



The Harrowby Church of England Infant School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 120599
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280849
Inspection dates 11 May 2006 to 12 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. John Brennan LI

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

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | New Beacon Road |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | NG31 9LJ |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 7 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01476 564417 |
| Number on roll | 129 | Fax number | 01476 564417 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mrs. Jane Sharp |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable | Headteacher | Mrs. Nicky Donley |

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Age group 4 to 7 | Inspection dates 11 May 2006 - 12 May 2006 | Inspection number 280849 |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils attend this smaller than average church school from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. This is reflected in children's attainment on entry to school. There are strengths in children's social and personal development but children's language skills are not as well developed. Overall attainment on entry is a little below average. An average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and other needs. A high proportion of these are for speech and language. A large majority of pupils are from a White British background. A small number of pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small number are at the early stages of learning English. The school has a Healthy School Award, is an Eco School, holds a Basic Skills Award and has achieved Investors in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'I am delighted with my child's progress both academically and socially,' says a parent. It is easy to see why. This is a good school that knows itself well and that gives good value for money. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Throughout the school pupils progress well. Provision for children in Reception is good and the vast majority of them reach expected standards. Standards in Year 2 are above average. Progress in writing is particularly rapid because it is consistently well taught. The use of speaking and listening to aid learning works well in most instances but not all staff are fully confident in this. Pupils are given a lot of opportunities to work and talk together in groups and are highly social and cooperative. However, these times are less productive in terms of pupils' academic learning. Pupils demonstrate an outstanding understanding of how to live healthily. They have a very positive attitude towards school. They eagerly join the excellent range of clubs on offer. Numerous trips and an interesting curriculum add much to pupils' enjoyment of school. The school takes good care of pupils, providing well for their differing needs. There is a 'get up and go' attitude in leadership, particularly by the headteacher. Recent work in developing essential leadership skills in others gives the school the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give more thought to, and keep a closer eye on, pupils' learning in unaided group activities. - Continue to support and check up on how well staff implement, and pupils benefit from, speaking and listening strategies.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well to reach standards that are above average. Children in Reception progress well overall but do better in teacher-led activities than in those they choose to do for themselves. Almost all reach the goals normally expected of them and a significant proportion go beyond these. Effective interrogation of performance data has led to the targeting of writing and, latterly, speaking. Many children in Reception reach expected standards in these areas but few exceed them. Good momentum through Years 1 and 2, and a continued focus on writing, have seen results in national tests being consistently above average. Progress in writing is rapid. Challenging targets for writing, reading and mathematics are set and met with a very high rate of success. Whatever their ability, pupils do well. A good proportion of pupils exceed expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics and very few fall short of reaching average standards. The school has recently placed speaking and listening at the heart of learning. This suits all pupils well, including the few new to speaking English. Pupils relish this approach and standards are rising. However, not all teachers are fully confident in using new-found approaches to ensure progress is consistently good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth, is good. Pupils learn in what one parent describes as 'a happy environment', where they feel very well cared for and safe. They enjoy school and attendance is above the national average. Attitudes and behaviour are very good because adults and pupils like each other. Mutual trust and respect permeate school life. Pupils confidently express their opinions. In the main pupils show great interest in lessons but on occasion can become quiet and withdrawn when teaching is not engaging. Pupils play together very harmoniously because of the close attention paid to their social development. Playtimes are lively and fun-filled occasions. Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour or bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. The impact of the school's approach towards developing healthy lifestyles is outstanding. A very high proportion of pupils eat healthily. They enjoy the fun of being allowed one 'naughty' food item in their lunchboxes. Lunchtime and after-school clubs are oversubscribed. An increasing proportion of pupils walk to school. Pupils make a valuable contribution to school life through, for example, actively campaigning for traffic calming measures outside school. They contribute well to the wider community through a broad range of fund raising activities. Pupils also take their responsibility to the environment seriously; collecting buckets for the left-overs from fruit snacks are soon filled. They acquire good basic skills such as in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) that prepare them well for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Writing is well taught. Pupils write in a variety of ways. Real life scenarios give purpose to writing, as in Year 2, where running a garden centre necessitated a surprising amount of writing. Key targets are well known by pupils and marking is quick to recognise success in these and point the way to further improvement. Pupils find this very motivating. Strategies to encourage speaking and listening are still bedding in. Pupils lap up opportunities to bounce ideas off each other, to test understanding and as one boy said to 'learn from each other.' However, on a few occasions, teachers talk for too long, resulting in a sluggish response from a few pupils. In contrast, the confident use of interactive whiteboards by teachers and pupils make demonstrations engaging. Talk and cooperation through practical group work are commonplace. However, talk is more successfully promoted than thinking because learning can take a back seat to discussion and cooperation. Adult-led group work is well taught but pupils working in unaided groups are sometimes left to their own devices for too long, especially in Reception. Here some tasks are too easy for higher attaining children and would benefit from a tighter structure. Elsewhere, learning would be more effective if pupils consistently shared their findings with the teacher or their peers. A group in Year 2 investigating ways to partition cubes, started with a

will but because they were not asked to prove their findings they found it difficult to sustain their efforts. The same pupils, working together to produce tongue twisters, worked with persistence because, as they proudly said, 'we're going to make a book out of these.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school gives pupils a good curriculum. Careful thought has been given to adapting the curriculum to the needs of the pupils and to addressing the relative shortcoming they show in language when they start school. Themed topics, such as 'The World', promote key skills successfully, especially in writing, because they combine learning across subjects. Recent initiatives to develop speaking skills have not only made learning more fun, but have also fostered greater independence and creativity. The curriculum in Reception is rich and varied, with a strong, effective emphasis on developing language, personal and social skills. Improvements to the curriculum for ICT have successfully addressed weaknesses found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils gain much from a plethora of lunchtime and after school clubs, ranging from French to gardening. Some of these are designed to foster team work and, as well as being fun, help pupils practise skills that are of use in other contexts. Visits and visitors, such as the local policeman, further enhance learning. An innovative partnership with a local special school, in which pupils from each school regularly work together, does much to help pupils understand and respect difference.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils. Formal systems that underpin this caring attitude are very effective. There are thorough procedures for ensuring pupils' safety, including those for child protection. Staff know what to do if they have concerns and pupils know they can confide in a trusted adult. They report that the 'friendship stop' in the playground works very well. Those chosen as 'playground friends' take their responsibilities very seriously. Systems for checking on pupils' progress have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. In Reception better use could be made of assessment information to ensure all work is pitched at the right level. The school knows whether individual pupils are achieving well enough. Extra help is given to talented and gifted pupils and in particular to those with learning difficulties. Teaching assistants play an important role here in ensuring that additional work dovetails well with work pupils are doing in class. Pupils throughout the school thrive socially and academically in this well structured social environment. They know exactly what they need to do to improve and display great excitement when they achieve their personal targets for development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

'Leadership by partnership' is how one governor astutely describes the good quality of leadership and management of the school. All staff and governors are drawn into school improvement, giving the school the mandate and capacity to improve further. Governors talk of being able to 'quiz' the school. They do this well and play an important part in decision-making. Parents' views are routinely sought and acted upon. The school has the full confidence of parents, and pupils think it's a great place. The headteacher leads the school extremely well. She has injected enterprise into the work of others, creating a 'can do' attitude amongst staff. The resultant quest to develop teaching and leadership is aided by the desire to work in partnership with others. Networking with other local schools has led to advancements in teaching, for example in writing, and to refinements to the curriculum. Most importantly, enrolment in the Primary Leadership Programme has sparked a recent spurt in the growth of leadership skills in others. Although this is still a developing area, observations of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' books and talking to pupils about their work are increasingly common and help keep key staff, and in particular the headteacher, well informed. Performance data are gone over with a fine tooth comb so that the right areas for improvement are tackled. Priorities are encompassed in a brief and to the point school improvement plan.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 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 | 2 | 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? | 2 | NA |
| The standards ¹ 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

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| 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 | 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 | 1 | 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 | 2 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 | 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? | 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 | 2 | 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 | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 | 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

Thank you for your help when we visited your school recently. We would like to share with you what we thought about your school. We really enjoyed our visit because everyone was so helpful and friendly. It felt like we were visiting one big, friendly family. We think this is because everyone treats each other well and the headteacher, staff and governors have your concerns at heart. Even though you go to a good school people in it are always trying to make it better still. You too play your part in making this a good school. You work hard and play very well together. Some of your writing is very good and you really know how to stay healthy and fit. We were very impressed with how many of you had healthy lunchboxes and how many of you joined the clubs on offer. We could see how keen you are to share your thoughts with your classmates, especially at the beginning and end of lessons. We think that this could be done a little bit more often. You are very good at working in groups. You talk a lot about what you are doing and help each other very well. We have asked your teachers to look for themselves, at what you are doing in these groups and to let you show your work to others more often.

Yours sincerely