

# The Harrowby Church of England Infant School, Grantham

New Beacon Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 9LJ

## Inspection dates

12–13 December 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Teachers are skilled and enthusiastic, and use a range of strategies to capture pupils' interest. They skilfully question pupils to check their understanding and deepen their thinking.
- Pupils' behaviour in all situations and at all times of the school day is consistently good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- Children make a good start in the early years. Standards have been close to or above the national averages for the last three years.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 improved in 2017. Disadvantaged pupils achieved more. The majority of current pupils in key stage 1 make good progress from their different starting points.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. There is a positive and caring ethos. Staff are good role models and create a culture of mutual respect.
- Leaders' and teachers' actions have ensured that standards in mathematics are high. A consistent approach to teaching and learning means pupils make good progress.
- Governance through the board of trustees is effective.
- Senior leaders are developing close links between the two schools in the trust. This is supporting improvements in leadership, teaching and pupils' transition arrangements.
- Parents are almost unanimous in their view that children are happy, safe and making good progress.
- Leaders' analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils is not sharp enough to set focused targets for improvement. As a result, improvements in standards are not as rapid as they could be.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' work vary in different subjects. Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils use spelling, grammar and punctuation accurately.
- Teachers sometimes do not challenge the most able pupils. They do not provide frequent enough opportunities for these pupils to demonstrate their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics. They do not ask them to use more sophisticated sentences in their writing.
- Overall attendance and that of disadvantaged pupils is too low.

## Full report

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

- Leaders and those responsible for governance to ensure that:
  - they refine their analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, set more focused targets for improvement, and use them to hold leaders to account
  - they develop the expertise of subject leaders so that they have more impact on raising standards
  - they work tenaciously with parents to improve attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
  - have equally high expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' work in different subjects
  - consistently teach pupils how to use accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation in their writing
  - challenge the most able pupils to improve the sophistication of their sentence structures in writing
  - challenge the most able pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders, the trustees and staff are ambitious for the school to improve further. The new executive headteacher is working effectively to build a cohesive leadership team, both within the school and across the trust. Leaders have provided training for teachers and leaders and encouraged staff to share good practice. Moderation of teachers' assessment of pupils' work has improved accuracy of assessment. These activities are supporting improvements in leadership and teaching, and pupils are making faster progress.
- The executive headteacher has introduced greater rigour to many school systems. This helps her to bring greater accountability among staff and support school improvement. Regular and focused reviews of pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, are helping to improve pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school. The management of teachers' performance is robust. It supports improvements to the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and leadership.
- The subject leaders for mathematics across the trust have developed a mathematics 'mastery' curriculum. They support staff and ensure that they receive training to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics is good throughout the school.
- Senior leaders and subject leaders are working to improve assessment practices, standards in handwriting and the ability of pupils to write at length. They are promoting positive attitudes to reading among pupils. Many initiatives such as these are at an early stage of development.
- The coordinator for provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities ensures that additional funding is used very well. In-class support and extra small-group sessions are carefully targeted. Staff review pupils' learning carefully. As a result, the majority of these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders and teachers ensure that the school's broad and balanced curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. School displays and pupils' work reflect the opportunities pupils have to develop their understanding of British heritage and culture. The school prepares pupils well for their life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the extra funding for primary physical education and sport effectively. Teachers have improved their skills in delivering lessons. Pupils are participating well in the increasing range of sporting activities that are on offer.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors or who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are nearly unanimous in their praise for all aspects of the school. They said their children are taught well and are making good progress. The overwhelming majority said that their children are happy and feel safe.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is accurate. They have a good grasp of the school's strengths and the areas in which it needs to improve. They have identified

relevant actions to support this improvement. Leaders' plans, however, are not based sharply enough upon analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. This means that targets are not focused enough to help drive even more rapid improvement.

- The pupil premium overall is used effectively and the majority of disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Leaders check their progress carefully and regularly. Leaders' plans and reviews of the impact of this funding, however, are not as sharply focused as they could be. This means they are not able to ensure that the funding is having the maximum impact.
- Senior leaders are strengthening leadership roles at all levels. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and being supported in developing their expertise. For example, there is a greater focus on checking standards and supporting other staff to bring about further improvements. Subject leaders welcome the clear expectations provided by senior leaders. They do not yet, however, consistently have all the skills they need to have a sustained and direct impact on accelerating pupils' progress.

### **Governance of the school**

- The committed and knowledgeable trustees have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are very clear on the role of the trust as the governing body of the school. They place improving pupils' achievement at the centre of their work.
- The board of trustees is engaging parents effectively in helping to improve the development and achievement of pupils. Trustees have worked with senior leaders, for example, to provide childcare arrangements for parents who have children in both schools in the trust. These arrangements supported parents and ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have a good start to the school day and are prepared for their learning.
- Trustees have received training in relation to safeguarding and safer recruitment. They are aware of the importance of keeping up to date with leaders' allocation of extra funding. They check that this additional funding has had an impact on pupils' achievement. Recent training on the use of the pupil premium is helping the board to consider how it might be more effective in ensuring that the funding has the maximum impact on accelerating pupils' progress.
- The board of trustees receives detailed reports from the executive headteacher on key aspects of the school's work. Trustees explore these reports and question the information provided. Their questions, however, are sometimes not as challenging as they could be, particularly about the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils. This means they are not fully able to hold leaders to account.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and other staff ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff have undergone appropriate training in safeguarding, including in the 'Prevent' duty. Staff are vigilant in

reporting any concerns they have about a pupil, in accordance with the school's policy.

- Leaders make rigorous checks on adults before they are able to start volunteering or work alongside pupils. The school's records meet all statutory requirements as well as recording additional safeguarding information.
- A robust system ensures that leaders respond swiftly to safeguarding concerns. The designated safeguarding leaders are well trained. They quickly ensure that concerns about pupils and their families are referred to outside agencies, where this is required. Records relating to concerns and referrals are organised and maintained well.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers are enthusiastic and skilled. They use their secure subject knowledge to question pupils skilfully and plan lessons that effectively build on previous learning. This enables the majority of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to make good progress in a range of subjects.
- The teaching of phonics is strong. Teachers engage pupils through stimulating activities that help pupils to learn letter sounds and new words, and to practise writing sentences. Teachers identify and remedy misconceptions, ensuring that pupils make good progress.
- Teachers regularly meet with leaders to analyse the progress of individual pupils and groups, including those who are disadvantaged. They jointly identify any who may be falling behind and decide what actions will be taken to help them catch up.
- Teachers generally plan lessons which interest and motivate pupils. They use a range of different teaching strategies. As a result, pupils behave well, work hard in a range of subjects and are keen to learn. In one lesson, pupils were learning how to write a letter. The teacher showed them how to do this while making deliberate errors. The pupils greatly enjoyed helping the teacher to correct her 'mistakes', and this supported their learning very well.
- Teaching assistants are often deployed well. They are effective in supporting pupils' learning, particularly when working with individuals or groups of pupils, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Pupils' work and school assessment information show that standards in writing are improving. Teachers, however, are not consistently rigorous in teaching pupils to improve the accuracy of their spelling, grammar and punctuation in extended pieces of writing, and in different subjects. Teachers' expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' work are not equally high in different subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength. Teachers' good use of visual imagery and physical apparatus underpins the teaching throughout the school. Teachers give pupils a secure understanding of the important ideas in mathematics. Teachers, however, do not consistently give pupils, particularly the most able, enough opportunities to use and apply their understanding. As a result, pupils are not always able to show success in problem solving and reasoning in mathematics.

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils are proud of their school and respect their teachers. Staff are excellent role models and encourage pupils to be confident and positive learners.
- Teachers expect pupils to communicate and work well together. In one lesson, the teacher and teaching assistant had a 'conversation' about how they might go about solving a mathematical calculation. This not only helped pupils understand the task, but also showed them how they should speak to each other and listen to other people's ideas.
- Pupils enjoy the roles and responsibilities the school provides. A 'playground buddy' explained that, 'I help people and play with them if they have no one to play with.' 'Dinner monitors' develop a sense of responsibility by, 'helping the children in foundation stage with their coats and trays'.
- Teachers encourage pupils to be reflective. A member of the school council in Year 2, for example, showed good understanding of what being a role model means, saying, 'It means you do something good, people copy you, to make the place good.' This ethos is evident throughout the school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the school's behaviour systems. Teachers effectively promote the idea of children's rights, and this helps pupils to understand the reasons for school rules.
- The vast majority of parents and pupils say that pupils are safe at school. Almost all parents commented on the school's friendly, caring ethos. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils say bullying is rare and are very confident that teachers will quickly resolve any concerns they might have, swiftly and fairly. A very small minority of parents raised a concern in this respect, but inspectors could find no evidence to support this.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' conduct around the school is excellent. This was true at all times of the day, whether in lessons, in the corridors or on the playground. Even at a very busy and exciting time of the year, pupils were polite, respectful and well mannered.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They apply themselves very well to tasks set and work well together to share their ideas and learning. They take pride in their work, although teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' work are not equally high for different subjects.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance, however, is too low, including that for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders use a range of strategies to highlight the importance of

attendance to parents. They work with the small number of families with persistent absence to improve it. They secure the involvement of the educational welfare officer where this is relevant. This work is supporting improvements in attendance for some individual pupils. Senior leaders and trustees, however, have rightly identified this as a priority and are committed to bringing about rapid improvement.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Outcomes in the early years have been close to or above that seen nationally for the last three years. The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 was close to the national average in 2017. Standards improved at the end of key stage 1 in 2017. The proportions of pupils achieving the standards expected for their age, and at greater depth, in reading, writing and mathematics were close to the national averages.
- At the end of key stage 1, the proportions of disadvantaged pupils achieving the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics were below those of other pupils nationally. A particularly low proportion achieved this standard in writing. Pupils' work and the school's internal information show that disadvantaged pupils are now reaching higher standards.
- The majority of pupils are currently making good progress in reading, writing and particularly mathematics. Pupils' work shows that strong teaching moves learning on from their different starting points. The good progress is also clear in the school's own assessment information. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates.
- Pupils' work shows that they make good progress in mathematics because teachers ensure that they learn mathematical concepts using a range of approaches.
- Phonics teaching is strong. Teachers encourage pupils to have very positive attitudes to reading. Pupils read fluently and show good comprehension of what they are reading. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, read regularly and typically make good progress in reading.
- The quality of pupils' writing is improving. Good teaching enables pupils to improve their handwriting. Many are now able to write at length. The quality of their work, however, is not consistent in different subjects. Sometimes, pupils make slower progress in writing than they should because teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils use accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Leaders understand the importance of moderating the assessment of pupils' work with other schools. This helps to ensure that teachers are making accurate assessments and the next steps in pupils' learning are planned accurately. Sometimes, however, the most able pupils do not make the progress they should. Teachers do not challenge pupils, particularly the most able, to use more sophisticated sentences in their writing, or develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.



## Early years provision

Good

- Children, including those who are disadvantaged, enter the Reception class with a variety of knowledge and skills. They make good progress from their different starting points. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the early years has been close to, or above, the national averages, for the last three years.
- Leaders ensure that transition arrangements into the early years are effective. Children visit the school on transition days and staff visit children in their Nursery settings. Discussions and meetings ensure that parents contribute to children's ongoing assessment. Leaders are encouraging closer partnerships with parents about their child's education.
- Staff understand individual children's ongoing learning and development needs well. They track children's learning and provide them with specific support. As a result, children, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching is good in the early years. A teacher, for example, helped children to understand addition in the context of passengers getting on board a bus. The teacher was very clear on what she was teaching and promoted the children's learning effectively through skilful questioning. This helped the children to understand mathematical vocabulary such as 'add' and 'equals'. In another activity, a teacher was playing 'snap' with children and very effectively supporting their personal development and the importance of taking turns.
- Relationships between adults and children are positive. Children's behaviour is good. Leaders and other staff ensure that routines are well established. Children move carefully from adult-led activities to independent tasks. Children settle quickly to tasks and show independence and the ability to concentrate.
- Safeguarding is effective and statutory duties are met.
- The leader for the early years ensures that children have opportunities for learning in all aspects of the early years curriculum. Children have a wide range of opportunities for their physical development in the outdoor areas. Children collaborate well, for example enjoying learning to be elves in the role-play area. The learning environment and activities, however, are sometimes not planned as well as they could be. This means they sometimes do not offer challenge, or engage and stimulate children's interest and curiosity.
- The leader of the early years has a good understanding of the broad strengths and areas for development. Analysis of the progress made by different groups of children, however, is not as sharp as it could be when planning provision across the early years as a whole. Consequently, children's progress could be improved even further.



## School details

Unique reference number	138283
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10037621

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	134
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Darren Thorpe
Headteacher	Anne Platt (Executive Headteacher)
Telephone number	01476 564417
Website	<a href="http://www.harrowbyinfantschool.com">www.harrowbyinfantschool.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@harrowby.lincs.sch.uk">enquiries@harrowby.lincs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	7–8 March 2013

## Information about this school

- The Harrowby Church of England Infant School, Grantham converted to become an academy school on 1 July 2012. The school is part of the Harrowby/National Academies Trust, along with one other school, The National Church of England Junior School. The board of trustees is the governing body for both schools in the trust.
- The Executive Headteacher took up post in August 2017.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average. The proportion who speak

English as an additional language is also below the national averages.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is close to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is close to the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. In all, 10 lessons were observed, many jointly with the executive headteacher or senior deputy headteacher. Inspectors looked at pupils' work, observed the teaching of early reading skills, listened to pupils read and spoke with them to evaluate the quality of their learning. They scrutinised a variety of documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' attainment and progress, and staff performance. Inspectors evaluated a range of plans for improvement. They looked also at the school's self-evaluation and documents relating to the work of the governing body.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior deputy headteacher, deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher, who is also the coordinator for provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They also met with subject leaders, the school's designated leaders for safeguarding, trustees, and an external adviser. An inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority. Discussions explored a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

John Lawson, lead inspector

Helen Atkins

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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