

Skegness Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120475
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number	291750
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jon Alexander
Headteacher	Mrs J A Kenney (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2002
School address	Cavendish Road Skegness Lincolnshire PE25 2QU
Telephone number	01754 762059
Fax number	01754 765226

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils are from White British families and speak English as their main language at home. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals and the area is one of some economic disadvantage. The school operates a daily breakfast club.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness, the quality of leadership and management and the progress and achievement of pupils are satisfactory. Children enter Nursery with knowledge and skill levels below those typically found at this age, with well below expected levels of personal, social and emotional development and speech and other language skills. Good induction arrangements and effective provision ensure that children make a confident start and good progress in Nursery and Reception. By the end of Reception standards remain below national expectations overall. Many children, however, attain in line with expectations in their physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress. However, in national assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2006, the school's results were below national averages. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress because the school ensures they are given suitable support by teaching assistants, often in small groups or individually. The few pupils whose home language is not English are supported so that they make satisfactory progress in their use of English.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral care is good and academic guidance is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are also satisfactory. Staff form good relationships with pupils and offer them much encouragement and this helps many pupils enjoy school and grow in confidence. In some Year 1 and 2 classes, marking does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance or challenge. Poorly presented work is too readily accepted. Teachers do not always clarify exactly what they are looking for in pupils' work and pupils themselves are given insufficient chances to evaluate their work against clear criteria. The organisation of home reading has improved recently and many parents make a helpful contribution to the progress their children make.

The curriculum is satisfactory. In Nursery and Reception it is good and children find their work interesting. Throughout the school, excellent resources on such topics as the Victorians capture pupils' interest and provide good starting points for learning. Although the curriculum mostly provides appropriate challenge for pupils, this is not always the case for the brightest pupils, especially in mathematics. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Most pupils show consideration for their own and others' safety and feelings and behave responsibly.

Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are satisfactory and monitoring findings are used to identify areas requiring improvement. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further. Although the school has a clear view of where standards require improvement, its self-evaluation of its overall effectiveness and the quality of teaching is over optimistic.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve opportunities for the most able pupils to do their very best and expect more of them, especially in mathematics.
- Ensure all teachers regularly specify what a good piece of work should look like so pupils see how to evaluate and improve particular aspects of their work.
- Ensure that all teachers provide clear guidance in their marking of pupils' work and set high expectations of how pupils present their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and progress are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In 2006 national assessments, Year 2 pupils' results were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' work and school records indicate that pupils currently in Year 2 are set to attain below average standards in 2007. In writing and reading they are doing a little better than Year 2 pupils did last year. This year, mathematics standards are similar to those in 2006. Standards are not rising in mathematics because too few pupils attain higher levels as the work set for them is sometimes not hard enough. There is an over-reliance on completing work-sheets which sometimes provide too little challenge for the more able pupils. Also, the school gives insufficient emphasis to investigative work and to solving word problems in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have good relationships with staff and this helps them to feel safe and to develop confidence and self-esteem. Although a few pupils have low levels of concentration, most pupils behave well because their behaviour is well managed. During lessons, and particularly those which are more challenging, pupils enjoy taking part in learning activities and are confident to make an effective contribution. Although the school follows good procedures to monitor and improve attendance, this remains well below the national average. This is mainly because too many pupils take holidays in term time. Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and show this in the choices they make for healthy eating and physical activities. Pupils of all ages make a positive contribution to school life through special responsibilities such as being playground buddies, monitors and class representatives on the school council. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing the basic skills to support their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and helps children to progress well in their learning. Staff skilfully organise interesting and purposeful play activities that enable children to become more confident and independent learners. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and so pupils make satisfactory progress. Teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' learning and plan activities to meet most pupils' differing needs. The recently improved target setting system is beginning to make pupils in some classes aware of their next stage of learning. In other classes targets are not reinforced rigorously enough. Marking sometimes helps pupils to understand what they have done well and what they need to do next but this is not applied consistently by all teachers, particularly in mathematics. Pupils' below average presentation of work in some classes is insufficiently challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum and other activities are satisfactory and lead to sound development of basic skills. The curriculum in Nursery and Reception is good. Children choose from a well-planned range of purposeful play activities and have good guidance in adult-led tasks. Throughout the school, pupils develop enthusiasm for learning through the well-planned themes that link subjects together. Teachers in each year group plan together so that there is consistency of opportunity for each pupil. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils with lower or average attainment but sometimes does not provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils, particularly in mathematics. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory and improving, so that they make steady progress towards their targets in individual education plans. The curriculum is enriched well through visits, visitors and club activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of pastoral support is good and there is a strong emphasis on caring for each individual child. Teachers and classroom assistants know the pupils and many of their families well and make the school a secure and inviting place in which to learn. The arrangements to ensure pupils' safety and well-being are securely in place and understood by all staff. The school works closely with parents and a range of outside support agencies. The school has improved its procedures to measure pupils' progress which are now good. However, there is inconsistency between classes in how well this information is used to support learning. Not enough is done to ensure pupils always know what they have done well and how they can improve their work. Marking sometimes provides insufficient guidance and many pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory and promote satisfactory progress by pupils. Leaders put great emphasis on caring for pupils' welfare and personal development. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, progress well in their personal qualities. The procedures for tracking pupils' attainment have recently been improved and are now good. Data was used well to focus the school's work on improving pupils' literacy skills. However, although data indicates that pupils' achievement in mathematics is lower than in reading and writing, the school has been slow to respond. The acting headteacher and senior management team have put in place a satisfactory framework for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, which includes some consultation with parents and pupils. Although sometimes optimistic, the school has a satisfactory knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. Staff are well supported but they are sometimes insufficiently challenged by leaders to ensure that all pupils achieve the very best of which they are capable. Governors are very supportive and committed to fulfilling their roles. Skills in asking more challenging questions aimed at improving the school's performance are underdeveloped. Year group and subject leaders provide good support for colleagues but sometimes offer too little challenge.

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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	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?	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	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?	3

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 Children

Inspection of Skegness Infant School, Cavendish Road, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE25 2QU

Thank you for making Mrs Hackney, Mrs Bosworth and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We are pleased that many of you enjoy your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and watching you learn and especially enjoyed the Year 2 assembly. We think your school is properly run and is giving you a satisfactory education. The work you do, especially your 'Victorians' topic, and school clubs are often interesting. Adults provide satisfactory teaching and care for you so that you make sound progress. Nursery and Reception children settle into your school quickly and make good progress. You show understanding of the importance of eating the right food and exercising regularly. Most of you behave well. You know right from wrong, show good consideration for others and are friendly and helpful to each other. Older pupils take responsibility for helping others within the school and the school council works well to help make life in your school better. Those of you who find learning hard make satisfactory progress because teachers and teaching assistants help you learn. You are being given satisfactory preparation for your next school and for the world of work beyond.

There are three things that we have asked your school to work on:

- give the most able of you harder work, especially in mathematics
- make sure that all teachers show you what your work should look like to help you assess and improve particular aspects of your work
- ensure that teachers' marking shows you how to make your work better and that you all present your work as well as you are able.

With very best wishes for the future,

Mr Sadler

Lead Inspector