



Alkborough Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117725
LEA North Lincolnshire
Inspection number 280138
Inspection dates 29 March 2006 to 30 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr John Heap

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Whitton Road
School category	Community		Alkborough
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Scunthorpe DN15 9JG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01724 720301
Number on roll	68	Fax number	01724 720301
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Tim Hardy
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr Michael Campion

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 29 March 2006 - 30 March 2006	Inspection number 280138
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school where all the children are of white British origin. The school serves four small villages and there are some signs of rural deprivation. Children start school with average skills. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around average. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is below average. The school has achieved healthy school status and the basic skills award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges itself to be good: a view mostly supported by parents. As one put it, 'This is a lovely community school, we are lucky to have our children come here.' However, inspectors judge the school to be satisfactory with strengths and giving sound value for money. The quality of education in the Foundation Stage (pre-reception and reception classes) is satisfactory and enables children to make adequate progress. Children enter Year 1 with standards that are a little above average. Standards in Years 1 to 6 are average overall but children could make more than the present satisfactory progress. The school knows this and some measures have improved matters, such as raising boys' achievement. Nevertheless, further detailed work is necessary to improve the satisfactory teaching and curriculum. In particular, marking and target-setting are not rigorous enough and there is insufficient use and development of basic skills across all subjects. At present, the opportunities for learners to use their ICT and literacy skills across the curriculum are too limited. Children's personal development is good. Behaviour is exemplary and children enjoy attending this happy, safe and secure school. The school cares deeply and well for the children. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The very busy headteacher leads well on the school's strengths and recognises that there are significant areas for development. Consequently, the school is soundly placed to move forward. Links with outside agencies are good and this plays a large part in ensuring that all children benefit equally from what the school offers. The satisfactory self-evaluation identifies the right priorities, but the development plan lacks rigour in the way it judges success. Governors are supportive, but rely too heavily on the headteacher.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of academic target setting for individual children, and mark more rigorously to the targets set.
- Increase greatly the use and development of literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum.
- Apply sharper success criteria to priorities in the school development plan.
- Develop governors' knowledge, understanding and procedures for evaluating the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. The school regularly meets its targets in the results of national tests. Children leave the school with expected levels of basic skills. When children enter the pre-reception class, they have broadly typical levels of skill. They make steady progress and leave reception with attainment that is a little above average. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. In Years 1 and 2, progress is satisfactory and standards compare favourably

with similar schools. Standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT are typical for the age of children. Girls do better than boys and this has been a focus for the school. In Years 3 to 6, girls and boys do equally well and children make satisfactory progress. This rate of progress is slower than it might be, particularly for higher attaining children in writing, because there is too little setting of individual targets for improvement and marking does not lead to a clear enough picture of how children are doing and what they need to do next.

Across the school, children with extra needs are well supported and they make good progress. In fact, some children reach average standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school, parents and children agree that this is a strength. Children are respectful and considerate and older ones willingly 'look after' the younger children. Behaviour is exemplary and children have a very clear idea of right and wrong. Children enjoy school and attendance is above average. Most children settle well to their lessons, listen attentively and concentrate well. Children willingly speak up. Bullying is very rare and children agree that when it does occur, it is dealt with effectively. Children feel safe and secure, much to the delight of parents. Children consider the needs of those less fortunate by raising funds for charity. The active school council makes a positive contribution to school decision-making. Children know and understand the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle and to live safely. Basic skills are typical for their ages and older children are being involved in projects with local businesses and government departments. Children have a good understanding of life in a multicultural society through the work they do in drama, music, religious education and geography. Children speak warmly of the good links with local churches and clergy and readily reflect on a range of issues.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and promotes sound learning and progress. The judgement made by the school is a little higher because the focus is too keenly on teacher performance rather than what children are learning. The strengths in teaching are:

- the strong relationships forged with all children that lead to good personal development, particularly confidence
- good classroom management that minimises disruption and develops children's self-esteem
- effective questioning in some lessons that involves even the most reticent.

Although lesson planning is detailed, it does not benefit sufficiently from rigorous assessment of children's achievements and needs. As a result, targets for improvement are too general and the regular marking does not set out clearly what children should do next. In Year 6, progress is only satisfactory because expectations are not high enough, particularly in writing. However, the introduction of interactive whiteboards is fostering a quicker pace to teaching and learning. The work in classes by the school's business manager is having a good influence on standards in ICT and children are developing a lot of confidence and skill. Classroom support assistants work effectively with children who have extra needs. They do valuable work in developing basic skills, particularly in reading.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with good features. The programme mainly meets the needs and interests of learners. It promotes well children's knowledge and understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity, learning in the community and the need to promote healthy and safe lifestyles. A particular strength is the commitment to physical education that is promoted by a partnership among the local schools. A good range of enrichment activities maintains the breadth and relevance of the curriculum. These include suitable after-school clubs and visits and visitors. However, there are many missed opportunities for children to use their literacy and ICT skills across the curriculum, particularly writing skills. As a result, progress in the use and development of basic skills is slowed down. Numeracy skills are regularly used in subjects such as science and design and technology. Children with extra needs are well supported and benefit equally from all that the school has to offer.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. There are good procedures for health and safety. As a result, children are happy in school, work safely and have clear knowledge of whom they need to speak to if they have a problem. Child protection procedures are robust and the school liaises successfully with a range of service providers to safeguard children. Staff know the children and their families well and parents heartily applaud the approachability of staff. There are good induction procedures for children entering the pre-reception class and at other times. As a result, new arrivals settle quickly and grow in confidence. Tracking children's academic achievements was until recently a weakness. Now, procedures are satisfactory and the information is used effectively in the grouping of children and setting general learning targets. However, it is not linked rigorously enough to day-to-day assessment and marking in order to quicken progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory with some significant strengths. The headteacher provides good leadership in all aspects of care, children's personal development and links with the community and outside agencies. As a result, there is a stable staff, children like school and parents consider it to be a happy place for their children. The headteacher, who works very hard and successfully to achieve a balance between his teaching and management roles, is well supported by the business manager who ensures that financial management and administration are good. Subject coordinators provide sound support. Their knowledge and understanding of the many subjects they lead are improving as a result of training and the development of their role in monitoring. Improvement planning is clearly better than at the time of the last inspection and benefits from input by staff, parents and children. The plan is satisfactory with some strong points, including accurate priorities and regular reviews of planning and outcomes. However, it requires further refinement because success criteria are not specific enough and there is insufficient use of school aims as a tool for evaluation.

The governing body provides good support for the school and ensures that legal requirements are met. Governors bring useful expertise to the school, particularly in management and curriculum matters. However, governors rely too heavily on an already over-stretched headteacher. Their procedures for examining the work of the school are weak, but slowly improving.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

Mr Michael Champion

Alkborough Primary School

Whitton Road

Alkborough

Scunthorpe

DN15 9JG

29 March 2006

Dear Children

I really enjoyed working with you and your teachers this week. I am grateful for your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided. Please give a special thanks to those who talked with me.

What I really liked about your school:

the support for the school from you and your parents

your excellent behaviour and good attitudes to school

the good work done by the business manager in developing your ICT skills

the good contribution made by the school council

the way that you all contribute to a safe and caring ethos in the school

the wide range of activities that enrich your curriculum.

I have asked Mr Champion and the teachers to improve the way that they set targets for each of you and mark your work. I also judge that you could make much greater use of your sound basic skills in English and ICT in all the other subjects that you do. You can be a great help by always doing your best work and following the advice from your teachers. In addition, I have asked that teachers and governors become much more rigorous in the way that they lead and manage the school.

I wish you all well and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead inspector