

Digby Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120519
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number	291767
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Richard Cheetham

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Mitchell
Headteacher	Mrs Mandy Wilding
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002
School address	Church Street Digby Lincolnshire LN4 3LZ
Telephone number	01526 320630
Fax number	01526 320630

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Digby Church of England Primary School is smaller than average and the number on roll has declined since the previous inspection. All of the pupils have White British backgrounds. The school serves a rural area of average socio-economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Most pupils start school with attainment similar to that of pupils of the same age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average but the number in each year group varies significantly. A second headteacher is now in post since the previous inspection and there have been other staffing changes. There are a number of staff changes in the near future and the governors are arranging new appointments.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school gives its pupils a sound education and provides satisfactory value for money. This confirms the school's view of itself. Changes of staff affected adversely its initial progress since the previous inspection. The current headteacher has brought about improvement in a number of areas and the school's recent progress has been good. It has a satisfactory capacity to continue improving. Most parents are pleased with what the school does but a minority are concerned about the number of recent and impending staff changes.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The developments started by the headteacher are leading to improvements in provision and their impact on pupils' progress is beginning to be felt. Staff work as a team and the leadership by other teachers is satisfactory, while that of the literacy leader is good. However, although there is some monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, it is not systematic. Governors are making a sound contribution to the school's development but do not yet monitor it with sufficient rigour. They are keeping parents in touch with the changes in staff and have arranged good procedures for replacements. Their planning for effective staff induction processes has not yet started.

Pupils' achievement overall has improved this year and is now satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and usually reach the levels expected nationally by the start of Year 1 because provision is satisfactory. Standards in Year 2, after some years of low attainment, are now well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. These pupils make at least satisfactory progress. There has been a rising trend of attainment in Year 6 and although current standards are average, most of these pupils are currently making good progress from their Year 2 starting points. Pupils continue to achieve less well in writing than they do in reading. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of excellent provision that includes good links with outside agencies. Higher attaining pupils do not make a similar rate of progress because they are not always given challenging work in lessons. Nonetheless, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and has some good features, such as the effective role of teaching assistants and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to foster pupils' interest.

The school's curriculum is satisfactory and has some good features such as the effective use of local visits in follow-up lessons and the extensive range of extra activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils generally enjoy their time in school and particularly benefit from the additional activities. The school provides good care and guidance for its pupils and successfully promotes their personal development and well-being so that it is good overall. Pupils feel very secure and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They accept responsibility maturely and make a good contribution to the school and local community. They behave well and their attendance has improved to above average. They know about leading healthy lifestyles, eat balanced meals in school and take plenty of exercise. Pupils' improving basic skills, their skills of working together and their involvement in decision-making prepare them well for the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to enable high attainers to achieve well.
- Firmly establish a cycle of monitoring and evaluation.
- Ensure an effective programme of induction for new staff.

A small proportion of the 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 make at least satisfactory progress, achieve soundly overall and reach average standards. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and usually reach the standard expected nationally by the start of Year 1. They make good progress in physical and social development and satisfactory progress in learning to write. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching has recently improved and this has lifted standards and improved progress over the last two years. Pupils now reach average standards in writing and mathematics and well above average standards in reading. Over the last three years, Year 6 standards have been rising and this year, although standards are average, pupils continue to make good progress and are overcoming their low attainment at the end of Year 2. Throughout the school, standards of writing are lower than those in reading but the gap is closing because of better teaching of handwriting and the writing of lengthier, better quality pieces. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress towards their targets because their needs are understood by all staff who work together to give them sustained support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils respect one another and work well in groups. They enjoy their time in school and are keen to stay after lessons to benefit from the extra activities. They have a very good understanding of how to stay safe and enjoy trusting relationships with the staff. They carry out responsibilities well. Older pupils look after younger ones, for instance ensuring that their voices are heard in the school council. Play and road safety monitors fulfil a valuable role. Through their work in lessons, the community and on behalf of others, pupils are well prepared for later life. They eat healthily and take a full part in sports clubs. They attend well and their behaviour is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their work in art and drama encourages reflection. Their moral and social codes are strong but their understanding of the culture of others is not as well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with good features that are now promoting some faster progress. Teachers cope well with the demands of ensuring that pupils in mixed-age classes make at least satisfactory progress. They do this by assessing pupils' learning needs and planning work in groups to meet them. This works well for most pupils but higher attaining pupils are sometimes not challenged enough. Older pupils are now taking more pride in the presentation of their writing and are progressing well in planning and producing longer pieces of writing. They can assess their strengths and weaknesses and this is helping them improve their work. They access the Internet for research but more able pupils do not always make best

use of it in their work. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a sound curriculum for its pupils that is significantly enhanced by a very wide range of extra activities, visits and visitors. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed soundly in specific lessons and are beginning to be extended in other subjects such as history and art and design. An example of this is the planning for local visits like the recent one to Hunstanton. This approach quickens pupils' interest and they sustain this in their follow-up work that involves using ICT, the development of skills in writing, art and design and increasing their knowledge in history and geography. The Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 curriculum has improved since the last inspection because the needs of older pupils are now met satisfactorily.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. One reason is that pupils' needs are understood well by the staff team. Adults place a good emphasis on pupils' welfare and safety so that pastoral care is good and pupils feel valued as individuals. There is general agreement from the parents on this aspect. Arrangements for child protection meet government requirements and pupils know that they can confide in adults at school. Pupils know one another well and older pupils take good care of younger ones. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress and using the information to help them improve. The tracking system does not allow quick access or analysis but the school is planning improvements. The tracking of the development of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is very thorough and used very well to promote their good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Since her appointment, the headteacher has initiated a number of changes that are now leading to improvement in provision and are beginning to impact on pupils' progress. She has a clear vision for school improvement and has involved staff and governors in implementing a detailed strategic plan. This has the right priorities, is up to date and is part way through its two year period. Several of the changes have yet to be embedded into routine school practice. These include the efficient tracking of pupils' progress, the analysis of teaching strengths and weaknesses and the delegation of management responsibilities. An excellent aspect of management relates to the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The approach is rigorous, flexible, well-documented and effective. The involvement of outside expertise and of parents is very well handled so that pupils make good progress towards their individual targets and frequently achieve academically as well as their peers. Reports to governors enable them to support the school well. They allocate resources carefully but do not yet monitor its development rigorously. However, they are taking the lead in keeping parents informed of staff changes and understand the need for effective induction procedures.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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	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	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	2
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?	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	2
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

20 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Digby Church of England Primary School, Digby, LN4 3LZ

Thank you for welcoming me to your school, answering all my questions and asking some interesting ones of your own. Here are some of the good things I learned about your school.

- You are now making at least satisfactory progress and older ones are doing well.
- Pupils who have some difficulties try very hard to get better, are supported excellently and do well.
- You enjoy all the things the school provides especially the extra activities.
- You are growing up to be caring and responsible because the school takes good care of you.
- The headteacher has made a good start on improving things for you.

These are the things I have asked the school to do to make things even better.

- Help you to improve your writing.
- Give the children who find lessons easier more challenging things to do.
- Keep a close eye on how well the school is doing.
- Make sure that the new staff quickly fit in and do a good job.

I wish you all well.

Yours sincerely

Richard Cheetham

Lead Inspector