

Inspection of Ulceby St Nicholas Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Ulceby, Lincolnshire DN39 6TB

Inspection dates: 31 January and 1 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The Head of School is Holly Atkinson. This school is part of Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jackie Waters-Dewhurst, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jerry Woolner. There is also an executive headteacher, Emma Hill, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and friendly village school. Pupils are respectful and happy here. It is a place that they enjoy attending. They feel safe with friends and adults they can talk to. They are proud to be part of this positive community.

Pupils build strong relationships. They work well together in the classroom. They take turns in discussions and respect the views of others. During breaktimes, they include each other in their play. The high expectations for behaviour lead to a calm and focused environment. Pupils live out the school rules of 'be ready, be respectful, be safe'. They say that the school rules are fair and that everyone is treated equally. A pastoral worker supports pupils' and families' mental health and well-being. Pupils have safe spaces to talk with trusted adults. They can choose to attend the 'calm club' during breaktimes. This builds pupils' confidence and resilience. They enjoy applying to become well-being ambassadors in a supportive role to others.

The school has developed a curriculum with five overarching key themes: confidence, emotional well-being, aspiration, independence and outward facing. These themes are considered by leaders as essential to 'open doors and minds' as pupils are preparing for life in modern Britain.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has an appropriate curriculum to prepare pupils for their next stage of learning. Appropriate adaptations are made for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These include breaking learning down into smaller steps, extra teaching and repetition. As a result, pupils gain the knowledge they need.

The curriculum is designed to connect previous learning with new knowledge. For example, when learning about location and place, pupils begin with the local area. This then connects to locational knowledge in a regional, national and European context. Older pupils connect knowledge about different biomes to the industries that these attract. The curriculum is at an early stage of implementation. Some subject leaders are new to their role. They have not yet monitored the impact of their subject. As a result, they have not been able to identify gaps and provide support to teachers.

The work in pupils' books shows a focus on the skills pupils need to learn. However, in some books, there are repeated errors with letter formation and spelling. It is not clear when handwriting and letter formation knowledge is introduced to pupils through the curriculum. Pupils' accuracy and fluency with this knowledge sometimes goes unchecked. Some of the procedures for identifying gaps and addressing misconceptions in writing are not well established.

In early mathematics, children learn good number sense. They are encouraged and praised to show their work in different ways. In activity choices, children have

repeated practice with their number representation. They make eggs in playdough to match digits on cards.

The school is developing a culture where books are celebrated and enjoyed. Children in Reception can recall their favourite stories and re-enact them in their play. Some pupils talk enthusiastically about the books that teachers read to them. These carefully chosen books provide opportunities for discussion and debate. They are beginning to broaden pupils' understanding of the world.

There is a clear structure and sequence for teaching pupils to read. Pupils learn how to decode words before they move on to develop greater fluency and comprehension. The books that pupils read match the sounds they know. Pupils can accurately decode these books and read them with success. Learning to read starts at the beginning of Reception. Children who struggle are soon identified. Staff provide effective additional practice so that children catch up quickly.

The school broadens pupils' experiences beyond their immediate locality. There are a range of clubs and trips throughout the year. These include learning sign language, a summer colour run and a residential visit. Roles such as worship leaders give pupils a voice and responsibility. Pupils visit the Wilberforce Museum and discuss issues of discrimination and diversity. They learn about fundamental British values. Pupils have a polling station to vote for their school councillor. Pupils do not always connect this knowledge beyond the school environment.

The school receives strong support from the trust. Senior leaders and those responsible for governance prioritise the needs of pupils. The trust offers a wide range of professional development opportunities for staff. These opportunities support curriculum improvement and develop staff expertise. Those at the early stages of their careers feel well supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum for handwriting is not clear and the precise knowledge that pupils should acquire at each stage is not set out. For example, children are not securing accurate letter formation as soon as they should. Some inaccuracies become embedded and are not addressed. Leaders should adjust the curriculum so that it is clear how pupils build accuracy and fluency in transcription over time.
- Some subject leaders are new to their role. They have not monitored and assessed the impact of the planned curriculum on pupils' learning. This means that some subject-specific gaps in learning and misconceptions are not addressed. Leaders should further develop subject leaders so that they can

effectively monitor their subject, identify gaps in pupils' learning and develop the expertise of teachers.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	140343
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10297396
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jerry Woolner
CEO of the trust	Jackie Waters-Dewhurst
Executive Headteacher	Emma Hill
Website	www.ulcebystnicholas.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average school.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Lincoln. Its last section 48 inspection took place in March 2022.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke to the head of school, executive headteacher, special educational needs co-ordinator and pastoral leader. They also spoke to the school's improvement adviser from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, listened to pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the development of the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the school gate. The lead inspector took account of the views of staff, parents and pupils through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.
- The lead inspector held separate meetings with the representatives of the school's academy committee, a representative of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer.
- The lead inspector spoke with the executive principal of the alternative provision.

Inspection team

Lesley Sullivan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Steve Kernan

Ofsted Inspector

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