



The South Hykeham Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120388
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 291710
Inspection date 13 February 2007
Reporting inspector Susan Aldridge

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wath Lane
School category	Community		South Hykeham, Lincoln
Age range of pupils	4-11		Lincolnshire LN6 9PG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01522 681919
Number on roll (school)	127	Fax number	01522 681919
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Keith Jones
		Headteacher	Mr John Richardson
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector in one day.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size school. Most pupils come from the communities of South Hykeham and North Hykeham. Children's attainment on entry to the school is typical of children nationally. Almost all pupils are White British; none speak English as an additional language. There is a lower than average proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with statements of special educational need is lower than average now, although this has been consistently above average in the past. Since the last inspection there has been a change of headteacher and deputy headteacher. The school's work is recognised by the Investors in People Award and it is working towards Healthy Schools status.

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 provides good value for money, and this is how it sees itself. Parents are delighted with the school. One described it as 'everything I was looking for in a school'. Many expressed their appreciation of its warm, friendly atmosphere, approachable staff and nurturing environment. It owes its success to good leadership and management. Since his arrival, the headteacher has made a considerable difference and the changes are appreciated by pupils and parents.

Children enter the school with knowledge and skills typical of children nationally, although there are variations from year to year which result in fluctuations in standards. Good provision in the Foundation Stage means that children get a good start to their education and make rapid progress. Whatever their starting points, pupils make good progress and achieve well because they have a rich and enjoyable range of learning experiences that are well taught. They are also well cared for and supported. Pupils' positive attitudes to school and to learning also contribute to the good progress that they make. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average, but standards in writing across the school are not as high as those in reading. The school recognises this, because its self-evaluation is good, and suitable action is being taken to raise standards.

Pupils' personal development is good. It is encouraged well by the school's family atmosphere, as well as the good teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and take part enthusiastically in the activities provided during and after the school day. They feel safe and say that there is no bullying. Behaviour is good. The school council is well established and has been influential in securing improvements for pupils. A wide range of games and activities at playtimes make these pleasurable occasions for all. Pupils take the range of responsibilities they are given in school seriously, and older pupils are pleased to look after the younger ones.

The self-evaluation process involves pupils, staff, parents and governors and informs the school's improvement plan well. This is a well constructed document that identifies the right priorities and drives development well, but it runs over a two year period rather than the three years recommended. As a result, it is not clear how some long-term developments are to be implemented. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The premises and outdoor environments have been improved. A splendid wooden fort in the Foundation Stage playground is a particular hit with children there, and older pupils are pleased to have a much better playground and after school clubs. The school's capacity to continue to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing.
- Ensure that the school improvement plan covers a three year period.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Whatever their starting points, pupils make good progress and achieve well in their time at school. Boys and girls make similar progress. In 2005, standards were average and the school was placed in the top 10% of schools nationally, based on progress made by pupils.

In 2006, standards in Year 6 dropped to below average and the school did not meet the challenging targets it had set for this group. This was the result of a number of factors that the school can explain convincingly. For instance, over a third of the pupils in the group had learning difficulties and/or disabilities or statements of special educational need. Standards were average in science, mathematics and reading, but below average in writing. Assessment information covering a three year period shows that this group made satisfactory progress overall.

This year, standards are set to rise. The Year 6 group is making good gains and assessment information suggests that they are on course to reach the challenging targets set for them. Two thirds of these pupils had reached the expected Level 4 or the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 5.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their relationships with one another and with staff are warm. Behaviour is good in lessons and around school, and above average attendance reflects pupils' obvious enjoyment of school. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions. Pupils are self confident, articulate, polite and well mannered. Their self awareness develops well, particularly through their personal, social and health education lessons. They also develop a good awareness of how to maintain their personal safety and lead a healthy lifestyle. They make healthy choices at school, eating fruit at playtime and drinking water during the day. Physical activities are popular during and after the school day. Pupils reflect quietly, during assemblies, on making wise choices, for instance. They willingly take on responsibilities, such as representing peers on the school council or as monitors. They also raise funds for charity. However, there are limited opportunities for them to contribute to the local community. They leave school as well rounded individuals, well equipped for their next schools and ultimately for working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good because teaching is well monitored by the headteacher; teachers know what is expected of them, and staff are well supported in developing their skills. Accurate assessments of pupils' progress are used well to plan activities that are enjoyable and offer a suitable challenge to pupils of different ages and abilities. Lessons have clear learning outcomes, which are shared with pupils then reviewed later. Clear success criteria enable pupils to judge whether they have met the objectives or not. Staff have good relationships with pupils and show that they value their ideas and contributions; this results in confident learners. Skilled teaching assistants support individuals and groups well. Occasionally, whole class teaching lasts a bit too long. Although pupils are very good listeners, a few pupils lose concentration and make less progress than they might. In most lessons, teachers are very successful in encouraging pupils to participate and keep thinking, by jotting answers on whiteboards or discussing questions with partners.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and supports pupils' good progress. The headteacher has led the development, which is still ongoing, of a more appealing and enjoyable range of experiences for pupils. Further development is identified in the school improvement plan. Careful planning ensures that pupils in mixed age classes do not miss out topics or repeat work unnecessarily. The curriculum is enriched well by French in Years 5 and 6, visits, themed weeks, visitors and residential school journeys. The addition of after school clubs is particularly appreciated by pupils and their parents. The quality of enrichment supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils' individual needs are met well. For instance, there are additional programmes for pupils, ranging from physiotherapy to the '5 plus' lunchtime club for high flyers in Year 6. Links with secondary schools offer enrichment for pupils who have particular gifts or talents and the school has plans to extend the provision it makes 'in house' for this group of pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils are confident that there is someone in school that they can turn to if they have a problem and they appreciate the help they get from staff. Well earned praise and merit awards encourage the growth of pupils' self esteem.

Health and safety matters have a high profile and comprehensive checks carried out by governors are followed by suitable and prompt action. Risks are carefully assessed and suitable action taken to minimise dangers. Staff are vigilant and supervision of pupils is good.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with statements of special educational need are well supported by teaching assistants and have suitable individual education plans, although not all of these contain success criteria. This makes it difficult to judge whether or when a target has been met. Pupils with medical needs are well catered for.

Academic guidance is good. Pupils are involved well in self and peer assessment and help each other to make good progress. Year 6 pupils have a clear understanding of what level they are at in English and mathematics and what they need to do to improve on this. Marking helps pupils to improve and pupils are well supported in preparing to take national tests.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and his deputy both lead well. The headteacher shows by his presence in the playground in the mornings that he values pupils and parents. He provides a warm welcome and a listening ear, both of which are much appreciated. His revival of the school's football club has also gone down well. He has a clear long term vision for the school's development that is shared by staff and governors, but is not fully reflected in the school's improvement plan, that has detail for one year and broad targets for a second year. The plan is sharply focused on raising standards and promoting pupils' personal development.

One significant development that the headteacher has initiated is the sharing of leadership responsibilities amongst staff. There is now a clear cycle of monitoring and evaluation of subjects that involves subject leaders and governors in checking standards and provision across the curriculum.

Governance is good. Governors are most supportive and they visit the school regularly and compile written reports on what they find. They ensure that financial resources are well targeted to support improvement, and that the school has a sensible reserve in case of emergencies.

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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	2
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	3
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?	2
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

14 February 2007

Dear Pupils

The South Hykeham Community Primary School, Wath Lane, South Hykeham, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN6 9PG

Thank you for making me so welcome in your school, especially to those who talked to me about school life. I enjoyed my day. I came to see how you are all getting on and whether there are any ways that the school could improve.

You all go to a good school. The main reason your school is good is that the headteacher, staff and governors are all doing a good job. I was pleased to see how well everyone gets on together and to hear that you all enjoy school and feel safe there. This is helping you to do well. Many of your parents wrote to say how much they appreciate the school and what it does for you too. You are making good progress because the teachers are doing a good job but also because you behave well in lessons, listen well and concentrate hard on your work. You are also developing well as young people. Your behaviour is good and so is your attendance. I was pleased to hear how much you enjoy the sports clubs after school, the visits and residential school trips. You told me that you appreciate the help that staff give you and I found that they and the governors work hard to make sure that the school is a safe place to be in. I was impressed with the way you all know what the objectives are in lessons and how well you are able to work out whether you have reached the objectives by using success criteria. You also told me that you enjoy marking one another's work and that teachers' marking helps you to improve.

There are two things that I have asked Mr Richardson, the staff and governors to do. They are already working hard to help you improve your writing and will keep doing this. There are lots of plans for making the school an even better place in the future, but not all of these are written down, so there will be a plan to last the school for three years.

I wish you all the best in the future. I am sure you will all keep up the good work.

Mrs S Aldridge

Lead Inspector