

# St Helena's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120587
<b>Local Authority</b>	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	291790
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roger Sadler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Minty Willoughby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Belton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 February 2002
<b>School address</b>	Willoughby Alford Lincolnshire LN13 9NH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01507 462367
<b>Fax number</b>	01507 462367

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Most pupils come to this small school from the village of Willoughby and the remainder come from the surrounding area. Almost all pupils are from White British families and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. More pupils join the school after the Reception year than is typical. The school has received a Basic Skills Quality Mark, Arts Mark Gold Award and the Activemark award. A daily after-school care facility is provided at the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Due to effective leadership and management, the quality of education provided to pupils is good. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Excellent communication and partnership with parents have been developed. The school has formed strong partnerships with local schools, and staff cooperate with others to help them further develop their skills. Parents are strongly supportive and pupils are proud of their school. One parent captured the views of many when she wrote, 'the school has such a friendly 'family' atmosphere and every single child is made to feel valued'. Many parents make an important contribution to the good progress their children make in reading. Pastoral care and support are excellent. Relationships are very good and expectations are high. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is outstanding and this helps them achieve well and make good progress in their learning. Pupils, especially older pupils, show a very strong sense of responsibility and readily help others. They enjoy school, attend regularly and are polite and considerate. Pupils enjoy learning and appreciate the efforts staff make to ensure learning is interesting and fun. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because they frequently receive carefully tailored support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Most children enter Reception with levels of knowledge and skill that are in line with what is expected for their age but their skills in communications and language are less developed than is typical. Standards have risen since the previous inspection and are continuing to rise. They are above average by Year 6 in reading, mathematics, speaking and listening. Standards in writing are average. Too few pupils attain higher levels in writing and opportunities are missed to develop writing skills in other subjects.

Teaching and learning are good. Classroom management is strong. Teachers confidently use interactive whiteboards to add clarity and interest to lessons. The school regularly assesses and carefully analyses each pupil's progress and directs extra help to those who are not achieving in line with the expectations for their ages. The school has introduced a system for providing targets for their next stage of learning in mathematics, writing and reading. Some pupils, however, show insufficient knowledge of their learning targets, and these are sometimes too vague to help pupils see where and how to move on to the next stage of learning.

The headteacher provides strong and clear direction for the work of the school. She is working well to raise standards further, particularly in writing, and has ensured that staff strive to achieve ambitious targets for future standards in English and mathematics. The school has a very clear understanding of its strengths and where improvements are needed. The school's success in improving provision and standards, especially in reading, indicate that it has good capacity to continue to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children new to school settle in quickly and their confidence soon grows. Staff make regular assessments of each child and carefully plan activities based on a thorough understanding of the learning needs of each individual. They are introducing the new curriculum. Good teaching, characterised by very effective questioning and the correct balance of adult-led and independent activity, helps children make good progress in all areas of learning. Parents are right to be very pleased with how well children are achieving, especially in language and communication skills.

By the end of Reception, most pupils reach the expected standards in all areas of learning and some exceed these.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in writing and ensure more pupils attain higher levels by ensuring the systematic development of basic writing skills, such as punctuation, grammar and spelling, in all relevant subjects.
- Ensure that teachers set specific and challenging targets for pupils in writing and mathematics and that pupils know exactly where to focus their efforts to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Due to good provision, by Year 2, pupils attain average standards in writing and reading and above average standards in mathematics. Over the last three years, standards attained by pupils in Year 6 have gradually risen and are a little above average overall. Pupils' work and school records indicate that pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and standards are continuing to rise. By Year 6, standards are average in writing and science and above average in mathematics and reading. Pupils are given frequent chances to develop their speaking skills and older pupils are confident and articulate when talking to each other or to adults. Leaders have recognised that too few pupils exceed the national targets and attain the higher standards in writing and have set appropriately ambitious targets to improve the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Relationships are very harmonious. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school with its warm and welcoming atmosphere. This is reflected in their attendance which is above the national average. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with moral and social development being significant strengths. Pupils participate fully in making decisions about school life and value their school council as an effective forum for discussion and change. They take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for taking responsibility. They believe bullying is not an issue and say they can always talk to an adult if they have a problem. Because of this, they feel safe. They also understand how to act with consideration for the safety of others. Pupils make valuable contributions to the community by raising funds for charities. Their excellent attitudes and improving skills prepare them well for their future lives. They show a clear understanding of the diet and activity necessary for a healthy life. They enjoy the frequent opportunities provided for exercise in school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching helps pupils achieve well. All staff have very good relationships with pupils and show good humour in lessons. Staff provide frequent and interesting opportunities for pupils to discuss their work in pairs or in small groups. This helps pupils gain in confidence in speaking clearly and articulately. Staff show strong subject knowledge in English and mathematics and often inspire pupils to show great interest in their learning. For example, in a poetry lesson pupils enjoyed analysing how poets use personification to bring life to their writing. All teachers

ensure they clarify the key features they are looking for in pupils' work and pupils are given frequent chances to evaluate their own success. Teaching assistants give strong support to lower-attaining pupils when they are working individually or in small groups. Teaching assistants' time is sometimes used less effectively in whole-class sessions: on occasions, additional challenge and support is not directed towards higher attaining pupils, especially in their writing.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is extensive. French has been introduced and the new strategies for literacy and mathematics are already being implemented. The curriculum for art and design is strong and pupils produce some good work. Information and communication technology (ICT) are used well to support teaching and learning in relevant subjects. Opportunities for developing writing skills are not effectively integrated into subjects other than English and this slows pupils' progress in writing. Pupils enjoy the extensive programme of visits, visitors and extra-curricular opportunities, particularly in the arts and physical activities. The curriculum is very well modified to meet the learning needs of pupils with learning difficulties so that they make good progress.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is outstanding. Pupils feel secure because teachers and other staff respond to their needs and readily provide guidance, especially in matters of personal development. There are extremely good arrangements for safeguarding pupils. Academic guidance is good. The school has thorough and effective systems for tracking each pupil's progress. Potential underachievement is identified early and effective support guides pupils to do their best. Many pupils in Years 3 and 4 are unclear about their learning targets in reading, writing and mathematics. The school appropriately intends to review the target system to introduce a manageable way of ensuring that all pupils understand where and how they need to improve aspects of their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides a strong lead and has ensured that pupils' personal development is outstanding and that they achieve well. The school has effective strategies for accurately judging its success and checking the progress of pupils. Checks to ensure that all teachers follow agreed policies, for example on how pupils' work is marked, are not always fully effective and consequently a few inconsistencies remain. All staff play an important part in improving the aspects for which they are responsible. For example, because ICT was identified as an area requiring improvement, the subject leader and headteacher ensured that resources were enhanced. Staff are now confident in using computers and in helping pupils to use them. The governors are closely involved with the school and very well informed about the quality of provision. Although monitoring and evaluation are good overall, governors recognise that they have limited understanding of how to use data to compare the performance of the school with similar schools.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

### 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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

13 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of St Helena's CofE Primary School, Willoughby, LN13 9NH

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I came to inspect your school. I am pleased that you enjoy school so much and attend regularly. I thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. I think your school is a good one. It is well run and is giving you a good education. Children in Reception settle in quickly and start to learn to read, write and count well. Adults provide good teaching in all classes, and care for you so that you make good progress. You read well and many of your parents help you to learn. You are being well prepared for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

Many of you, especially older pupils, show a strong sense of responsibility and enjoy helping others in school. You show good understanding of the importance of eating the right food and exercising regularly. You clearly know right from wrong, show consideration for others and are friendly to each other. You should be proud of your excellent behaviour. This helps you concentrate well and make good progress in lessons.

Those of you who need extra help make good progress because the school gives good attention to helping you learn. The work you are given is often very interesting and the school works hard to give you a wide range of chances to learn, including interesting lessons, clubs, visits and special visitors to school. It was good to see you enjoying performing sections of your Christmas performance.

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

- Try to help more of you attain higher levels in writing and help you improve your writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Make sure that each one of you knows the targets you are set in writing and mathematics and how you can achieve them.

With very best wishes for the future,

Mr Sadler

Lead inspector