

Gedney Church End Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120409
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number	291719
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	61
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Annette Andrews
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Stillwell
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002
School address	Church End Gedney Spalding Lincolnshire PE12 0BU
Telephone number	01406 362383
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves the village of Gedney. Although many of the pupils live locally, an increasing number are drawn from further afield. Pupil mobility is high, particularly in Key Stage 2. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. Attainment on entry is below average with a high proportion of pupils having learning difficulties or disabilities. Six pupils have a statement of special educational need.

Since January 2007, the school has been federated with another small village primary school. Although each school has its own set of governors, the Gedney headteacher has the responsibility for both schools.

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 provides a satisfactory level of education within the context of a caring environment. Although overall standards in Year 6 are below average, recent test results have shown encouraging signs of improvement. In particular, science remains a relative strength, with standards in line with the national average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and mathematics through the school but there are pockets of underachievement in writing. The current work of the older pupils shows that this trend is beginning to be reversed but the pupils' work lacks accuracy.

Apart from the occasional hiccup, standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have risen year-on-year. This is because the children are given a secure start to their learning by the good provision in the Reception class and the teaching in Years 1 and 2 successfully builds on this. Current standards are broadly average, although there remains scope for greater challenge for the pupils to ensure that they are achieving their best in writing.

The quality of teaching and the curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers maintain good levels of discipline within the classrooms and use new technology well to support learning, but the use of assessment data to match the work set to different groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 lacks rigour. Although the teachers plan well for the different activities for pupils in each lesson, they are less focused on the development of skills. The school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory, as much depends on the rigour that is applied by the school leadership to improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 to ensure that the pupils are achieving their best.

The personal development of the pupils is satisfactory. Good care, guidance and support mean that the school is particularly successful in managing the above average levels of pupil mobility and settling new children well. The school provides a safe and secure environment. The accommodation is much improved and encourages high expectations. The ethos and range of opportunities available to the pupils supports their personal development and keeps them interested. As a result, the pupils enjoy their schooling and attendance rates are satisfactory. Although their behaviour is good, many pupils lack maturity and are not committed to raising their academic performance to ensure they are achieving their best. The school works well with other schools to develop teaching and learning but has yet to develop a strong partnership with parents to support their children's progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's view of itself is broadly accurate and its strategy for strengthening its effectiveness is gaining momentum with the recent federation with a neighbouring school and the potential for sharing expertise. The headteacher is committed to teamwork and ensuring that the pupils benefit from high quality resourcing. The governors' contribution is satisfactory as they are beginning to hold the school to account as well as providing invaluable support. They recognise that greater rigour is required at all leadership levels in evaluating the pupils' learning experiences to raise expectations of the pupils' achievements year-on-year. Currently, the school provides satisfactory value for money and is continuing to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2.
- Strengthen the partnership with parents.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. The children achieve well in the Foundation Stage because they are well taught. They make good gains in their learning, particularly in their speaking and listening and in their social development. This progress is sustained in Key Stage 1 and standards are broadly in line in reading and mathematics by the age of seven.

Standards are rising in both the junior and infant classes. The teachers and pupils now have a much clearer idea of what is needed to improve. This is a welcome turnaround after a period when achievement in Key Stage 2 has been unsatisfactory. Currently, standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 are below average. However, these are in line with this group's starting points and represent satisfactory progress. Pupils achieve well in science because they respond well to the school's emphasis on practical investigations. The pupils make good progress in reading. The high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from sensitive support in Key Stage 1 that breaks down learning into small steps. This is not always the case in the junior classes and limits the pupils' progress. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have been improved through enhanced resourcing and training for staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well around school and in lessons. They are polite and helpful and are mindful of the school rules. The pupils enjoy good relationships with their peers and with the adults in school, setting a suitable atmosphere in lessons. When the teaching lacks sparkle the pupils continue to behave satisfactorily, although they tend to become restless as their attention wanes. Most of the pupils enjoy school, even though many lack academic ambition, and attendance rates are satisfactory.

The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory. The children have a strong sense of their own rural cultural traditions and a growing awareness of cultural diversity. The school has suitable arrangements to take account of the pupils' views. For example, the school council has a developing role in the school's decision-making process and has been particularly successful in making choices about healthy snacks. The pupils know how to stay safe and appreciate the school's encouragement towards more active life styles. They make a satisfactory contribution to the rural traditions of the community. The development of the pupils' workplace skills is satisfactory. They are becoming numerate and literate and their computer skills are progressing well. When they have the opportunity, most pupils work well together and enjoy taking responsibility but there are too few opportunities in Years 3 to 6 for them to develop their initiative and independence in lessons.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in the class for the Reception children and those in Key Stage 1, where the teacher provides an imaginative and creative range of lessons which motivates the children. Furthermore, the teaching assistants provide valuable support and share the responsibility for the children's learning. With the exception of

music, where the teaching is good, the quality of teaching for all groups of pupils is steady rather than inspirational in the junior classes. Throughout the school, relationships between teachers and pupils are good and help to promote positive attitudes to learning. Pupils particularly enjoy computer based learning and this is used well by teachers. However, sometimes the work given does not offer the right amount of challenge to pupils and the pace is too slow. This results in pupils making less progress than they should in their learning. The school has a good system to assess the pupils' progress but this information is not used consistently in Key Stage 2 to help the children to improve their skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. For the children in the Foundation Stage it is good as it enables them to settle quickly and make good gains in their communication and social skills. Throughout the school, there is good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). The staff provide good role models and strongly support and promote healthy eating and active lifestyles. The school has modified the grouping arrangements for literacy and numeracy in Years 3 to 6 and this is beginning to raise the expectations of the pupils' achievements. The school's planning links subjects well so that lessons are interesting for the pupils, but there is insufficient emphasis on developing the pupils' skills. The staff ensure that the curriculum is enriched by an appropriate range of visitors, such as the weekly visits by Boston United Football Club, and by visits to places of interest.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support. The family atmosphere of the school strongly supports the pupils' well-being. Pupils are happy and secure. Arrangements to ensure their safety are fully in place. Risk assessments are carefully attended to. Children starting school in Reception or transferring from other schools settle to learning quickly because of the very good arrangements which prepare them well. Because the school works so well in partnership with local clusters of schools, arrangements to ensure pupils transfer onto the next stage of their education are very good. The good pastoral care provided by the school is matched by the quality of academic guidance that the pupils are given in Reception and Key Stage 1 but assessment information is not used well enough at Key Stage 2 to match work to different abilities. Academic guidance has enabled the brighter pupils to make good progress. Procedures to monitor the progress of other pupils, including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are not doing as well as they are expected to, particularly in writing, are being sharpened. This is impacting on the pupils' progress as they grow in understanding about what they need to do to improve. However, this is more evident in Key Stage 1 than it is in Key Stage 2.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is committed to improving the quality of education in the face of high pupil mobility and falling rolls. The school has developed good working partnerships with neighbouring schools to accelerate the rate of change and improvement, but the full impact of these initiatives is yet to be felt.

The impact of greater rigour in the monitoring of pupils' progress is beginning to be felt as standards improve. The staff function well as a team and they are developing their roles and responsibilities in evaluating achievement. But there is still much to be done, particularly in developing the partnership with parents.

Governors are committed to the work of the school and provide conscientious support. Their awareness of their responsibility to hold the school to account has grown but there is a need for the further development of their role as critical friends, particularly in terms of monitoring school effectiveness.

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Annex A

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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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

29 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Gedney Church End Primary School, Church End, Gedney, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 0BU

I really enjoyed my visit to your village school because everybody was so helpful and friendly. I was very pleased to be able to work with you in your classrooms, join in with your assemblies and watch you playing outside in the lovely spring sunshine. I can understand why you enjoy your school so much as there are many things that make your school special. Here are some of them.

- Everybody understands the school rules and you behave well.
- Everybody tries to be friendly, thoughtful and helpful. Well done!
- All of the teachers want you all to enjoy school and to do well.
- The staff are caring and provide a range of activities and visits to keep you interested.

But, of course, as in all schools, there are still things that can be done to make your school even better.

- Firstly I know that you can do even better with your work, and I am asking your teachers to keep on trying to improve your lessons so that you can become more skilful, especially in your writing, and more interested in doing well.
- I also want the school to work more closely with your parents to help you with your work.

Although there is work to be done to make your school even better, you must never forget that Mrs Stillwell and the staff work very hard to help you to learn and you should remember to thank them. I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector