

Kirton Primary School

Station Road, Kirton, Boston, PE20 1HY

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2014

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

- Pupils are now making good progress throughout the school. As a result, pupils currently in Year 6 have reached standards that are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and pupils respond positively to their teachers' expectations of them. Teachers' enthusiasm and helpful advice on how to improve are helping pupils to learn well.
- Pupils who join part way through the year, disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those for whom the school receives additional funding make good progress because the right support for them is quickly put in place.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are keen learners with a growing desire to do well and to succeed. They feel safe and show great care and respect for their teachers and for each other.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and choosing topics which they find interesting to learn about. They lead class assemblies and show how thoughtful and reflective they are. This contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School leadership has strengthened since the previous inspection. The good leadership of the executive headteacher and the acting head of school has been quick to restore good-quality teaching following substantial staff changes over the last year.
- Governors know the school exceptionally well, and have reviewed their own roles in the last year to make sure that they provide good levels of support and challenge, ensuring that the school continues to improve rapidly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always show consistently high expectations for what pupils, particularly the most able, can achieve.
- Teachers' written comments are not always acted upon by pupils to show that they know how to improve further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, including 12 seen jointly with the executive headteacher and senior leaders. Inspectors also observed support sessions for pupils who need extra help with their learning.
- Inspectors attended two school assemblies, one celebrating pupils' achievements and the other led by a Year 1 class.
- They spoke to pupils informally throughout the inspection, gathering their views and experiences of life in the school and also met with the school council.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in class and looked closely at how the school encourages and promotes a love of reading.
- Meetings were held with a group of governors and also a school adviser. Inspectors also met with subject leaders and staff responsible for checking attendance and behaviour and coordinating special educational needs.
- The 19 responses to the online Parent View survey received during the inspection were also noted.
- The lead inspector analysed the 25 responses to the staff questionnaire completed during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, planning documents, checks carried out by leaders on the school's effectiveness, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Anne McAvan	Additional Inspector
Christopher Wright	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kirton Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school and is currently expanding.
- The school is in a federation with Boston Nursery School. Both share the leadership of an executive headteacher but currently have their own separate governing bodies. The school has its own designated head of school.
- The school is currently in the midst of building work to create extra classrooms and a dedicated Early Years Foundation Stage unit.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils, mostly from White European backgrounds, who speak English as an additional language is greater than in the large majority of schools.
- The proportion of pupils joining and leaving part way through the school year is rising and is above average. The school now has more pupils with disabilities and special educational needs and more pupils for whom English is a second language joining than previously.
- The school recruited seven new teachers in September 2013 to replace staff moving to other roles or leaving the area.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is slightly above the national average.
- In 2013, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise achievement by making sure that:
 - teachers consistently express the highest expectations for the quality of work which pupils produce and that tasks set are difficult enough for all groups, particularly the most able
 - teachers' marking and feedback comments to pupils are always clear and pupils regularly correct or improve their work as a result.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Nursery class with skills and abilities that are generally well below the levels typically seen at their age. They make a good start, settle quickly and soon develop positive attitudes to learning. Children make good progress and improve their skills in the Reception, but attainment is below the level expected for their age as around half of the children are new to the class and have had little or no pre-school experience.
- Pupils typically make good progress from low starting points. With the exception of 2013, progress from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 has been above the national average since the previous inspection. However, results at the end of Year 6 in 2013 were low in reading, writing and mathematics, and the proportion of pupils making expected progress was below average as was the proportion exceeding expected progress in mathematics. This dip in both attainment and progress reflected significant disruptions caused by changes in staffing and a higher than usual number of pupils joining and leaving during the year because of a lack of places in the town schools and the transient nature of employment locally.
- Pupils' progress has now returned to its previous level and pupils currently in Year 6 are back on track to reach standards which are close to national averages by the end of the year. The school's information and pupils' current work indicate that pupils throughout the school, including the low proportions of the most able, are making good progress.
- In 2013, the attainment of pupils in Year 6 for whom the school receives the pupil premium was behind their peers in school by a year for each subject. Equivalent pupils currently in the school achieve well and gaps in attainment between these pupils and their classmates are closing quickly. They are currently two terms behind in reading, one in writing and one and a half in mathematics and are making good progress. Gaps are closing because the extra funding is used effectively to provide highly skilled staff to lead a variety of extra support activities.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught particularly well in the Nursery and Reception, and pupils in Year 1 have achieved results well above national averages in the annual screening check in phonics in the last two years.
- Pupils' standards in reading have risen and the promotion of reading across the school is strong. All pupils have positive attitudes and read regularly, and at the right levels, because the school has carried out a thorough check and carefully re-banded all books. The addition of tablet computers and online reading quizzes and tests has encouraged pupils to be more actively involved and means that they cannot move up to the next book before completing the checks. Many more pupils now visit the school library and speak with excitement about what they are reading.
- Writing standards are rising this year and pupils write accurately for a range of purposes, with good levels of competence and confidence. They regularly review and check their own work so that they know how to improve further. Pupils take great pride in their work and each has their own achievement file with examples of their best work.
- In mathematics, teachers and other adults make good use of varied and colourful resources to help pupils learn. Regular opportunities to talk about their mathematics and explain how they have solved problems are spreading across the school. This improves pupils' confidence and understanding of the subject and has had a positive impact on raising achievement across the school.

- Additional sports funding is used well, and teachers are working with specialist coaches to improve their own skills. Training teaching and support staff and strengthening links with other schools have raised the profile of active sport across the school, and greater numbers of pupils are now attending clubs, being active at playtimes and taking part in competitions.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support and achieve well as a result. Additional funding to provide specialised adult support for smaller groups has been used effectively to promote these pupils' progress.
- The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups is similar to that of other pupils. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because the school identifies their language needs early on and provides good support, particularly through the two learning mentors in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together to make sure that activities are interesting and suitably demanding for most pupils. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to promoting learning and frequently deliver additional teaching and catch-up sessions outside the classroom.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from receiving good levels of support. This is because work is set at the correct level to help them achieve well. This good-quality support also extends to those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils appreciate this and, in the relaxed and friendly environment, are encouraged to do their best.
- The best teaching motivates the pupils and helps them to become keen learners who willingly rise to the challenges set for them. Pupils frequently use prompts and resources in the classroom and are growing in confidence about what they can achieve. For example, pupils in Year 6 looking for tricky number patterns and consecutive sequences reached for colourful number lines with positive and negative numbers to help themselves work out solutions. This showed their confidence and positive attitudes to helping themselves without the need to seek adult guidance.
- Pupils learn exceptionally well where adults' high expectations ensures that they are set work which is suitably challenging. Because of this, their belief in themselves and what they are capable of is also high. In a few cases, the most able pupils have to complete work set for the whole class, before being given extension work which poses a greater challenge for them.
- Pupils understand what they must do and how they can achieve greater success because teachers are adept at linking activities with clear learning objectives and targets. Pupils know their learning targets and most can pinpoint where they are, by referring to targets displayed in books and on the classroom wall.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes quickly come to enjoy learning, and their overall progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Adults have helped them to develop confidence early on, and the children happily steer themselves to activities, with a good sense of the learning task set.
- Teachers provide pupils with regular and constructive verbal feedback on how to improve their work. However, the quality of teachers' written comments varies across the school. Marking is improving and the best examples offer a careful balance between praise and suggestions for

improvement. This practice is not yet widespread and not enough pupils add their own responses to marking, showing their engagement with their own learning and their active participation in helping themselves to improve.

- Homework set has a clear purpose. Pupils understand that it is a regular feature and extension of their work in class or links with what they will be learning next. They say that it is challenging and several commented that parents are involved in checking their work, which they find very helpful.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and the great majority act responsibly in managing their own and helping with others' behaviour in the school. At break and lunchtimes, older pupils are often seen checking that everyone has someone to play with and nobody is left out.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in school and on the roads outside. Pupils are knowledgeable about e-safety and understand well the potential dangers of misusing the internet.
- Parents, carers and staff agree that pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils' attendance levels have risen and are now closer to national averages. School leaders, supported by the recently appointed attendance welfare officer, are passionate about deterring unauthorised holidays during term-time. Pupils gaining 100% attendance badges wear them proudly around the school.
- Vulnerable pupils know that they can visit the 'Nest' at any time to meet with one of the learning mentors in a calm and peaceful haven within the school. Pupils find this reassuring, and this helps them to feel more settled at school and engage with their learning.
- The pupils who act as school councillors are both active and visible in the school. They have weekly meetings, set their own agenda and check the contents of two suggestion boxes for others' comments. Councillors are attached to classes which they visit to report back on their activities. They embrace their responsibilities well. They meet with councillors from other schools and bring back ideas to make their own even better. This has prompted several improvements, such as staggered lunchtimes, reduced queues and better hot dinners.
- Bullying is rare, and pupils comment that staff deal with it effectively when it occurs. Pupils understand that if they cannot resolve conflicts themselves, they can rely on staff to intervene quickly. There are very few racist incidents, and discrimination in any form is not tolerated.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. The grounds are kept litter free, and the playground areas are carefully shared while building works are being carried out. Pupils know and show a high regard for each other in the school and this helps those who join the school late to settle easily and feel welcome. Pupils speak positively about how much they enjoy and value being a part of the school, and this is reflected in their smart appearance and good manners.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders of the school, championed by the executive headteacher and acting head of school, have quickly responded to changes in the groups of pupils attending the school, such as disabled

pupils, those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. They have created detailed plans to raise achievement while skilfully managing significant changes in the teaching staff.

- School leaders have been successful in appointing new teaching staff, including several newly qualified teachers, and re-positioning others, while continuing to improve pupils' progress during the period of considerable change in the school. Assistant heads in charge of literacy and numeracy, joined by an experienced leader in the Early Years Foundation Stage and a coordinator for special educational needs, have strengthened the team. They work together with a clear vision and commitment to continuous improvement, and their high expectations are reflected throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching and its impact on achievement have been restored to a good level following a dip in 2013. Teaching and learning are managed well across the school. The executive headteacher has ensured that support for newly qualified teachers is strong, and this has enabled the majority to provide effective teaching.
- Leadership roles are evolving and strengthening at all levels and the executive headteacher has acted quickly to recruit the expertise she needs to provide skilled support for the different groups of pupils who now join the school during the year. Staff support for school leaders is strong, and many staff during the inspection expressed their praise for the executive headteacher and the acting head of school.
- The school now reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts quickly to address any gaps, so that the pace of improvement remains constant. The school's plan to raise achievement is realistic and sharply focused and is linked to close checks on the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' progress.
- Staff training, together with the effective and active partnerships with the local authority and advisers, has led to improvements across the school since the previous inspection. Staff are now more skilful in using assessment and progress information, and early gaps in learning are identified and dealt with swiftly.
- Leaders make sure that teachers' and support staff's pay and performance link directly to whole-school priorities and pupils' progress. School leaders are active in checking the quality of teaching across the school, and class teachers and teaching assistants team up to plan and prepare together. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better for most pupils.
- Activities in lessons are supplemented by a growing number of extra-curricular clubs and activities, enhanced by the sports specialists who work with the school. Pupils understand the importance of being healthy, and more pupils than previously are active at lunch and playtimes, attend sports clubs and take part in competitions. Their greater involvement in sport has been enhanced by the extra funding for sports from the government.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything the school has to offer. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, and a strong pastoral programme ensures the all-round development of each pupil.
- Pupil premium spending on the learning mentors and the attendance welfare officer has had a positive impact on raising attendance and improving punctuality, and the school has strengthened its work with families whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are highly committed to continuing to improve the school. The governors work closely with school leaders to ensure that raising the quality of teaching and learning remains at the heart of their work. They have a good understanding of information on pupils' progress, undertake regular training to refresh their knowledge and skills and commissioned an independent review to audit their own effectiveness
- Governors use the most recent data to make comparisons with other schools, locally and nationally, and actively challenge school leaders where dips occur. They meet with key staff, and make visits to check directly on important areas of the school's work
- Governors ensure that financial resources are managed efficiently, know how the pupil premium and sports funding is being spent and monitor the impact of these initiatives on achievement. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' and support staff's pay is linked to how well pupils are doing. They are motivated and visible in the school and check that safeguarding meets statutory requirements.

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	120415
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	444026

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	481
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Holmes
Headteacher	Nicky Donley (Executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2009
Telephone number	01205 722236
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