



Partney Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120627
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 291804
Inspection dates 2–3 October 2006
Reporting inspector Keith Edwards

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Maddison Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Partney, Partney
Age range of pupils	4–11		Spilsby, Lincolnshire PE23 4PX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01790 753319
Number on roll (school)	65	Fax number	01790 753319
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Hudson
		Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Glazier
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector over two days.

Description of the school

The school serves the small rural community of Partney and surrounding district. Numbers on roll are declining. Many of the children are brought into school each day by car. Almost all of the children are of White British background and all come from homes where English is the first language. An above average number of children are not at the school for the whole of their primary education as they join and leave at other than the usual times. The number of children eligible to free school meals has risen to a broadly average level. Attainment on entry to the school is below average, although each intake reflects a wide range of ability. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is well above that in most schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Partney Primary School provides a satisfactory level of education for its pupils. The headteacher has guided the school through a difficult period in its history that has seen standards of achievement for pupils in Year 6 fall in consecutive years. Nevertheless, the headteacher has remained resolute in her determination to bring about improvements and this upturn is now evident in the pupils' work. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Apart from the occasional hiccup, standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have risen year-on-year. This is because the children are given a secure start to their learning by the good provision in the Reception class and the teaching in Years 1 and 2 builds on this. However, there remains scope for greater challenge for the pupils in Year 1 to ensure that they are achieving their best. The school has resolved the issue from the last inspection regarding the pupils' achievements in Years 3 and 4, although the legacy of this weakness is still evident in the published test results for pupils in Year 6. The school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory, as much depends on the rigour that is applied by the school leadership at all levels to ensure that the children are achieving their best. The school has retained its strong caring ethos, based on its Christian foundation, and the personal development of the pupils is a strength. The pupils' spiritual development is very well promoted through imaginative assemblies. The school is particularly successful in managing the above average levels of pupil mobility and settling new children well. The school ethos and the good range of learning opportunities available to the pupils, strongly supports their personal development and keeps them interested. As a result, the pupils enjoy their schooling and attendance rates are rising. The school has the respect of the community that it serves and works well with other schools to develop teaching and learning. The school has maintained its commitment to teamwork and ensuring that the pupils benefit from high quality resourcing. The accommodation is much improved and the high quality displays encourage high expectations. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers maintain good levels of discipline within the classrooms and use new technology well to support learning, but the use of assessment data to match the work set to different groups of pupils lacks rigour. This is because the teachers plan well for the different activities that the pupils will engage in each lesson but are less focussed on the development of skills. Although marking is not consistently used to inform the pupils about how best to improve their work, the academic guidance that the pupils receive from the staff has improved significantly since the last inspection. The pupils are much better informed about the next steps in their learning. The school's view of itself is broadly accurate and its strategy for strengthening its effectiveness is gaining momentum within the climate of greater staff stability. The governors' contribution is satisfactory as they are beginning to hold the school to account as well as providing invaluable support. They recognise that greater rigour is required at all leadership levels in evaluating the pupils' learning experiences to raise expectations of the pupils' achievements year-on-year. Currently, the school provides satisfactory value for money and is continuing to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school should raise achievement by improving the quality of teaching and learning to ensure appropriate challenge for all learners. - The school should strengthen leadership and management at all levels by improving the rigour of its self-evaluation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are rising in both the junior and infant classes. The teachers and pupils have now a much clearer idea of what is needed to improve. As a result pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is a welcome turnaround after a period when achievement has been unsatisfactory. Currently, standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 are average. These are in line with this group's starting points and represent satisfactory progress. Standards in reading are good. The high proportion of pupils with learning disabilities benefit from sensitive support that breaks down learning into small steps. Consequently, they make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets. The school has clearly identified why standards in science have slipped recently and has taken remedial action. The pupils' performance in mathematics is improving as a result of more focussed teaching that has placed greater emphasis on the children applying their skills in problem solving. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have been improved through enhanced resourcing and training for staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development is good. They benefit from a climate in school that enables them to grow in confidence and self-esteem and to take responsibility. Their positive contribution to the community is particularly evident in various fund raising activities and the improvements to the school environment that stem from school council decisions. The children are kind and considerate towards each other and they enjoy trusting relationships with the adults in school. They are confident and work very well together. Their behaviour is very good. Attendance is satisfactory and the children thoroughly enjoy their time at school because they feel safe and secure and appreciate the range of opportunities provided. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is good with particular strengths in the spiritual and moral aspects. The children have a strong sense of their own rural cultural traditions and a growing awareness of cultural diversity. They are keen participants in the school's drive to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

This is satisfactory overall, with some teaching that is good, particularly for the older pupils. Lesson planning is detailed and pupils understand the purpose of their lessons. However, sometimes the work given does not offer the right amount of challenge to pupils and the pace is too slow. This results in pupils making less progress than they should in their learning. The school has a good system to assess the progress pupils are making but this information is not used consistently to help the children to improve their skills. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and help to promote positive attitudes to learning. Pupils particularly enjoy computer based learning and this is used well by teachers. The teaching assistants provide valuable support, particularly for those pupils who find learning difficult.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall. For the children in the Foundation Stage it is good, as it enables them to settle quickly and make good gains in their communication and social skills. Throughout the school, there is good provision for the children's personal, social and health education. The staff provide very good role models and strongly support and promote healthy eating and active lifestyles. Weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum, that have adversely impacted on the pupils' performance in science for example, are being remedied and the school day is now appropriately balanced. The school's planning links subjects well so that lessons are interesting for the pupils. The staff ensure that the curriculum is enriched by a good range of visitors and by visits to places of interest.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support. Pupils are very happy and secure. Arrangements to ensure their safety and well-being are in place and conform to government guidelines. Children starting school are able to settle to learning quickly because of very good arrangements which prepare them well. The good pastoral care provided by the school is not yet consistently matched by the quality of academic guidance that the pupils are given. Pupils with learning needs and disabilities are supported well by knowledgeable teaching assistants. Procedures to monitor the progress of other pupils, including those who are gifted and talented and those who are not doing as well as they are expected to, particularly in mathematics, are being sharpened. This is beginning to impact on the pupils' progress as they grow in understanding of what they need to do to improve and the teachers' expectations of their capabilities is rising.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has remained determined to improve the quality of education in the face of staffing difficulties. It is only now that standards are beginning to improve as greater rigour in the monitoring of pupil progress has been introduced. The staff ensure good inclusion of pupils with different needs in all school activities. The staff also function well as a team and they are developing their roles and responsibilities in evaluating achievement. But there is still much to be done. Governors are committed to the work of the school and provide conscientious support. Their awareness of their responsibility to hold the school to account has grown but there is a need for the further development of their role as critical friends, particularly in terms of monitoring standards.

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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?	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?	2
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.

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

4 October 2006 Dear Pupils Partney CE Primary School, Maddison Lane, Partney, Spilsby, Lincolnshire, PE23 4PX I really enjoyed my visit to your village school because everybody was so helpful and friendly. I was very pleased to be able to work with you in your classrooms, join in with your morning assemblies and watch you playing outside in the early autumn sunshine. I can understand why you enjoy your school so much as there are many things that make your school special. Here are some of them: - You clearly want to do your best to learn in lessons and are prepared to work hard. - Everybody understands the school rules and you behave well. - Everybody tries to be friendly, thoughtful and helpful. Well done! - All of the teachers want you all to enjoy school and to do well. - The school provides a good range of activities and visits to keep you interested. But, of course, as in all schools, there are still things that can be done to make your school even better: - Firstly I know that you can do even better with your work, and I am asking your teachers to keep on trying to improve your lessons so that you can become more skilful in your work. - I also want the teachers and governors to keep a more careful eye on what works well in the school and what needs further improvement. Although there is work to be done to make your school even better, you must never forget that Mrs Glazier and the staff work very hard to help you to learn and you must remember to thank them. I would like to wish you all the very best for the future. Yours sincerely Keith Edwards
Lead inspector