

The North Thoresby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120470
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number	291748
Inspection date	9 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sarah Stalker
Headteacher	Mrs Irene Casey-Evans
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2005
School address	High Street North Thoresby Grimsby DN36 5PL
Telephone number	01472 840295
Fax number	01472 840295

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Pupils are taught in two full time classes but larger year groups, especially children in the Foundation Stage, are often taught as a single year group. Most pupils are from White British families and all pupils speak English as their main language at home. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well above average. The school is situated in an area of some economic advantage and few pupils are eligible for free school meals.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory and improving. Good leadership and management have resulted in many improvements in the quality of education over the last two years. Consequently the school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies. The school is positively regarded by almost all parents. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage varies considerably from year to year but most children enter the school with knowledge and skills in line with those expected nationally. They quickly settle in and make sound progress in Reception because their needs are carefully assessed and appropriately met. Although higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress, sometimes even more could be expected of them, especially in writing and mathematics. Pupils' work and school records indicate that standards are rising and the current Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards in mathematics and science and above average standards in English. More Year 6 pupils exceeded the levels expected of 11-year-olds.

Care, guidance and support are good throughout the school. The headteacher has introduced an effective system for checking and analysing pupils' progress. Extra support is given to pupils who are falling behind and this is helping improve their achievement. Staff mark pupils' work well and help learners to see clearly where and how to improve their work. The school has introduced an effective system to give pupils ambitious targets to aim at in their work. These initiatives are helping to raise standards. Teaching assistants cooperate closely with teachers and are effectively deployed to support learning throughout the school. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they are identified early and given appropriate support, often by teaching assistants.

The curriculum is good and has contributed to pupils' improving achievement. The science curriculum is better than at the time of the previous inspection and pupils are developing more confidence in carrying out investigations in science. The art and music curriculum have also been improved and older pupils have recently produced some very good paintings. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave and cooperate well. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility for helping the smooth running of the school and for helping other pupils, for example with their reading. Pupils act safely and feel safe in school, confident that they can turn to any adult for support if they are worried about anything.

The school has good capacity for further improvement and provides good value for money. The headteacher and governors monitor and evaluate the performance of the school well and have ensured some useful improvements in the quality of education. As a result of their work, teaching and learning have improved and are now satisfactory overall and good in Years 3 to 6. Although subject leaders have started to manage their subjects, their role in planning and evaluating improvement is limited.

What the school should do to improve further

- Expect more of higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Improve the role of subject leaders, particularly in planning and evaluating improvements in their subjects.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement, progress and standards are satisfactory overall. Children make sound progress in Reception and most children meet national expectations by the end of Reception. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in their reading. Home reading is well organised and some parents make an important contribution to the progress their children make. In Years 3 to 6, progress is satisfactory and standards are rising. Standards in national test results for Year 6 pupils have been a little below average up to 2006, but standards are higher this year. This year, due to demanding teaching, pupils are catching up and significantly more Year 6 pupils are attaining higher than nationally expected levels, especially in English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Pupils act on a clear understanding of what is right. Most pupils value the friendships they form and develop sound attitudes to learning and to school, which are reflected in average attendance. By the time that they leave school, most are mature and hard-working. They understand how to act safely and their good understanding of health issues is indicated, for example, in their high uptake of healthy snacks and their enthusiastic participation in sporting and exercise activities. The school council provides pupils with a voice in the running of the school and they are, rightly, proud to be involved in decision making. Good links with the village community, such as during the recent village 1940s celebration, and thorough involvement in charity work enable pupils to make a contribution to the wider community. Average standards in basic skills such as literacy and mathematics and pupils' ability to work well together provide them with a satisfactory preparation for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Children settle quickly into the Foundation Stage and confidently play and learn alongside each other. Staff ensure that children receive an appropriate balance of teacher-directed and independent activity, and many children are beginning to use their knowledge of letter sounds to correctly place counters on the word read to them. In Years 1 and 2 teaching has improved and is now satisfactory. The teaching of reading and speaking and listening is good and pupils make good progress in these subjects. Science teaching is also good and pupils understand how to make a test fair. In Years 1 and 2 sometimes not enough is expected of higher attaining pupils who could do harder work, especially in writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is good and high expectations have resulted in pupils making faster progress. Staff show a clear awareness of the learning needs of each pupil and have helped pupils see where and how to improve their writing and mathematics work. Consequently standards attained by Year 6 pupils have risen well this year and more pupils are exceeding the levels expected of 11-year-olds.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of interesting opportunities for learning and the development of basic skills. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is interesting and varied. Children are able to choose from a well-planned range of purposeful activities and receive sound guidance in adult-led tasks. The curriculum is effectively modified to ensure that the large proportion of pupils with learning difficulties enjoy school and make good progress. However, sometimes less emphasis is given to activities that extend brighter pupils in Years 1 and 2 developing their writing and mathematics. Staff who share responsibilities for classes plan carefully to ensure a consistent approach. Reading is given high priority throughout the school and this helps pupils enjoy reading, read frequently and make good progress. The curriculum is very well enriched through well-chosen visits, including residential trips, visitors, including visits by sports coaches and a good range of club activities. The good links with other local schools provide pupils with the opportunity to mix with pupils in neighbouring schools. Pupils confidently use information and communications technology to support their learning in many subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Improved assessment and an effective system for tracking pupils' progress are helping the school identify potential underachievement. This is now leading to satisfactory achievement. The headteacher analyses assessment results to identify pupils who need additional help. The school prepares effective plans containing challenging targets for learning to guide the work of pupils with learning difficulties. Good quality extra support is provided for lower-attaining pupils and this helps them to make good progress and achieve well. The quality of pastoral care is good. Members of the school council report that they feel safe in school, that there are few incidents of bullying, and that if there were these would be immediately dealt with by staff. Effective procedures and routines, and staff training, ensure that standards of health and safety are maintained and that arrangements for child protection and for safeguarding pupils are effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has successfully changed the ethos of the school to focus more clearly on ensuring that all pupils are helped do their best. Arrangements for staff training and development are much improved and staff are now much better at their jobs. Strong systems for monitoring and evaluation mean that the head and governors show a clear understanding of where improvements are needed. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and needs, and with the effective guidance of the headteacher are improving their ability to challenge the school to continue to improve provision and standards. Staff receive clear direction, regular feedback and guidance on their work and enjoy learning from one another. They work consistently and as an effective team. Subject leaders take some responsibility for planning and monitoring improvements in their subjects but their skills and role needs to be strengthened further.

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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?	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	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	3
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	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?	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.

Annex A

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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of The North Thoresby Primary School, Grimsby, DN36 5PL.

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school. Your school has improved greatly over the last two years. I thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. I think your school is well run and is giving you a satisfactory education. Adults care for you well and teach you properly so that you make satisfactory progress. You are being properly prepared for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond. You show good understanding of the importance of eating the right food and exercising regularly. You behave well, know right from wrong, show consideration for others and are helpful to each other. I was impressed by how older pupils take responsibility for helping the school run smoothly. The school council helps the staff make sure that the school takes account of your views when thinking about improvements. Those of you who need extra help make good progress because the school gives careful attention to helping you learn.

There are two things that I have asked your school to work on.

- to always set hard enough work, especially in writing and mathematics, to those of you in Years 1 and 2 who find learning easier.
- To help staff who lead subjects find out more about how well you are learning, and plan how to make your learning even better.

With very best wishes for the future.

Mr Sadler

Lead Inspector