

Louth Kidgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120459
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
Inspection number	291745
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Brown

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	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Eileen Ballard
Headteacher	Mrs Deborah North
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2002
School address	Kidgate Louth Lincolnshire LN11 9BX
Telephone number	01507 603636
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is much larger than most primary schools; it serves the town of Louth as well as some of the adjacent villages. Almost all of the pupils are of White British background with around 4% from a range of other backgrounds. Very few of the pupils do not have English as their mother tongue. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average and the number entitled to free school meals is very small. The school has Healthy Schools status and has gained the Artsmark Silver Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvements, because it is performing significantly less well than in all circumstances it could be reasonably expected to perform. The school is therefore, given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the progress that pupils make, the consistency of teaching, the care, guidance and support and in the leadership and management of the school.

This school's overall effectiveness is inadequate. In the time since the last inspection, standards at both key stages have declined to a significant degree. For too many pupils, the progress they are now making is unacceptably erratic. A number of issues identified at the time of the last inspection, for instance, the ineffective use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning have only recently been prioritised. As a result, progress since the last inspection has been inadequate.

Parents are in the main happy with the school and their children enjoy being there. Pupils are well behaved, polite and enjoy the many extra sporting activities and clubs that are now available to them. They get a good start in the Foundation Stage and begin their time in the school well, but for some time, most pupils have failed to make the expected progress from year to year. Although pupils' attainment in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved, the outcomes are below what could reasonably be expected from their earlier achievements. Too few of the higher attaining pupils are achieving the higher standards in mathematics and science.

The impact of the teaching on the pupils' learning varies considerably, but overall it is inadequate. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities get good support; as a result they make at least satisfactory progress. However, in some classes, poor planning and a lack of challenging work, properly matched to the differing needs of the pupils, means that pupils are not engaged in their learning. When teaching is good, the pupils are enthusiastic about what they can achieve, but the inconsistencies mean that the outcomes for pupils vary considerably.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Much effort has gone in to broadening and expanding the activities the pupils undertake, but the work is not yet complete. This is a caring school with a strong commitment to supporting its community. The pupils readily explain how they feel safe and secure in school, but the care and guidance of pupils is judged to be inadequate. This is because the training for staff in the safeguarding of pupils is not up to date, and the academic guidance for the pupils in the form of targets and explanations of what they need to do lacks rigour.

The leadership and management of the school are inadequate. Monitoring and evaluation has had too little impact in making the work of the school effective. Some aspects of the schools work, such as the quality of pupils' personal development have been maintained and even improved, but other changes have been too small or too late.

A new headteacher has just taken over at the school. She has made a very accurate diagnosis of the issues that the school needs to address and has already prioritised what must be done. The governors support this and in setting the criteria for her appointment gave a clear mandate to bring about improvement. The governors have supported the school well, but recognise that they have not always challenged the leadership in the past when standards have slipped. The school no longer gives satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils begin school in the Reception year from a range of different nursery and childcare settings, and there is effective liaison between the school and the range of providers. As a result, children settle appropriately into routines and procedures and manage their personal needs with confidence. However, the school has a too lengthy induction process which hinders progress initially. Children start school with a level of development that is broadly in line with national expectations forming good relationships with adults and each other. The progress of each child is carefully monitored so that achievements are recorded and particular difficulties are quickly addressed. As a result, children make good progress in their learning. The recent introduction of an outside area helps to extend learning and is used well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rate of progress for all pupils by ensuring a consistent level of challenge from all teachers.
- Evaluate the school's performance rigorously, to enable leadership at all levels to apply effective and consistent practices that will enable the school to improve.
- Ensure that all pupils have targets which they know and understand, and which help them in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement is inadequate. At the time of the last inspection standards throughout the school were well above those found nationally. Since then there has been a clear downward trend and standards have fallen to a level below those found nationally. Recent improvements have improved outcomes at the end of Year 6 assessments, they are now close to those found nationally. However, improvement is not consistent across the whole school. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities get good help and support, but the high attaining pupils, whilst getting some help and guidance, particularly with their English, do not get sufficient support in mathematics and science where the outcomes for the school are disappointingly low. The inconsistent progress pupils make through the school following a good start in the early years arises from a lack of clarity in the targets the pupils are set. These result from the inadequate tracking system the school uses which is cumbersome and incomplete in its coverage.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Attendance is only satisfactory because a significant number of days are lost due to holidays taken during the school term. Behaviour is consistently good throughout the school. Pupils report they feel both safe and listened to, and believe that incidents and concerns will be dealt with. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. They understand the importance of their contribution to the life of the school, and they are proud to take on extra responsibilities. For example, they regularly raise money to support a range of charities, often instigating fund raising themselves. Some older pupils assume additional responsibilities such as 'Playground Wizards' helping with activities for younger pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural

development is satisfactory. There is no evidence that pupils have enough opportunities to learn about a wide range of cultural traditions and practices other than their own. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, eating fruit and drinking water regularly. They are proud of their school environment, and the school council has been involved in several projects to develop the outdoor areas of the school. Pupils are appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching is inadequate. Although there is some satisfactory and good teaching, there are inconsistencies in practice across teachers, subjects and year groups which result in pupils failing to make sufficient progress. The inconsistencies show clearly in the teachers' planning. In most lessons pupils understand the purpose of their work, but teachers do not apply the information they have about pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding to pitch activities at an appropriate level. Expectations of what pupils can do are not high enough across most areas of the school. This is especially so for more able pupils and contributes to their under-achievement in mathematics and science.

The bright and interesting learning environment and the good relationships between pupils and teachers encourage pupils to learn. Pupils enjoy those lessons where they have opportunities to learn by working independently on practical tasks. They become restless and bored, however, when teaching is over-directed and when the pace of learning is too slow. A good feature is the growing opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and ideas with each other. Good practice was seen in Year 1 where pupils were reviewing their learning and making decisions about how their work could be improved. Some homework was set during the inspection, but this did not extend classroom learning. Marking does not help pupils' understanding of what they are doing well or need to improve. However, as in all areas of teaching at the school, there is some good practice, but this is not shared in order for it to become the norm.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory in that it provides an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy, although little ICT was taught last year as the equipment failed. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well catered for, but provision for gifted and talented pupils is inadequate. All pupils have a weekly music lesson and pupils in Key Stage 2 are learning French as part of the school's response to broaden their horizons. The curriculum promotes knowledge of healthy eating and living as part of a personal, social and health education which is being further developed and which is promoting satisfactory personal development. Pupils enjoy the wide range of extra curricular activities that are as diverse as knitting and golf. The provision for physical education and after school sports activities has been strengthened and extended by the Sports Partnership.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

The care, guidance and support of the pupils are inadequate. Pupils feel safe in school, but some of the procedures to ensure their safety and welfare such as staff training and guidance are not up to date. The guidance pupils are given about what they need to do to improve their

work is inconsistent and ineffective because teachers' planning and assessment procedures vary widely. The school uses a system to track pupils' individual progress, but this does not cover all subjects and year groups, or provide clear answers to staff when they need to assess the impact of their work. As it stands, the school's tracking system does not provide the necessary means to improve pupils' achievements or help the teachers to guide learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The leadership and management of the school are inadequate. Until recently, the leadership of the school has had too little influence on the quality of provision. This caused the school to drift and consequently, what was a very good school at the time of the last inspection deteriorated as standards fell because monitoring and evaluation was ineffective and the self-evaluation provided by the school was inaccurate. However, the newly appointed headteacher has a realistic and accurate understanding of the issues as a result of her thorough evaluation of the school's documentation and data. She also has the support of the governors to bring about change. Whole staff training on some key aspects that were underdeveloped has already taken place and the successful impact of this work can already be seen in the displays around school and the actions and activities that the staff are beginning to introduce into their classrooms. As a result, the school does have a satisfactory capacity to bring about improvement.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
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?	4

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?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
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?	No
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 September 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Louth Kidgate Primary School, Louth, LN11 9BX

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and would like to share with you what we thought about your school.

We could see that you play your part in making Louth Kidgate Primary School a happy place to be. We were very pleased to see how well behaved you are, and delighted that you are so thoughtful and considerate of each other. We especially liked the fact that you listen carefully to your teachers and teaching assistants. You showed us that you are responsible and caring which is why your teachers know that they can take you out on visits to interesting places.

However, we were very concerned that standards of work at the school have slipped over the last few years. We can see that there has been a recent improvement in some areas, but we would like your headteacher, teachers and governors to work with you to raise standards even further by:

- making sure that they plan interesting and challenging lessons for you to enjoy;
- making sure that you all understand what it is they want you to learn in lessons, and how you can best do this, for instance, when they mark your work;
- developing systems to check that the standard of your work continues to improve.

Thank you once again and good luck in the future.

Roger Brown

Lead Inspector