some examples of excellent teaching across the school, but not yet enough to result in outstanding achievement over time.
- Pupils said they enjoy their lessons and that all teaching is good. As one explained, 'They just keep going till we get it.' Parents agree; all those who spoke to the inspector commented on the good teaching and were very pleased with the progress their children make.
- Effective teaching in Reception enables children to make good progress. Accurate assessment leads to adults planning appropriately for next steps in learning. This builds very effectively on what children know and can do. As well as effective teaching of key literacy and numeracy skills, children are helped to think about what they are learning and to work on their own as well as collaboratively with others.
- A strong feature of the best teaching is the close match of group tasks to the pupils' ability. This enables all groups to make good progress. Teachers match the level of challenge well to different groups and extension tasks provide effective challenge for the most able pupils, enabling them to reach high levels of attainment.
- When whole classes are taught together, teachers do not always take such careful account of the different ages and abilities. Occasionally, therefore, an introduction to a lesson is too difficult for some and too easy for others. At these times, going over learning that some pupils already know prevents pupils from moving on more quickly.
- Some of the best writing is produced when teachers make good links across different subjects. Teachers inspired pupils to write exceptionally well and with great enthusiasm when writing accounts of their experiences of singing at the Royal Albert Hall.
- Teachers celebrate good work in class and in assembly. As well as promoting good literacy skills, teachers promote pupils' social, spiritual, moral and cultural awareness by celebrating success.
- Teachers encourage reading for pleasure throughout the school. Much effective learning across a range of areas of learning in Reception has come from teachers using children's enthusiasm for the stories about Cinderella and Prince Charming. Pupils in Year 6 talk confidently about the books they enjoy and are knowledgeable about types of books and their characteristics.
- Some of the best learning takes place when teachers encourage pupils to follow their own interests and pursue their own lines of enquiry. Teachers provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop the ability to find things out for themselves, thus extending both their knowledge and the ability to apply their learning.
- There are many examples across Key Stages 1 and 2 where teachers' marking is effective in helping pupils improve their work. However, marking is not consistently used well in all subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- There is an exceptionally warm, welcoming atmosphere throughout the school, which arises from pupils' attitudes to school life. Pupils are always very friendly and extremely polite. They get on very well with each other and with adults. They enjoy school and are very keen to learn. They respond exceptionally well to the school's very high expectations of their behaviour.
- Children in Reception learn the rules of good behaviour quickly. As soon as they arrive in the morning they choose a learning activity and settle with their classmates to start learning. They show maturity as they concentrate and persevere with activities, choose their own resources and make decisions together about their own learning.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour and highly positive attitudes to school create a very effective climate for learning. Their behaviour and attitudes make an excellent contribution to their own learning. Pupils readily use resources independently to find things out for themselves and show initiative in moving their own learning on.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the different forms bullying can take. They say it is extremely rare in school. Parents, staff and school behaviour records confirm this view. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's ability to keep their children safe and to deal with any problems quickly.
- Pupils know how to act if something seems dangerous and they know who to go to for help should they need it. They feel very safe. As one pupil summed this up, 'Everyone is friendly with everyone,' and 'If someone was unhappy we would soon sort it out because we all care about one another.'
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and contributing to the life of the school. Pupils appreciate the importance of being part of a caring community with older pupils often supporting younger ones. At lunchtime, some older pupils are librarians and read stories and act them out for younger ones who choose to spend their time being entertained in this way.
- Attendance is typically above the national average, and this reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher gives the school strong and committed leadership. He inspires the full support of a small but effective team, including experienced governors, who have contributed to improved standards since the previous inspection, as well as seeking further improvement. Leaders demonstrate their capacity for school improvement, through improved teaching and higher attainment.
- Leaders check the progress of pupils regularly, and the results are used to plan future work and to target where additional support is required. This is monitored carefully by senior leaders to make sure it has the best effect on how well pupils do. Careful checking of each pupil's individual progress is a strength of the school and helps pupils of different ages and abilities in the same class make good progress.
- Effective target setting to improve teachers' work provides support, constructive criticism and appropriate training for teachers' work in the classroom. Senior leaders provide guidance and support for all teachers, particularly in developing the skills of the newly appointed subject leaders. Senior leaders make sure that teachers are aware of how they use pupils' achievement,

and teachers achieving their targets, to award promotion and salary increases.

- Leaders, including governors, manage the school's resources well. They make sure teaching assistants contribute well to the progress pupils make, especially those needing specific support. Teachers' individual expertise is managed well so pupils are taught music by specialists, and art and science by adults with expertise.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. There are only a very small number eligible for this funding; they have diverse needs so these and the progress of each pupil are checked individually. The effective use of this funding is checked by governors. The school's ethos of care and support, valuing and including all pupils as well as promoting their self-esteem and aspirations, ensures that there are equal opportunities for all.
- Leaders have planned well to make good use of the primary school sports funding. The plan includes the employment of a coach with expertise in a wider range of sports to encourage pupils to adopt a healthier lifestyle, but also to improve the expertise of teachers to deliver these sports in the future.
- The learning in the Reception class is firmly based on the children's needs and interest, so they are enthused and motivated by all that is on offer for them. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is carefully constructed to ensure that pupils of the same age, but in different classes, have the same chance to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects and make equally good progress. Pupils' learning is enriched by a wide-ranging and interesting variety of subjects and activities, and tasks are well matched to their different abilities. Pupils have opportunities to take part in day trips relating to their lessons as well as a residential trip for older pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The school ensures that the strong links with parents and the village community are maintained. Strong links with a school in Malta, from which pupils write 'a blog' to each other, extends well pupils' experiences of people with different traditions and cultures. Social and moral development is promoted exceptionally well and this can be seen in the way pupils relate to each other and how they manage their own behaviour.
- The headteacher is a member of a forum of local headteachers who discuss ways of improving pupils' progress through sharing teachers' training opportunities. The deputy headteacher has effective experience of moderating standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage across the county. This work has added to the professional skills of school leaders, who are effectively helping to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards.
- The local authority provides only light touch support, visiting at the school's specific request.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The members of the governing body are well aware of the school's strengths and where improvement is needed. They are ambitious for its improvement. They bring a wide variety of expertise to the school and have a good understanding of data, standards in the school and the quality of teaching. The governors are fully supportive of the school, but also challenge its performance effectively. They ensure performance management plays an effective role in rewarding effective teaching and promoting staff. Governors take part in training courses to ensure they are fully up to date with all areas of responsibility. They ensure that their statutory obligations are fully met, including those for safeguarding pupils.

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	120388
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	424998

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	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Flint
Headteacher	John Richardson
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2011
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