



The St Faith's Church of England Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120562
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 291781
Inspection dates 14–15 February 2007
Reporting inspector Richard Cheetham

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	West Parade
School category	Voluntary controlled		Lincoln
Age range of pupils	3–7		Lincolnshire LN1 1QL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01522 888988
Number on roll (school)	193	Fax number	01522 888991
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Agnes Barstow
		Headteacher	Mr Ian Wiles
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Faith's Nursery and Church of England Infant School is smaller than average and in common with other Lincolnshire Infant and Junior Schools, is subject to reorganisation proposals. Nearly all the pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a few from black and minority ethnic groups. There are also a small number whose families are refugees and seek asylum. A small minority of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who start or leave school during the year is higher than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Most children start school with standards broadly in line with children of a similar age although this varies each year. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is an effective school with a number of significant strengths. It provides a good education, includes all its pupils extremely well in everything it does and gives good value for money. The overwhelming majority of parents hold the school in high regard and one commented, 'I would recommend St Faith's Infants to any other parent.'

It has improved well since the previous inspection. It has raised standards and has a good capacity to continue to get better. This is largely because it is well-led and managed. The senior leadership group work effectively with the headteacher to maintain a good oversight of the school's development. Their work ensures good quality teaching overall, for which they provide excellent role models. They stimulate good curriculum development that provides outstanding enrichment opportunities for the pupils. The overall inspection judgement is not as high as the school's evaluation which graded its effectiveness as outstanding. This is because the school's development planning does not focus clearly enough on raising pupils' achievement and on making sure staff know exactly what the quality of teaching and learning is throughout the school. The school has a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework which enables staff to track pupils' progress very closely and set targets for their improvement. This contributes to the excellent care, guidance and support the school provides. The result of this provision is pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. They come to school eager to learn. They behave excellently and have a very clear understanding of healthy living by taking plenty of exercise and eating a balanced diet. Through pupil's proud acceptance of responsibility, they make an excellent contribution to the school community. They put into practice their excellent knowledge about staying safe. Their close involvement in activities such as 'Industry Week' promotes business skills through themed activities. This combined with their above average basic skills, means that they are excellently prepared for later life.

Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of accurate assessments and some high quality teaching. Most reach and a minority exceed, the standard expected of them by Year 1 and achieve particularly well in personal, social and emotional development and in their physical development. They achieve soundly in mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress. They achieve well and reach above average standards in reading, mathematics and science and well above average standards in writing. This is the result of good teaching and work well-matched to pupils' needs based on accurate assessments. Last year, standards in mathematics slipped to average due to a few girls not achieving as highly as previously. The school has altered its teaching to remedy this and is now on track to meet its challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of effective support within the school and excellent partnerships with outside agencies. Those who speak English as an additional language are well supported by what the school provides internally.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils consistently achieve similarly high standards in mathematics as they do in English.
- Increase the rigour of self evaluation by putting the raising of pupils' achievement at the centre of school development planning and acting on sharper analyses of the quality of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start in the Nursery with standards similar to most pupils. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and most reach and a minority exceed the Early Learning Goals, which are the standards expected in the six areas of learning. They achieve particularly well in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. Their progress in mathematics is relatively slower than in other areas of learning and the school plans improvements. By Year 2, pupils usually reach above average standards in reading, mathematics and science. They achieve well above average standards in writing and this is a significant improvement. This sustained advance reflects the effectiveness of the school's continuing priorities. Staff are addressing relative weaknesses in problem solving in mathematics and in science investigations where attainment is not as high as other aspects. Higher attaining pupils make good progress, marking an improvement since the previous inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils greatly enjoy all aspects of school, mix easily and behave excellently. Their attendance is good. Pupils feel very safe and know fully that there is always someone to go to. Pupils eagerly carry out many responsibilities such as 'playground buddies' and office assistants. The school council confidently discuss their classmates' views and suggest improvement such as decorated litter bins. Pupils are excellent ambassadors in the locality especially with local churches and businesses. They develop very caring attitudes for instance through making things to sell for charity. Pupils have an excellent understanding of a healthy life style and take a regular part in physical activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They reflect very well and suggest prayers for collective worship. They are developing a good understanding of cultural traditions, particularly through art.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good with examples of outstanding teaching from experienced staff. The highest quality teaching is meticulously prepared, based on excellent subject knowledge and routinely challenges and supports learning through effective questioning. Consistently strong features are the excellent quality of relationships that provide a secure foundation for learning and high quality classroom displays that support learning well. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to support groups of pupils well. There is some excellent support for pupils with more severe learning needs that allows them full access to the curriculum. Most lessons begin with clear objectives and end with effective consolidations of what pupils have learned. Assessments and marking are thorough and help teachers plan to meet individual needs well. Sometimes teachers do not help all pupils sufficiently in their small working groups and they occasionally allow the pace of learning to slow.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. Besides a strong focus on basic skills, there are particular strengths in drama and art. The school is in the early stages of modifying the curriculum to link subjects into themes. The range of additional activities is outstanding. There is a wide-ranging programme of local visits and visitors such as story tellers and musicians. Extra activities including different sports attract many pupils and make a strong contribution to their learning and enjoyment. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very well-focused on developing social and communication skills. Through this pupils access other areas of learning well. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on promoting personal and social development so that pupils have a good understanding of being good citizens. An excellent programme for health education ensures that pupils know how to stay fit and healthy. The use of the locality as a learning resource is exceptional for pupils of this age. For example in the 'Industry Week', pupils learn how business works. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities follow effective programmes that are tailored well to their needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides an excellent, caring environment and has excellent links with outside bodies to support pupils' well-being. Pupils feel safe knowing that there is a trusted adult to turn to. Procedures for health and safety, risk assessments and child protection meet requirements. The school has successful strategies to manage pupils' behaviour. There are excellent procedures to monitor pupils' progress and the information is used very well to identify learning needs and set individual and school targets. Pupils know their targets and understand what they need to do to reach them.

Those with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well to enable them to make good progress. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive extra support in speaking and listening in English and they make good progress. The school provides effective, additional opportunities for pupils who have particular gifts and talents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and have improved because the senior leaders now play an influential role alongside the headteacher. This has helped raise standards and bring about general school improvement. Senior leaders have developed excellent systems for tracking pupils' progress and they carry out their delegated duties very well. This promotes curriculum development and the excellent inclusion of all pupils enabling their good progress. The school makes good use of its resources, for instance investing in effective teaching assistants and in providing additional management time for staff. It is supported well by parents who raise additional funds. Although the school development plan has broad themes for the next three years, it does not focus precisely enough on the specifics of raising achievement further and on judging its effectiveness in this. It's monitoring shows good teaching quality but the school does not analyse this deeply enough to direct further improvement. Governance has improved and is now good. Governors are closely involved in the school and check its decisions.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	1

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.

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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 February 2007

Dear Children

St Faith's CE Infant School, West Avenue, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN1 1QL

Than you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed hearing about your school, watching you learn and looking at some of your work.

This is to tell you what we found out during our visit. We agree with your parents that your school is a good one and does some things particularly well. For instance, the grown ups take excellent care of you. They keep a very careful check on how well you are doing so they know how to help you improve. You help with this because you know your targets and how to reach them. You told us how much you enjoy school and how careful you are about what you eat so you grow up healthily. 'Industry week' looks great fun and you know a lot about making a profit. It was very good to see that you care enough to give this to charity. You behave excellently and look after each other very well. By doing your important jobs around the school, you help it run well. You work hard and make good progress in reading, mathematics and science and you do very well in writing. The headteacher, the senior teachers and the governors work well together and help the school to improve.

We have asked the school to do even better by making sure you regularly make as good progress in mathematics as you usually do in English. We have also asked them to plan how the school should move forward and how it can improve teaching further so that you can make even more progress.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Richard Cheetham and Vera Rogers

Additional Inspectors