

The Gonerby Hill Foot Church of England Primary School

Gonerby Hill Foot, Grantham, NG31 8HQ

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's good leadership over the last two years has been the catalyst for rapid change that has enabled managers and governors to improve teaching and accelerate achievement since the last inspection.
- Pupils behave well and insist that they feel safe in school. They enjoy the atmosphere in school, and their high attendance reflects this.
- The school's strong ethos of respect and tolerance promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Teaching is good in all phases of the school.
- Pupils make good progress across the school, and many make excellent progress. No group of pupils underachieves.
- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2014 were higher than they were in 2013. A large proportion of pupils in Year 6 made more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children make a good start to their life in school in the welcoming Reception classes.
- Governors have a clear picture of the school, and they have the range of expertise necessary to hold leaders to account for the school's performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching over time is not yet high enough to ensure that all pupils progress equally rapidly.
- In some lessons, some pupils, particularly those who are most able, complete the tasks they are given very quickly and sometimes have to wait for further challenge.
- Teachers' marking does not always ensure that pupils benefit by correcting their mistakes.
- Leaders' plans for making further improvement do not always include enough detail on what actions are needed to ensure that intended improvements will happen.
- The roles, responsibilities and expectations of subject and other leaders are not always clearly understood.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited parts of 27 lessons. Ten of these were carried out jointly with four senior leaders of the school. Inspectors also looked at a large sample of work in pupils’ books and work on display.
- Inspectors met with staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 21 staff questionnaires, and spoke to parents at the start and finish of the school day to gather their views. Sixty-three responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were also considered.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in the playground and in the classrooms and observed them moving around the school at different times of the day. One inspector had a formal discussion with pupils in Year 6.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and considered a number of documents relating to behaviour and safety in the school. They studied the school’s self-evaluation of its performance, external evaluations of its performance, its improvement plan, its data on pupils’ performance, and documents relating to governors’ meetings.

Inspection team

Terry McDermott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Philip Hamilton

Additional Inspector

Andrew Beckett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British origin. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Almost all classes except Reception are organised in mixed age groups.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil-premium funding is much lower than average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of pupils supported through a statement of special educational need is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding, in order further to improve pupils' learning and progress, by ensuring that:
 - all pupils, but particularly the most able, are not given work which is too easy
 - when pupils are working independently, an adult frequently observes their work to keep them on the right track and extend their learning further
 - adults regularly keep track of how well pupils are progressing during lessons, and modify their guidance accordingly
 - marking in all subjects gives clear guidance on what pupils need to do next to improve, and is followed up
 - all activities for Reception children, both inside and outdoors, have planned learning intentions so that adults can take children's learning forward at all times.
- Further increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - development plans have precisely defined actions to bring about intended results
 - roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined, and that all managers have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.
 - evaluations always pay full attention to all information sources.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is led well by a determined and effective headteacher, ably supported by an equally effective senior leadership team, and a revitalised and energetic governing body.
- There have been marked improvements in the achievement of pupils currently attending the school. The legacy of earlier underachievement has now been eradicated by improved teaching. However leaders have yet to ensure that good and occasionally outstanding progress is maintained consistently throughout the school.
- The school has an accurate overall picture of its own strengths and areas for improvement, but leaders do not always consider fully all the information at their fingertips. This means that plans drawn up to tackle areas for improvement do not always specify the precise actions needed to bring about the desired changes. Some less senior leaders do not always have an accurate understanding of what is expected of them.
- This is a very caring and inclusive school where all pupils are valued and able to access everything it has to offer. Staff work hard to ensure that all groups of pupils do as well as they can, for example, by removing gaps in achievement between those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and their peers. The school is aware that some more able pupils have on occasion the potential for even higher achievement.
- The headteacher and senior staff carry out regular checks on the quality of learning, which provides a clear and accurate picture of its effectiveness over time. Where improvements are required, teachers are able to improve their skills through bespoke professional development. The links between performance management systems and professional development opportunities are effective, and arrangements for pay and promotion of staff are closely linked to teaching performance and pupils' progress.
- The school is making considered modifications to its curriculum offer to ensure that it is compliant with the new curriculum regulations and assessment procedures by September 2015. The school is beginning to operate age-related assessments in parallel with the outgoing assessment by levels. The present curriculum mostly caters well for the individual needs of all pupils.
- The primary sports grant is being used well. Teachers are increasing their skill to teach physical education by team teaching with specialist instructors. All classes in the school now receive regular expert physical education tuition, and their participation rates in a range of sporting activities have increased.
- Safeguarding and child protection procedures are carried out rigorously. Current statutory requirements are met well.
- The local authority has provided good support in helping the school through recent turbulent times.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The new leadership of the governing body has energised its activities. Members are well informed about all aspects of the school and are determined to help the school to improve further. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and where it could do better, particularly in respect of the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching. Governors bring a range of skills which they use to good effect in carrying out their roles properly. Where there are gaps in their knowledge they make sure that they receive appropriate training. In carrying out their responsibilities to hold the school to account for its overall performance they actively seek explanations for any inconsistencies in results. They make sure that teachers' performance in the classroom is managed well, and is making a positive difference to pupils' learning. They are keenly aware of the spending of pupil premium funding and the impact this is having on pupils' achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their attitudes to learning are never less than good and their behaviour in classrooms and around school is commendable. They settle quickly and quietly to work in lessons, and are eager to participate sensibly in practical activities.

- When learning is at its best, pupils rapidly become completely absorbed in the challenging and interesting tasks they are set.
- Pupils are open, friendly and helpful to each other, and polite and respectful to adults. Relationships between pupils and adults, and between pupils themselves, are consistently very good. They are careful to look after their clean, spacious and well-resourced classrooms, proud of their school, and look neat and smart in their school uniforms.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. When asked directly, pupils seem incredulous that anyone could even consider that bullying would happen in their school, but they know what to do if it should. They have a good awareness of the different forms bullying might take, including through computers and mobile phones. They are confident that there are adults in the school to whom they could turn if they were worried about anything.
- Pupils know how to keep safe. They are familiar, for example, with 'stranger-danger', the danger posed by fireworks, road safety and e-safety, because of visits and visitors to the school, and the lessons they are taught in school and in assemblies.
- Some parents who responded to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View) expressed concern with regard to how bullying was dealt with. Conversations between an inspector and several parents before and after school suggested an alternative perspective. Indeed the vast majority of parents who responded to the same questionnaire indicated that their children were happy in school. Pupils' consistently above average attendance confirms this.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is promoted very well throughout the school. The whole school ethos of tolerance, fairness and respect for others is modelled by adults from the first day children arrive in Reception class, and continuously thereafter as they grow older and more mature. Strong links with the church underpin this. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are considerate young citizens with well balanced views of life in multicultural Britain in 2014.
- The school takes securing the safety and safeguarding of all its pupils very seriously. All staff have undertaken relevant training. Effective checks are in place to measure and minimise the risks of different activities and parts of the premises. Pupils are supervised closely at playtimes and lunchtime.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because it enables pupils to learn well. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils, they know their different strengths and enjoy teaching them. This ensures that guidance or help is deployed where it is most needed, and that progress is typically good overall.
- A significant contributor to the good teaching in the school is the calm, clean, well ordered and purposeful learning environment. As a result of teachers' good encouragement and support, pupils willingly work independently individually, in pairs or in small groups. They do this diligently, and support each others' learning where they can.
- This was clearly exemplified in a mixed age (Year 1 and Year 2) literacy lesson, when the pupils were endeavouring to write their own 'eight-word sentences', having helped the teacher to construct a model sentence, with appropriate start and finish, on the interactive white board. Five different groups of pupils had five different sets of exciting resources, including support from adults. The classroom buzzed with activity. These young pupils were engrossed with getting their subjects, verbs, nouns, and connectives into a meaningful eight-word sentence, with capital letter to start and full stop to end. Their attitudes to learning were exemplary, their concentration total, and their learning outstanding.
- Pupils are well aware of their targets for achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Older pupils say that teachers don't let them 'mess about', and that they are expected to complete their work neatly and tidily.

- The school's marking policy is clearly laid out, but it is not always applied to best effect. All teachers follow the policy to the letter. Many teachers go well beyond this, making comments which are supportive and helpful. However, even they do not always follow up to make sure that their guidance has had the intended impact on pupils' understanding.
- In a small number of lessons, where work is a little too easy, more able pupils quickly finish their set tasks. They then sit quietly waiting for the next instruction, or the spark from the teacher or a teaching assistant, to stimulate their curiosity and their next line of enquiry. This can sometimes take a little time, and learning is slowed unnecessarily. Occasionally, adults do not keep a sharp enough eye on pupils' progress in lessons, to move them on or give extra help as necessary.

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils in the school are making good progress in all year groups and all phases of the school. Assessments of what pupils know and can do are now accurate. The progress pupils make has accelerated because of improvements in the quality of teaching. The legacy of previously inconsistent achievement caused by weaker teaching, or staff turbulence, has been eradicated.
- No group of pupils underachieves. All groups of pupils, including the small numbers of those eligible for additional support through the pupil premium, are now making faster progress over time than that typically made by similar groups nationally. The small number of eligible pupils in Year 6 in 2013 means that it is not possible to comment on their attainment compared with that of their classmates without risk of identifying them.
- In 2013, many of the more able pupils who had reached Level 2A at the end of Year 2 made three levels progress by the end of Year 6 in reading and mathematics. Fewer did so in writing. More pupils than nationally who had achieved Level 3 at the end of Year 2 reached Level 6 in mathematics, but none did so in reading or writing, broadly similar to the national picture. In 2014 the proportion of Level 2A pupils making more than expected progress in reading and mathematics was higher than in the previous year.
- All pupils throughout the school are provided with many opportunities to read, both through guided reading and by choice. This resulted for the third consecutive year in more than 80% of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check; this is above average. In Year 6 this year, 42% of the pupils made three levels of progress in reading over the course of Key Stage 2. This is likely to be much higher than the national average.
- Many older pupils made rapid progress in writing and mathematics in Years 5 and 6. This enabled them in 2014 to reach standards above those reached in the school in 2013. Teachers' strong subject knowledge ensures that work is usually presented to pupils in a stimulating and challenging manner. This captures pupils attention and contributes to the good and sometimes outstanding progress that pupils are making.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs successfully meet the challenging targets set for them because of the well-considered and timely support they receive. The school has high expectations of all pupils, regardless of any barriers they may have to overcome.
- The school's reliable new recording system shows that the standards being reached by pupils currently in school in mathematics, reading and writing are higher than they have ever been.

The early years provision is good

- Children join the school from a variety of Nursery settings. Their levels of knowledge, skills and understanding are around that which is typically expected from children of their age.
- They settle quickly into the well resourced and welcoming Reception classes, and are confident to play and learn with other children they may not already know. They co-operate well together, share resources,

and can follow instructions or guidance closely. Their communication skills are well developed and they can explain their ideas in properly constructed sentences.

- When children arrive in school, teachers quickly assess what they know and can do, so that they can direct their attention to those children who might need extra support to develop their early reading, writing and mathematical skills. This provides a good foundation for their next steps in learning.
- Because teaching is good, children make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time children left the Reception classes in 2014, well above three quarters of them had attained a good level of development, with about one third exceeding that. They had achieved well.
- Children flow between the inside and outdoors, but activities outdoors do not always have a planned learning outcome. This occasionally limits the progress that children can make in such activities because children are sometimes left too much to their own devices.
- Adults check the progress children are making in mathematics, reading and writing closely. Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught securely. Recording systems show that all children, from whatever starting point, are making good progress.
- All necessary safeguarding, safety and welfare requirements are carried out conscientiously.

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	120524
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	449087

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	306
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Boddington
Headteacher	Claire Stylianides
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2013
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