



# Thurlby Community Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 120390  
**LEA** LINCOLNSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280801  
**Inspection dates** 10 November 2005 to 11 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Martin Beale LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Lawrance Park
<b>School category</b>	Community		PE10 0EZ
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01778423311
<b>Number on roll</b>	180	<b>Fax number</b>	01778421314
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs. Maggi Ogden
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Graham Clegg

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school in a rural area of South Lincolnshire. All but a very few pupils are of white British heritage. The number of pupils is falling as the number of pupils of school age is declining in the area. Free school meal entitlement is very low. The pupils are taught in single age classes at present. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. The school has a breakfast club and externally managed after hours care.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that Thurlby Community Primary is a good school. The headteacher is a highly respected and effective leader who ensures that the school provides a caring and happy atmosphere where every pupil is valued and encouraged to do their best. The school has a highly effective partnership with parents. The school is currently operating with a budget deficit agreed with the local education authority and gives satisfactory value for money. Children make a very good start in the reception class through the outstanding teaching and the highly stimulating and creative environment provided. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and reach above average standards by the time they leave. Teaching is good overall, but the pace of learning varies. The work of teachers is monitored but this does not focus sufficiently on their impact on pupils' learning. The school provides a curriculum that focuses well on the development of basic skills. An innovative feature is the choice of additional activities once each week. The school provides a curriculum that focuses well on the development of basic skills. An innovative feature is the choice of additional activities once each week. However, the use of a full afternoon for this along with inefficient use of teaching time in the mornings means that the school cannot be sure that subjects other than literacy and numeracy are receiving sufficient attention. Pupils are proud of their school, enjoy their learning and behave well. They are polite, helpful and thoughtful and have the potential to contribute more to the life of the school and to the community. The school does not always exploit the pupils' maturity fully, particularly when involving them in setting personal targets. Good improvement has taken place since the last inspection and the school is clear about what needs to be done. Inspectors are confident that the school has the ability to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Evaluate more rigorously the impact of the work of teachers on pupils' learning.
- Increase the amount of taught time, to ensure that subjects other than literacy and numeracy are covered in sufficient depth, and make better use of the time available in the mornings.
- Involve pupils more in setting personal targets, monitoring their own progress and planning and initiating their own ventures both in and out of lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good overall. Children's attainment on entry to reception is a little below average. They make very good progress and by the end of the reception year the vast majority reach the expected goals for their age. Progress is good across the school, although this is more rapid in the older classes. Standards at the end of Year 2 have remained at the same slightly above average level for the last few years, although writing standards are merely average. Recent test results at Year 6 are higher and standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. A high proportion

of pupils exceed the levels expected for their age. The school sets reasonably challenging targets and is successful in meeting them. Pupils are more successful in reading than in writing. The recent action taken by the school to improve pupils' writing is starting to bear fruit. Pupils' writing shows a wide range of styles. The pupils demonstrate a good grasp of basic techniques and have plenty of opportunities to apply their writing skills in other subjects. Pupils have very good scientific knowledge and understanding but there is scope for them to take more responsibility for their learning by undertaking investigations and devising experiments to solve problems. Pupils with special educational needs benefit considerably from support and teaching that focus sharply on their particular learning targets and they make very good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The reception children quickly settle into the routines of the school and are happy and keen learners. They show good levels of independence and make informed choices and decisions about their work. Throughout the school, behaviour is good, and children are polite, friendly and helpful. Children have a very clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and from an early age show a good appreciation of the beauty of nature and the wonders of the world. Children show good levels of interest in the customs and traditions of others, but their knowledge of cultures other than their own is limited. Thurlby pupils are lively and confident learners who have a very good capacity for expressing their ideas, and a wealth of suggestions for ways in which aspects of school life might be altered or improved. At present, the school is not fully capitalising on this potential, and there are not enough opportunities for the children to plan and initiate their own ventures. Children of all ages have a good understanding and knowledge of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and explain the benefits of exercise and good diet. They follow safe practices when working in class, and good input from the school on topics such as road safety, drug and alcohol abuse, ensures that the children are well informed. Children thoroughly enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. The older Year 6 children sum up the views of the entire school when they say, 'the teachers are brilliant and learning is great fun'.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall, but the pace of learning varies across the school. Teaching is outstanding in reception where the children are very enthusiastic learners. They thrive in a positive and exciting atmosphere and benefit from a very wide range of practical activities. Throughout the school, teachers have high but realistic expectations of the pupils. Teachers generate an atmosphere in which the pupils feel happy and confident that their contributions are recognised and valued. Teachers use a wide range of methods and activities that support and extend the pupils' learning. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged by these methods and

questioning is used skilfully by many teachers to engage pupils of all abilities. The pace at which pupils learn slows when whole-class sessions are too long and where teachers do not ensure that all pupils are actively involved through carefully targeted questioning. Marking is carried out regularly, but does not consistently give pupils a clear picture of how to improve their work. Where targets for improvement are met, teachers and pupils do not always check that these are followed through in subsequent work. Teaching meets the needs of pupils of different abilities well. Basic skills are also taught well. Pupils with special educational needs benefit considerably from effective individual support and lessons, that are planned to meet their carefully diagnosed learning difficulties.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum for children in the reception class is outstanding. Reception children enjoy taking part in a wide range of very exciting and stimulating activities that give free rein to their creativity and challenge them in their learning. There is a really good balance between activities that the children choose and organise themselves and those that the teacher or teaching assistant guide and plan. Overall the curriculum for the infant and junior children is satisfactory. Children speak enthusiastically about their work, especially the visits they make to museums and other local attractions, and the wide number of clubs that they attend at lunchtimes and after school. The school has done much to enhance the basic curriculum by introducing some 'free-choice' activities on a Wednesday afternoon. These additional activities include options such as Spanish, sports, art, and information and communication technology (ICT) all of which are extremely popular. However, because most mornings are devoted to literacy and numeracy, the loss of one afternoon per week means that the school cannot easily track whether all of the other subjects are receiving enough time.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a very caring school. Procedures for ensuring the children's welfare, health and safety are robust. Child protection procedures are well established and are understood by staff. The children know whom to turn to if they are in trouble, and agree that their comments will be treated seriously and that action will be taken if necessary. Children with special educational needs receive very good levels of support to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable, and the school benefits from its excellent links with external health and social service agencies. Children throughout the school know their group writing and mathematics targets, and respond well to the challenge of achieving them. However, they do not have a clear enough view about the overall progress they are making or the standards they are achieving. This means that children are sometimes vague about what they need to do to improve their work, or how to reach the next 'level'.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher is a good leader who is very well supported by an effective deputy headteacher. Their complementary skills provide a clear direction for development and have aided the establishment of a caring and inclusive atmosphere in the school. There is a productive relationship with parents, who are consulted regularly about their views of the school. The role undertaken by the governing body has improved since the last inspection. Governors are well informed, monitor the work of the school more closely and offer a good balance of support and challenge to the headteacher. However, they are insufficiently involved in establishing the school's strategic direction and annual improvement planning. Resources are managed securely to meet the schools' aims. The budget deficit caused by falling pupil numbers is under control and there is an advanced plan for its elimination. This has delayed the school's refurbishment of its computer resources and the introduction of more teaching assistants. Leaders know the school well and take appropriate action to bring about improvement. The school's self-evaluation is sufficiently rigorous for it to plan the action required to improve. For example, in response to the variation in standards between reading and writing, they have implemented a detailed plan for improvement. The impact of this work has yet to be fully felt. By contrast, work undertaken over the last two years to raise achievement in mathematics has been particularly successful. The focus on raising achievement and the success of work undertaken to secure improvement give the school a secure base from which to improve further.





## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	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	2	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	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	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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	No
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to myself and Mrs Gough when we visited your school a short while ago. We really enjoyed our visit, and especially enjoyed sharing your lessons, and having conversations with you all. There were many things we liked about your school. Most of you work hard and because of this you do well in the tests at the end of Year 6. You get on well with one another, and we were pleased to hear that there is very little bullying or naughty behaviour. You know that if you have any problems you can talk to any of your teachers or Mr Clegg, and that they will do their best to make you feel happier. We are pleased with the way Mr Clegg leads the school and he makes sure that you are all happy in your work. As you can see, we think that Thurlby is a good school. However, there are some things that could be even better. You really enjoy the Wednesday afternoon 'enrichment' activities. We think they are a really good idea, but have asked Mr Clegg and the teachers to make sure that they don't take too much time away from your main lessons. Many of you have some really good ideas and we would like the teachers to give you more opportunities to try them out. For example, you could perhaps contact the pre-school group and make some books for the children. Finally, we saw how keen the teachers are to improve their teaching but have suggested that they look in more detail at ways of making your learning even better. We wish you well for the future and feel sure that Mr Clegg and the staff will work hard with you to make the school an even better place.