

William Lovell Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120664
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number	291821
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Elaine Taylor HMI

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

Type of school	Modern (non-selective)
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	423
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Monica Everard
Headteacher	Mr Robert Dring
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
School address	Main Road Stickney Boston PE22 8AA
Telephone number	01205480352
Fax number	01205480398

Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This Church of England school is a small but popular rural school. It operates in an area where there is selection by ability and consequently there are fewer students with the highest levels of prior attainment than is usually found. There are more boys than girls and very few students come from minority ethnic groups. The proportion eligible for free school meals is low but the percentage of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is well above 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 a good school with some outstanding features. A strong Christian ethos pervades the school, providing a happy atmosphere in which students thrive. Parents are particularly pleased with this. Students appreciate the safe and caring community in which they work. A strength of the school is the students' excellent personal development and well-being that is nurtured by the very good pastoral care and support given by the staff of the school. This is combined with a satisfactory and developing system of academic guidance. Students behave well in lessons as a result of strong systems of rewards and sanctions. Around the school their behaviour is excellent and they work and play together without the need for adult supervision. They feel very safe in school and make a good contribution to both the school and wider community, in particular through fund-raising activities.

Standards overall are broadly average and, given their below average starting points, students' achievement is good. The percentage of students achieving five or more good passes at GCSE rose in 2006 to the best ever for the school. Inspection findings and current analysis by the school shows that this improving trend is being maintained and the school is well placed to meet its academic targets this year.

The curriculum is good and provision is developing to meet the needs of all students particularly in Key Stage 4. Students appreciate the wide variety of activities and extended opportunities offered by the school. Improved sporting facilities and an emphasis on healthy eating help them to stay fit. The school works well in partnership with other schools and agencies to promote students' well-being.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Coupled with the effective curriculum and strong support, all students make good progress. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress as a result of the excellent support they receive. Teachers generally plan their work well, but targets and objectives for lessons do not always aim high enough for all groups of students. These are not always shared clearly with students so they know what it is they are expected to learn. In some lessons students spend too long listening and teachers do not consistently ask questions which help students to develop a deeper understanding of the work. Teachers mark student's work regularly and give praise for effort. However teachers do not always give students sufficient guidance on how they might improve.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and his leadership team firmly believe that every child does matter and this is shared by staff throughout the school. Many parents concur with this and several wrote to express how happy their children are at William Lovell. One parent wrote: 'A great strength of the school is that they know the whole child, not just their name and academic ability. They take the time to find out more.' Senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. The effectiveness of managers at all levels in bringing about improvement is increasingly consistent. Strong systems for self-evaluation at all levels are feeding in to action plans which focus clearly on improving student outcomes. Governors are well informed and are very supportive. They monitor the work of the school thoroughly taking every opportunity to gain first hand experience of the work of the subject areas with which they have links.

The issues for improvement identified by the last inspection have been successfully addressed and there is good capacity for further improvement. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement a consistent whole school approach to lesson planning to ensure learning outcomes are clearly stated, reviewed and evaluated.
- Ensure teachers use questioning to improve the depth of students' understanding.
- Maximise opportunities, including marking to guide students as to how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students start the school with standards that are below average. They make good progress through their first three years at the school. Consequently results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 are in line with the national average. In 2006, students made better progress in English than in mathematics and science, but all core subjects are improving at a faster rate than nationally. Students continue to make good progress in Years 10 and 11. Even though the percentage of students attaining five or more good GCSE grades in 2006 was below the national average, these were the school's best ever results. Current analysis indicates that further improvement is likely this year with the expectation that this will continue to narrow the gap between the school's results and national averages. Improvements in student's achievement in the core subjects are shown in the increased percentage of students who achieve five or more grades A* to C including English and mathematics, which this year is expected to exceed the challenging target set by the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Reflecting the strong Christian principles which underpin the school's ethos, students adopt a high moral stance, are courteous to people around them and treat each other with respect. They develop secure self-esteem. Students' attendance is good, and their behaviour in class and around school is excellent. Exclusion numbers are very low. Older students who are appointed prefects take their roles seriously and are held in high regard. The school council represents the interests of the school community conscientiously, although within a narrow field of influence.

Students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good, but opportunities to prepare them for life in an increasingly culturally diverse society are limited.

The extensive programme of trips and visits to places of interest and further afield widens their horizons and enriches their experience greatly; exchange visits with students from other countries include a recent visit from students from a school in Japan.

Students have a highly developed sense of compassion for those in deprived circumstances, raising significant sums of money for local, national and global charities. Many take part in the programme of musical and dramatic events presented during the year, and large numbers participate in a wide range of sporting activities. Students are particularly knowledgeable about issues related to personal health and safety. Indications are that they try to look after themselves and each other. For example, they are enthusiastic about the attractive range of healthy meals available in the canteen. Student's positive attitudes, ability to work harmoniously with others and the levels attained in basic skills provides a firm base for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The additional needs of students with learning difficulties or disabilities are catered for well, and this is a strength of the school. Many of the lessons seen were good or better, because good working relationships promote a positive climate for learning and students therefore make good progress. Teachers show good subject knowledge, and this is appreciated by students. Teaching is monitored well and leaders in the school have an accurate view of its quality. However, the school understands such monitoring now needs to be more focused on learning. Although there has been improvement in the levels of challenge offered to the students, this is inconsistent across the school. Lesson plans do not always identify learning objectives which will be suitable for all levels of ability. Too often in lessons students remain passive and are not given enough opportunities to extend their understanding through questioning and other activities which encourage them to think more deeply. There are some weaknesses in the marking of students' work, which often praises effort, but does not tell students specifically how they can improve. Students are not always clear enough as to how they can move to the next stage in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall. Since the last inspection there have been some important curriculum developments which are helping to improve students' achievement. Science has developed new modular courses and students have taken to these readily. Changes in the way English is taught are raising standards. A positive emphasis is placed on careers education, links to promote work related learning, and support for students' future economic well-being. A range of options including some vocational subjects is available to students in Years 10 and 11. There is a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. Aspects of citizenship are well supported through the general studies programme, but not all subjects are yet making their full contribution towards the subject. During recent years, the development of information and communication technology (ICT) has been hindered by staffing and resource difficulties. These have now been resolved. The school actively seeks to provide courses matched to the specific needs of its students.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision for the care, guidance and support for students is good. Pastoral care is very good as seen in the high levels of commitment to ensure the well-being of all students. They feel safe and are confident that any concerns they may have will be taken seriously. Rare cases of bullying are dealt with swiftly. Procedures for child protection are meticulously observed. Health and safety checks are regular and rigorous.

The system for monitoring and tracking students' attainment is developing well with suitable intervention and mentoring for those who appear to be under-achieving. However, there is not enough information given regularly on a short-term basis to ensure that students can take independent action to improve their performance. Students with learning difficulties achieve very well. They are supported by individual education plans and by the recently introduced

profiles. These are highly effective in sharing individual students' responses to different strategies. Students identified as gifted and talented are well provided for in a range of extra-curricular activities.

The school makes every effort to ensure that students are guided towards suitable options at GCSE, and adapts the learning programmes of those students for whom the full curriculum is not appropriate. High quality careers guidance results in the great majority of students going on to further and higher education or clearly structured employment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The senior leadership team is effective and shares a vision for the school in which the students are at the centre of all the work that they do. Equality of opportunity is actively promoted. The school accurately identifies the areas that it needs to improve. Good systems for monitoring and evaluating performance are in place and information from evaluations is well used to inform development planning. The success of these systems is evident in the recent improvement in student achievement. However, lesson monitoring is not yet focused sharply enough on learning.

The quality of middle leadership has improved through well targeted support in the form of training and informal links between experienced subject leaders and those who are relatively new in post. They contribute well to the school's self-evaluation and monitor the work of their departments effectively. Progress in addressing some issues from the last inspection has been rather slow, but as a result of a thorough system for monitoring this progress, all these issues have now been addressed.

Careful use is made of resources and many recent improvements are having a positive effect on the outcomes for students. For example, the new sports hall is helping students to stay healthy through the improved access to high quality facilities. Also the additional computers and other ICT equipment are enhancing students' progress across the curriculum.

The governors support the school well and take every opportunity to experience the work of the school at first hand. The school has organised suitable training to enable them to fulfil their role as critical friends to the school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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	3
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	2
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	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?	2
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?	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	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

8 June 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of William Lovell Church of England School, Stickney, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE22 8AA

On behalf of myself and my colleagues I want to say how much we enjoyed visiting your school and how good it was to meet such a mature, polite and caring group of young people. You helped us greatly in our work and I am writing to tell you about our findings, but I hope many of you will read the full report too.

We found that the school is good with some outstanding features. These include:

- the progress you are all now making in your work
- your excellent behaviour and the consideration you show for each other and for those in need both here and abroad
- the way the school helps you to develop into responsible young adults
- the way the headteacher and his team lead the school
- the good range of subjects you can study and the many activities in which you can take part
- the satisfactory teaching which is improving because of the way the school monitors its work and your progress.

You said you feel safe and you are confident that adults in the school will help if you have problems. You appreciate the musical and sporting opportunities the school provides. Those of you in Year 11 are proud of the way you can contribute to the life of the school as prefects.

We think there are a few things the school could do to make your progress even better. We have asked that the following development points should be addressed.

All teachers should plan their lessons so it is clear to you what you will learn and they should check throughout the lesson that you are making good progress towards those objectives. When teachers ask you questions in lessons we want them to do so in a way which makes you think more deeply about what you are learning. The school should provide as many opportunities as possible to show you what you need to do to improve your work, for example by writing helpful comments when they mark it.

You can help by asking your teachers to show you how to improve your work and by taking every opportunity in lessons to develop your thinking skills.

We wish you all the best for your futures.

Elaine Taylor

Her Majesty's Inspector