

Ulceby St Nicholas Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Ulceby, Lincolnshire DN39 6TB

Inspection dates

20–21 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have failed in their safeguarding duties. Arrangements to protect children do not meet statutory requirements and are not compliant with guidance. For this reason, leadership is inadequate.
- Senior and middle leaders do not make rigorous enough checks on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress. This is one of the main reasons the school has not progressed to become good.
- The quality of teaching of reading and mathematics across the school is variable. Consequently, too many of the older pupils have not made enough progress in these subjects.
- Too few pupils make enough progress to reach the higher standards of which they are capable. This is because teachers do not consistently give the most able pupils work that is challenging enough.
- The unacceptable shortcomings in safeguarding potentially affect the youngest children also. This is why provision in the early years is inadequate. In addition, play opportunities do not challenge children sufficiently in their independent learning. Leaders do not involve parents well enough in their children's learning and assessment.
- The academy trust and local governing board have an inaccurate view of the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- Despite the serious shortcomings in safeguarding arrangements, pupils feel safe. They enjoy school, including the many enrichment activities on offer.
- Pupils develop well personally and socially. They behave well, display good manners and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Some teaching is more effective, especially the teaching of writing, resulting in stronger outcomes in writing than in other subjects.
- The few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, primarily due to the effective work of the special educational needs leader.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of 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?

- Urgently improve safeguarding arrangements, by:
 - ironing out any confusion about accountability and putting in place effective arrangements to regularly check procedures and recording
 - thoroughly auditing all aspects of safeguarding policy and practice, then taking action to correct any shortcomings
 - ensuring that all staff and governors are trained to a better standard, updating training regularly, and checking that all adults fully understand all of their duties.
- Improve leadership and governance, by:
 - ensuring that senior and middle leaders carry out more regular and thorough checks on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning
 - strengthening improvement plans, identifying precise targets that can be measured at regular points throughout the school year
 - reviewing arrangements for governance, including the scheme of delegation
 - ensuring that governors are properly trained and that they receive more detailed information so they can challenge leaders more effectively.
- Further improve teaching so that pupils' outcomes improve, by:
 - bringing all teaching up to the quality of the best in the school
 - making sure that teachers identify the most able pupils and consistently give these pupils challenging work so more of them reach higher standards
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to routinely attempt really tricky problems in mathematics and to develop their reasoning skills
 - improving pupils' reading comprehension skills.
- Improve provision in the early years, by:
 - conducting more rigorous risk assessments
 - more fully involving parents in their children's learning and assessment
 - improving the quality of resources inside and outside and ensuring that children are challenged in their independent play and exploration.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

The lead inspector recommends that the school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- That children can be considered safe in this school can be put down more to good fortune than effective leadership. There are unacceptable shortcomings in safeguarding arrangements that have the potential to put pupils at risk. Leaders have not fulfilled all statutory requirements nor ensured compliance with the latest guidance.
- Leaders have brought about improvements in teaching, behaviour and pupils' outcomes since the school was converted to an academy in October 2013. However, improvements have not been rapid enough for the school to be judged good. Too many older pupils, especially the most able, have not yet caught up to where they should be in their reading and mathematics.
- Leaders' actions to improve reading and mathematics are beginning to take hold so that pupils' progress is improving, but many actions are too recent to have made enough difference, especially for the most able pupils.
- Senior and middle leaders do not carry out checks on the quality of teaching regularly enough. When leaders do carry out checks, they do not give enough attention to the effect that teaching is having on pupils' learning. Consequently, the quality of teaching across the age range varies.
- Leaders' improvement plans are not sufficiently well developed to help leaders and governors to be clear about the intended outcomes of any actions. Leaders have not identified precise indicators of success or milestones for improvement.
- The very effective work of the special educational needs leader ensures that the few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The leader ensures that precise targets are set, involves parents, and checks that teachers and teaching assistants are helping the pupils to meet their targets.
- Leaders' use of the pupil premium funding has helped disadvantaged pupils to meet the minimum expected standards by the time they leave the school. However, leaders have not recognised that the most able disadvantaged pupils have not made as much progress as they should, so these pupils do not reach the higher standards of which they should be capable.
- Leaders make good use of the sports premium funding to provide opportunities for pupils to engage in a range of sporting activities, such as swimming and participation in the 'Deepdale Dash', and to provide some professional coaching. However, leaders do not properly evaluate the effect of this work on pupils' achievement in physical education.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced so pupils generally get to study a range of subjects regularly, such as science and Spanish, for example. These opportunities are fewer in some classes than in others. In some instances, this work does not challenge the most able pupils well enough, so standards are not high enough. Teachers select interesting topics and pupils get to visit places of interest to broaden their experience and stimulate learning. Pupils and parents value the range of extra enrichment activities, including well-attended after-school clubs.

Governance of the school

- Governors are unclear about who is accountable for checking the school's safeguarding arrangements. They have failed in their safeguarding duties. Governors are also unclear about their delegated powers. The scheme of delegation is not available either on the school's website nor on the Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust's (LAAT) website, so parents and others cannot easily see to whom leaders are accountable.
- Governors have the range of skills and experience that should enable them to fulfil their duties. They ask appropriate questions of school leaders. However, they do not receive detailed enough information about pupils' outcomes to be able to challenge leaders sufficiently well. Members of the local governing board make regular visits to school to seek the views of pupils and staff.
- The headteacher is required to report regularly to the chief executive officer of the trust and the deputy chief executive officer attends governing board meetings. Despite this, the trust has an inaccurate view of how well the school is doing, and was not aware of the serious safeguarding omissions.
- The trust's challenge and support at the time of the school's conversion to academy status had a positive effect on the school's early improvement. More recently, challenge has been less effective, and this has led to leaders and governors believing that teaching and outcomes are good.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have not carried out proper checks during recruitment to be able to say they have done all that they can and must do to make sure that adults are suitable to work with children. For example, checks have not been made to make sure that teachers have not been prohibited from teaching or that no adults are disqualified. Though checks made during the inspection confirm that adults are in fact suitable, it is unacceptable that leaders did not know.
- Most staff received child protection training last summer, but the latest statutory guidance has not been made available to them. In particular, leaders have not made available the latest updates to 'Keeping children safe in education' to other adults in the school. In addition, the training record is not clear or well organised; the deputy designated safeguarding person has not had the required training; staff are not aware of whistleblowing procedures; and there are a few important omissions from the child protection policy.
- Child protection records are not organised in a way that would enable anyone to keep a proper track of each child's history. Leaders have not kept accurate records of conversations with the local authority's social care services or the actions taken.
- Other safeguarding records such as the fire safety records are also disorganised and by no means systematic and thorough. Leaders have carried out far too few fire evacuation practices.
- Despite all these shortcomings, most adults demonstrated that they understand what they should do if they have concerns about a pupil and to whom they should speak. Teachers, other staff and leaders record concerns about pupils. Pupils trust the adults and say that adults listen to them. All staff and governors have had training in the

'Prevent' duty. The inspector observed strong, trusting relationships and a positive culture and ethos. All staff promote positive behaviour. The building and premises are safe. Nevertheless, the serious shortcomings are inexcusable.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies across the school. Over time, the teaching of mathematics and reading has been less effective than the teaching of writing. There are also inconsistencies in the teaching of other subjects across the age range.
- The variability in the teaching has resulted in too many pupils, especially the most able, not making sufficient progress in reading and mathematics by the time they leave the school.
- The teaching of early reading is such that most pupils learn to read with fluency and expression. However, the teaching of comprehension, for example how to read between the lines, has not been as effective. This holds too many pupils back in their reading, especially the most able pupils.
- Most pupils read at home because teachers check this, and many parents listen to their children read. Teaching assistants compensate for those who do not get to read to adults at home, by listening to these pupils read daily in school.
- There are strengths in the teaching of mathematics, which is improving. Pupils' calculation skills have improved over time and teachers are increasingly including problem-solving in lessons. However, there is still more work to be done to help pupils tackle more tricky mathematical problems and to develop their reasoning skills. Again, this holds back too many of the most able pupils.
- The teaching of writing has improved so that pupils currently in the school and those who have gone on to secondary school have made good progress in writing. Teachers' strong subject knowledge, particularly of grammar, helps pupils to construct accurate and adventurous sentences. Teachers insist on pupils' best handwriting and spelling. They ensure that pupils write at length often, so pupils develop staying power in writing and manage to sustain the quality of writing throughout a longer piece.
- Teachers give helpful guidance to teaching assistants, who are largely effective in helping the least able pupils especially, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make good progress.
- Most teachers demonstrate some effective teaching skills and some teaching is very strong. Teachers' probing questioning skills often help pupils to think deeply. All teachers check pupils' learning during lessons and provide helpful feedback. Teachers follow the school written feedback policy and this helps many children to make progress. Nevertheless, the variability in the quality of teaching over time has held too many pupils back.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.

- Pupils are happy in school and feel safe. They develop well personally and socially. However, the shortcomings in safeguarding mean that the school's work to promote pupils' welfare is not good enough.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay safe online and leaders and teachers have responded effectively to a few instances of inappropriate social networking.
- Pupils report that there is little bullying and that adults deal with this well. Pupils trust adults and know whom they can go to if they need help, for example to sort out any disagreements. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and friendly. Leaders and teachers take time to chat with pupils, demonstrating care and interest.
- Pupils are taught how to be healthy. Pupils know about what a balanced diet might look like. The school provides balanced lunches and many pupils are happy to try new foods. Pupils take up opportunities to be involved in sports and fitness activities.
- The vast majority of pupils show pride in their work, evident in the neat presentation in workbooks. Where teaching is strongest, pupils demonstrate resilience and concentration. Teachers are adept at helping pupils to assess their own work, which helps pupils to accept some responsibility for their own learning.
- Adults are preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of what it means to show respect for those who are different. They learn about, and join in, celebrations of major world faiths. Older pupils have visited a mosque to learn about differences in belief and worship. Pupils are involved in school council elections and the school council system gives pupils some idea about how they can influence change. Pupils learn about gender stereotyping and different family groupings.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in and out of class, including in the dinner hall and the playground. Pupils follow instructions and show they can be trusted to move around the school under limited supervision, showing good self-discipline.
- Adults instil good manners in pupils, who say 'please', 'thank you' and 'you're welcome'. Pupils hold doors open for visitors.
- Attendance remains above the national average, though it has fallen over two years from higher levels. The small number of pupils on roll means that the poor attendance of one or two pupils has a disproportionate effect on the overall attendance figure. No group is disadvantaged by poor attendance. Persistent absence rates are low.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Too many of the most able pupils do not make the progress they should, particularly in mathematics. This has meant that over the last couple of years, progress scores by the end of key stage 2 have not been good enough. Most pupils reach the expected standard in most subjects so are prepared for secondary school. However, many pupils could be doing so much better.
- Outcomes in writing are better than in mathematics and, especially, in reading. Outcomes in other subjects are variable across the school because of the inconsistent challenge that teachers provide.

- The teaching of early reading is effective, so most pupils by the end of year 1 reach the required standard in phonics. Pupils continue to progress to read fluently but do not do as well in their understanding of what they read.
- The small proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their generally low starting points. This is because of the effective leadership of special educational needs teaching and the effective support from teaching assistants under the guidance of teachers.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils with the same starting points. While nearly all disadvantaged pupils reach the expected standard by the time they leave the school, a few of the most able disadvantaged pupils do not reach the higher standard they should be capable of, given good teaching.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The early years provision is inadequate because the shortcomings in safeguarding in the rest of the school apply equally to the youngest children. Adults check equipment daily to make sure it is safe, and record these checks, but do not systematically identify potential risks or draw up detailed risk assessments.
- From starting points that are generally typical to below those which are typical for their age, pupils generally make good progress. Of the small numbers of pupils in the early years over the last couple of years, most have made more than typical progress from their starting points. A few have exceeded the early learning goals in some areas of learning, especially in personal and social development. Pupils are generally well prepared for Year 1 by the time they leave Reception.
- The early years leader knows where the strengths and weaknesses are in children's outcomes and is taking action to address these. For example, writing outcomes last year were lower than they should be, so the teaching of writing has been reviewed and work is being done to address this right from the start of the current year. However, improvement planning, like in the rest of the school, needs sharpening to help leaders and governors keep a closer eye on progress.
- Learning areas and the resources in them are not arranged to best effect. Resources generally do not help children to sustain interest and concentration so children tend to flit between activities. The range of activities and resources available do not make sufficient demands on children. Leaders have purchased some new resources, but many of the resources on offer are old, tatty and uninviting.
- Adult interactions with children, as they play and explore independently, improve the quality of learning as adults ask questions and make suggestions. However, when the adults leave, children often lose interest. At worst, this results in pupils playing inappropriately with equipment, for example play fighting with spades from the sand pit.
- Assessment practice has improved. Assessment of the children is largely accurate and adults use this information to plan learning activities for the children. This means that teaching of basic skills helps pupils to make good progress in reading and numeracy as adults identify next steps for individual children.

- The early years leader has made efforts to try to involve parents in their children's learning with growing success. However, more can be done to involve parents regularly in their children's assessment and to give them access to the classroom so they can see for themselves how their children are getting on.

School details

Unique reference number	140343
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10019697

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr H Beverley
Headteacher	Chris Smith
Telephone number	01469 588219
Website	www.ulcebystnicholas.org.uk
Email address	admin.ulc@laat.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum, special educational needs information, governance and some aspects of admissions on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the curriculum, special educational needs information, governance and some aspects of admissions.
- The school became an academy in 2013 and is part of the Lincoln Anglican Academies Trust. The previous school under the same name was last inspected in March 2013.
- Ulceby St Nicholas is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- All pupils in the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average.

- The school meets the current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics set by the government.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited all classes at least once, some of these with school leaders, to observe pupils learning.
- Pupils were questioned about their learning and what it is like to be a pupil at Ulceby St Nicholas. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to a few pupils read. Pupils' behaviour was observed around the school, including at breaktimes and at lunchtime.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher and other school leaders and teachers, four members of the governing body, a school improvement partner from the trust, the deputy chief executive officer of the trust and the deputy director of education of the trust.
- The inspector listened to the views of several parents during the inspection. There were just eight responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey – insufficient for analysis. Six parents made written responses to the survey, of which the inspector took note.
- The inspector considered nine responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- Documents were analysed, including school development plans, governing body minutes and information about pupils' achievement.
- Records relating to attendance and safeguarding were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Philip Riozzi, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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