



Scartho Infants' School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117956
Local Authority North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number 290979
Inspection date 21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Jackie Barnes

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Edge Avenue
School category	Community		Grimsby
Age range of pupils	3-7		DN33 2DH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01472 879634
Number on roll (school)	149	Fax number	01472 879634
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	The Rev. Ian Walker
		Headteacher	Mrs Andrea Todd
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves a mixed social and cultural area on the outskirts of Grimsby. A smaller than average proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals. About one in ten pupils speak English as their additional language, and a similar number have special educational needs. There has been an increase in the number of pupils arriving and leaving the school in recent years. Most pupils remain in the school from the early years until they transfer to the junior school on the same campus. When they enter the school in the Foundation Stage, the majority of children have the knowledge and skills expected for their age. Some pupils have above or below these expectations, especially in early literacy and numeracy.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that is well led and managed with good capacity to improve further. It has the confidence of parents; pupils enjoy learning and mature well as individuals.

Pupils are well cared for. They thrive within the positive support and good relationships that are clearly evident around the school and which are enhanced by a sound curriculum that provides well for their personal and social development. They know that making mistakes is acceptable on the way to improving their work and trying out their ideas, so most have the confidence to make their views and needs known. Their behaviour is good. They work well together, value their friends and generally care for each other. They are knowledgeable about the choices they should make to live healthy lifestyles and to stay safe.

Children settle quickly when they start school in the Nursery. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn, responding well to the good quality teaching and learning opportunities provided. They make good progress through the two years of the Foundation Stage. By Year 2, most pupils have continued to make good progress and standards are above average. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. The school's national assessment results in 2005 indicated that standards, although lower than in the previous year, were high in reading, but less so in writing especially for the more capable pupils. In mathematics, results were slightly below average. Although national assessment results have remained above the national figures for several years, they vary from year to year for groups of pupils. This is mainly due to the varying proportion of pupils with special educational needs and to occasional inconsistencies in the generally good quality of teaching and learning. The school has an extensive range of assessment information which is thoroughly analysed. This information is used well in identifying the standards attained by different groups of pupils but less so in checking their progress and planning the day-to-day teaching and learning in lessons. As a result, the level of challenge for pupils in lessons is occasionally too difficult or too easy.

The headteacher provides clear leadership and direction for the school and works closely with the senior management team to check the quality of teaching and the pupils' attainment. Records of assessment results are meticulously kept and inform the strategic decisions about priorities for the school's development. The overall arrangements for checking the school's effectiveness work well in practice. The present format of the school development plan does not help governors and others to check the progress the school is making. The school is a welcoming place for parents and visitors, and pupils are valued. This contributes very effectively to the pupils feeling secure and provides a good environment for learning. Due attention is given to safeguarding pupils and to their welfare, which contributes well to their enjoyment of school and their regular attendance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics and writing for the more able pupils.
- Use assessment data more consistently to check the progress and plan the learning for different groups of pupils.
- Improve the format of the school development plan to help regular progress checks on the key priorities, especially by the governing body.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average. In the Foundation Stage, children respond well to the careful nurturing of their personal skills and their understanding of the wide range of experiences which the school provides. They have a keen appetite for learning and are well served by the good quality and planning of their learning. They make good progress and the large majority either attain or are close to the goals for their age by the end of the Reception year.

Although the results in the school's national assessments for seven-year-olds remain above average, they declined slightly in 2005. The school has accurately identified where groups of pupils could do better and where teaching needed to be improved. The unconfirmed results for 2006 indicate that the action taken has been largely successful, especially in improving the results of the more capable pupils in mathematics. Boys and girls attain similar results, with boys' attainment being well above what it is for boys nationally. The number of pupils who have English as their additional language varies from year to year as does their attainment, but the school's records indicate that most achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Most pupils enter school with good attitudes to learning and an enthusiasm for what school offers. These attributes are effectively nurtured by good relationships with adults and day-to-day opportunities to develop independence. Pupils work with others, behave well and gain the knowledge to make decisions about living safe and healthy lives. As a result, the pupils are very aware of their responsibilities to the school community and their individual contributions to harmonious relationships. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall. When pupils make mistakes they respond well to correction and many are capable of evaluating their own personal strengths and weaknesses. Most know how to deal with any feelings of harassment, and are confident that staff will respond if they need help or advice. The school's positive approach to parents' involvement in their children's development is typified by the excellent start to each day. Parents and carers briefly settle the children into the classroom and activities, encourage their enthusiasm and share information with the teachers where necessary.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons are well prepared, generally interesting and well managed. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and the age groups they teach. The school's intake is changing slightly as families move in and out of the area more frequently, which is partly the impact of employment patterns at the local hospital. This has increased the need to consider the progress of individual pupils. In lessons, teachers and support staff make every effort to ensure that each group of pupils receives the attention needed to complete their work. Although this works reasonably well, the school recognises that in some classes pupils have a wider range of differing needs and has begun to develop the organisation of the teaching and learning to provide for them more effectively. For example, staff are allocated to specific groups of pupils where there is a need to boost their progress. This is working well and assessment information is used effectively to identify the needs of the pupils. When planning learning in whole class lessons, assessment information is not so accurately used and occasionally pupils become inattentive because the teaching and tasks are too difficult or too easy.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides all the required subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It rightly prioritises the pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy with effective support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils particularly enjoy practical activities and visits out of school. The adaptation of the curriculum to the needs of individual groups of pupils beyond those with special educational needs is at an early stage but is sensibly based on the school's assessment information.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The staff provide excellent care for pupils' welfare and due attention is given by senior management to arrangements for their safety. Most successful is the school's positive ethos, which encourages pupils to explore and be adventurous, knowing they will have the support of staff to help them when needed. The encouragement for children to review their own successes and areas for improvement starts in the Nursery. This approach continues to be of great benefit to pupils' personal confidence and sense of purpose throughout the school. Most pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve, and have targets to work towards. Occasionally, these targets are too general to help the pupils overcome a difficulty which is particular to them rather than the group in which they are working.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school and is well supported by good governance and committed staff. Consequently, the pupils progress well, attain good standards and enjoy school. The school's systems for evaluation have accurately identified the strengths and areas for development, and improved teaching and learning. The present format of the school improvement plan undervalues the strategic work the school undertakes and lacks a sharp focus on how improvements are judged to be successful. This limits the governing body's involvement in checking the progress being made and assuring that their trust in the school's senior management is well placed. The last inspection did not identify any specific areas for improvement but the school has clearly continued to develop well. It has successfully established a good quality nursery which, after a slow start, is oversubscribed and gives the children a good introduction to their school life. The school provides good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Scartho Infants' School

Edge Avenue

Grimsby

DN33 2DH

21 September 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your good school. You helped me to see how much you enjoyed school, especially meeting your friends, and how keen you are to learn. You are confident and well behaved, and you care for each other. You rightly trust your teachers to help you to learn and keep you safe. You are proud of your successes and of your school. You make good progress in your work and try hard to improve.

I think you can do even better. I have asked your school to check that you are doing as well as you can, especially in your mathematics and writing, and that you do not find your work too easy or too hard. I know you will help them all you can.

Yours sincerely

J M Barnes

Lead inspector