

# South Witham Community Primary School

Water Lane, Grantham NG33 5PH

**Inspection dates** 8–9 December 2015

**Overall effectiveness** **Inadequate**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have not tackled the decline in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Hence, leadership and management are inadequate.
- Leaders' action planning is poor. The actions do not show how teaching will improve. In addition, plans do not have clear measurable success criteria by which governors can judge if actions taken have been successful. Consequently, the school is not improving quickly enough.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is very low. Leaders are not improving standards in writing across the school quickly enough.
- Middle leaders are inexperienced and do not lead their subjects effectively to drive up standards.
- Teachers are not using the information from their assessments accurately enough. As a result, the most-able pupils are not always suitably challenged.
- Leaders are not allocating the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils well enough to improve the low attainment of this group in writing.
- Governors do not robustly challenge school leaders about the performance of the school. As a result, the school is not improving.
- Pupils' presentation of their work is poor. Pupils' skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation are also weak.
- Pupils underachieve in mathematics at Key Stage 1. Pupils' written calculation skills are underdeveloped.
- Pupils' behaviour is inadequate. Learning is adversely affected through low level disruption. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils concentrate well enough in lessons.
- Pupils' awareness of British values and knowledge of other faiths is limited. Consequently, they are not well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Although the majority of early years children have made typical or better progress in 2015, there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their writing skills and to learn outdoors.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school encourages pupils to read good quality reading books. Pupils are given the opportunities to discuss the texts and share opinions.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are very well aware of the potential dangers when they use the internet.

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To improve leadership and management at all levels by:
  - revising the school development plan to ensure that it includes clear actions to improve teaching with measurable success criteria to enable governors to hold leaders to account for their work
  - ensuring that governors check the impact of leaders' actions to improve pupils' achievements
  - training middle leaders to lead improvements in their subject areas to raise standards
  - monitoring more closely the information about the quality of teaching across the school, including in the early years, to provide staff with clear guidance about how to improve, and ensuring that this is followed up with regular feedback
  - providing staff with clear guidance about how to use assessment to move pupils' learning forward
  - making sure that the system for the appraisal of teachers is robust and the policy is followed in relation to rewarding teachers
  - allocating the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils more precisely to meet their needs
  - developing pupils' understanding of British values and knowledge of different faiths.
  
- To improve the quality of teaching and learning to raise standards by:
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length to build up their stamina to write
  - increasing the focus on teaching English grammar, spelling and punctuation
  - making sure that there are enough inspiring opportunities for children to learn outdoors as well as indoors in the early years and promote children's physical development
  - increase the opportunities for children to practise their letter formation and writing skills in the early years
  - checking more closely on pupils' understanding in lessons, particularly the most-able pupils, to move their learning forward at the appropriate pace
  - giving more opportunities in Key Stage 1 for pupils to develop their mathematical calculation skills
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical reasoning and problem solving skills
  - ensuring that the teaching of pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress from their starting points.
  
- To improve the behaviour of pupils by:
  - having clear expectations about the standard of behaviour in classrooms and consistently applying high standards to stop low level disruption affecting learning
  - using external agencies more effectively to reduce the frequency of temporary exclusions
  - having higher expectations about the quality of pupils' presentation of their work.

External reviews of governance and the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Leaders have not halted the decline in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Leaders' feedback to teachers has not led to improvements. Consequently, leaders have not demonstrated the capacity to lead improvements at the school.
- The headteacher is aware of the weaknesses in teaching. A review of the school, carried out on behalf of the local authority in June 2015, stated that the quality of teaching was not good. However, the weaknesses in teaching have not been addressed effectively. As a result, pupils are not achieving as well as they could in writing, English grammar, punctuation and spelling and in mathematics.
- Leaders' action planning does not clearly state how the school will improve standards and does not contain measurable success criteria by which governors can judge if actions have worked well. The current school development plan does not detail the professional development for teachers to improve the quality of teaching. There is no action plan to improve the quality of teaching for mathematics. Hence leaders are not taking effective action to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards at the school.
- Middle leaders are not raising standards in their subjects. Their analysis of school performance and monitoring of pupils' work is not leading to improvements quickly enough. Leaders are not ensuring that teachers' assessments of what pupils can do informs future planning to enable pupils to progress well.
- The curriculum is not planned well enough to promote pupils' achievement. The English curriculum does not give enough opportunities for pupils to write at length. In Key Stage 1, pupils have not had the opportunity to complete calculations in mathematics. In Key Stage 2 there is not enough mathematical reasoning or problem solving. Consequently, pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Current school information shows that disadvantaged pupils are not achieving well enough through the school. Leaders have not targeted the additional funding effectively to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in writing. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils were over five terms behind other pupils nationally in writing in the Key Stage 2 assessments in 2015.
- The school is not promoting British values effectively. Pupils had little understanding of how democracy works at a local or national level. Although pupils have been taught about different faiths and cultures, their knowledge was often incorrect or vague. Consequently, pupils are not well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school website is compliant with government guidance. It does not contain all the necessary curriculum information about what pupils are learning at school. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View (Ofsted's survey) said they would not recommend this school to another parent.
- The school has planned a range of trips and extra-curricular activities to broaden the curriculum. Pupils have participated in visits to Skegness, theatre trips, residential visits and curriculum days hosted by the secondary school. A range of extra-curricular clubs which includes cooking, gardening and singing are well attended by pupils. In addition, an artist works with all classes to paint in the style of famous artists, use fabric and make models linked to the topics. As a result, the activities promote the pupils, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils have the opportunity to perform in front of audiences to build their confidence. Each year, the school takes part in the Colsterworth Festival to perform a dance or musical piece. Pupils sing carols at the local church and, during the inspection, Class 1 and Class 2 pupils performed their nativity play in front of their parents.
- The school has used the sports premium funding this year to employ a sports coach to teach pupils the key skills of balance, coordination and agility and to use these skills in games. Consequently, pupils have been more active in lessons. The school offers extra-curricular sporting clubs, but the numbers have not yet been analysed to see if more pupils are participating.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are not challenging leaders sharply enough to ensure that the quality of teaching improves and that standards are raised. The Chair and the vice-chair of governors are committed to the school and visit regularly. However, there are too few governors to share out this leadership role effectively.
  - Governors use an external adviser to support their process for the performance management of the

headteacher. However, their checks on staff appraisal arrangements are not robust enough. Governors are unsure how classroom performance is linked to pay progression.

- Governors have not challenged leaders sufficiently about how the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent and what has been the impact on pupils across the school. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils are not currently achieving well across the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Despite working with a range of external agencies, the frequency of exclusions for disruptive behaviour in lessons has not reduced. Low level disruption in lessons also prevents other pupils from learning.
- The school's safeguarding policy has been reviewed and is available on the school's website for parents and carers. Risk assessments are in place and the site supervisor inspects the school's premises on a daily basis to ensure that it is safe for pupils. The school does not analyse the number of accidents in the first aid book over time. Therefore no action has been taken to try to reduce the number of incidents.
- An adviser, deployed on behalf of the local authority, has increased her involvement in the school over recent months and carried out a detailed review in June 2015. The report identified weaknesses in the school's provision. The adviser has recognised that improvements have not been quick enough and identified that additional external support was necessary to help the school improve. Alongside the headteacher, the adviser has successfully applied for a grant to increase the amount of external support to improve leadership and teaching. This support will start in January 2016.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** is inadequate

- The quality of teaching has declined since the previous inspection and is now inadequate. Teaching is poorly planned and activities set by teachers do not consistently build on what pupils have already learnt. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- Teachers have not planned enough opportunities for pupils to write at length. Pupils repeat the same mistakes in their writing. Teachers' expectations are not high enough and, as a result, standards in writing are low.
- The teaching of mathematics is weak. Teachers are not providing enough opportunities for pupils to be fluent in calculations in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, pupils are not given enough opportunities to reason mathematically or problem solve. As a result of poor assessment, the most-able pupils are not completing more demanding tasks to develop a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Teachers have not ensured that the teaching of English grammar, spelling and punctuation is having a positive impact on pupils' work. Pupils do not always correct their spellings and edit their work to check their use of grammar and punctuation. As a result, pupils do not write as well as they should.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement. There are limited activities outside to promote children's learning, particularly their physical development.
- The teaching of phonics is not effective enough in the early years or Key Stage 1 to that ensure pupils' knowledge and skills are developed quickly enough. There is a downward trend in the number of pupils who have passed the phonics test in Year 1. Consequently, the attainment in reading in Key Stage 1 dropped in 2015.
- Pupils are encouraged to read good quality books in Key Stage 2. Pupils discussed book titles including *The Iron Man*, *Skellig* and *The Diary of Anne Frank* to deepen their understanding of character and plot. Teachers and teaching assistants ask good questions to promote pupils' understanding of the text. Unfortunately, not all pupils were always fully focused in the discussions to develop their learning.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** is inadequate

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. Pupils do not always take pride in how they present their work. Work can be untidy, and sometimes dates and titles are not completed or underlined. Most-able pupils are not extending their vocabulary to improve their writing. Pupils do not routinely respond to teachers' feedback to improve their work.
- Pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultures is limited. The headteacher recognises that the religious education curriculum needs to develop to give pupils a better understanding of different faiths.

- Pupils say bullying does not occur often. When it has happened, pupils say teachers do deal with it and it does stop. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including bullying which can take place on mobile devices.
- Pupils know how to keep safe. Pupils know not to put their personal details on the internet and to tell an adult if something concerns them. The learning mentor provides effective pastoral support to promote pupils' emotional well-being.
- Pupils are being given opportunities to take more responsibility. Junior PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) have encouraged other pupils to walk to school and have organised a competition to raise awareness of safe bike riding. The school council has successfully organised a raffle to raise money for a local charity.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Pupils told me that there are times in class when they cannot learn because other pupils are being disruptive. Pupils shout out and do not always respond to the teachers' instructions when asked. In addition, pupils can be silly in class, which can go unchecked by adults. As a result, learning slows or does not take place at all.
- Some parents expressed concern about behaviour at the school. The majority of staff in the staff questionnaire said that behaviour was not good in the school. School behaviour logs show regular incidents of poor behaviour and low level disruption. However, during the inspection, pupils did listen to the headteacher in assembly, walked around the school in an orderly way, and behaved well on the playground.
- Despite the school working with a range of external agencies, the number of serious behavioural incidents has not reduced and the number of temporary exclusions is too high.
- Last year's attendance improved for all groups of pupils and was above the national average. The number of pupils who were persistently absent reduced. Attendance data in the current academic year continues to show good attendance for non-disadvantaged pupils. However, the attendance for disadvantaged pupils has started to drop which the school had not identified.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **are inadequate**

- Pupils' achievement in writing and English grammar, punctuation and spelling is inadequate. In 2015, standards of attainment for these subjects were significantly below the national averages at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 was inadequate. Current school information and work in pupils' books show that the standards in these subjects remain low across the school.
- Standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015 were significantly below the national average. Current school information and work in pupils' books show that the standard remains low in Year 2. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, pupils were attaining below the national average in mathematics. However, all pupils did make at least the expected progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 in mathematics.
- The most-able pupils are not being challenged. No pupils in the 2015 Key Stage 2 assessment gained a level 5 in writing. Too few pupils gained a Level 5 in mathematics. Currently in school the most-able pupils are not being challenged in lessons to make good progress and attain well.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is mixed. Just over half of current pupils in this group are making progress in the school. The others are not making progress according to the school's current information.
- Disadvantaged pupils matched the attainment of their classmates in reading and attained higher than their classmates in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015. They attained close to other pupils nationally in these subjects. However, the attainment of this group of pupils in writing and English grammar, punctuation and spelling was below their classmates and well below other pupils nationally. Current school information shows disadvantaged pupils at the school are underachieving in writing.
- All pupils at the end of Year 2 passed the phonics screening check. In Key Stage 2, the progress of pupils in reading was good and pupils attained just above the national average. Current school data show that more pupils are working at, or near, age-related expectations in reading than they are in writing or mathematics.
- Pupils are not well prepared for their next stage of education because of their weak writing skills.

## Early years provision

## requires improvement

- Children do not have enough opportunity to be physically active outside due to the limited space. When children are on the tricycles, they accidentally collide with furniture and other children due to the lack of space. There is not enough space for children to travel distances at different speeds.
- There are too few learning activities outside to inspire the children to learn independently. Unless children are with an adult, their learning can slow.
- Children have not had enough opportunities to develop their letter formation and writing. Consequently, children are not developing these skills quickly enough.
- The most-able children are not always stretched. When learning about patterns, the most-able children were not challenged to think of patterns which were more difficult to sequence.
- An increasing number of children have attained a good level of development in 2015 by the end of the Reception year. Consequently, pupils are better prepared for the Year 1 curriculum. Hence, the early years requires improvement and is not inadequate.
- Children can listen attentively but occasionally shout out when they have an answer. Children can sustain their concentration on particular tasks, for example when making presents in Santa's workshop.
- The teacher has established good links with the onsite pre-school, which enables a smooth transition process. In addition, the school works in a local cluster with other providers to moderate children's learning and share ideas about school readiness for children.
- The school works well with parents to enable children to settle quickly into school routines. A visual timetable tells the children what times of day the activities will take place. Parents are encouraged to share children's successes at home by completing memorable moment certificates. In addition, the school has organised a phonics workshop for parents as well as a stay and play session in the classroom.
- Children are encouraged to eat healthily and have visited the new kitchen on the school site to learn about healthy eating. Children have also had a chance to bake bread and make soup with a local chef.
- The school works well with a range of external agencies, including a speech and language therapist and family resource workers to meet the needs of the children.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils to make a judgement about their progress.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120389
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001284

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	103
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cliff Ashton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ruth Taylor
<b>Telephone number</b>	01572 767233
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.south-witham.lincs.sch.uk">www.south-witham.lincs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@south-witham.lincs.sch.uk">info@south-witham.lincs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6–7 December 2010

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. An increasing number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is just above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement for special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- There is high mobility of pupils compared to other schools nationally.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been continuing staff changes at the school over the past three years.
- A children's centre and pre-school playgroup are on the school site. They are not managed by the governing body and are inspected separately.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of 14 lessons, mostly with the headteacher. The inspector also looked at pupils' work in books and in folders.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils from Key Stage 2 and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the leaders for English and mathematics, the reception teacher, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority adviser to the school.
- The inspector spoke informally to parents at the start of the inspection. The inspector also considered the 11 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspector also considered the questionnaires completed by 15 members of staff.
- The inspector also looked at a range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation; the school's most recent information on pupils' achievement; the school development plan; minutes of the governors' meetings; an adviser's report on behalf of the local authority; the headteacher's reports to governors; and information relating to performance management, behaviour and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector



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