



# William Alvey School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 120670  
**Local Authority** LINCOLNSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 291823  
**Inspection date** 6 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Paul Weston HMI

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 address</b>	East Road
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Sleaford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		NG34 7EA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01529 302772
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	515	<b>Fax number</b>	01529 414865
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sharon Mallinson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Peter Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 December 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors in one day.

## Description of the school

This larger than average church controlled foundation school is situated in the Lincolnshire market town of Sleaford. Pupils are mostly from white British backgrounds with a small number in the early stages of learning English. There are fewer pupils claiming free school meals than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and with statements of special educational need is similar to that in most schools. The number of pupils on the school roll has fallen in recent years. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award in 2003 and the Investor in People award in 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is a learning school. Each and every day, pupils and adults enjoy the thrill and excitement of learning something new. 'Our daughter eagerly looks forward to school every day,' reported one parent. Another said, 'This is a welcoming school which gives the children the feeling that they matter'. As is recognised in the community, William Alvey is an outstanding school of which pupils, parents, staff and governors are rightly proud. It provides excellent value for money. Since the last inspection, this school has continued to get better and better. What makes this school so special? First and foremost, the headteacher provides extremely good, decisive leadership and management. He has very clear and high expectations about what can be done. He is well supported by all staff who share a common sense of commitment and purpose. They carry out their leadership responsibilities comprehensively. Self-evaluation is exceptionally thorough, although the school's assessment of itself as good is too modest. The work of the school is monitored very rigorously and highly relevant points for development are identified. For example, recent work is helping to develop handwriting, improve spelling and ensure marking gives pupils clear ideas of what they need to do to improve. These need more time to be fully developed and embedded throughout the school.

Secondly, parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. In particular they say that their children make excellent progress because teaching is outstanding. Almost all say that their children are safe, well cared for and enjoy school. This is confirmed by the inspection findings, which indicate that pupils love school and appreciate their lessons. As one pupil explained, 'Teachers put a lot of effort into lessons.' Another said, 'We do some really fun things.' These comments reveal the third reason why this school is so successful. Pupils' positive attitudes and excellent behaviour mean that they arrive at each lesson wanting to learn. They are not disappointed. High quality teaching and learning that is consistent through the school is the fourth reason for this school's success. Together, these factors lead to exceptional pupil achievement. They get off to a cracking start in the Reception classes. The provision is well matched to their needs and most make exceptional progress so that many exceed the early learning goals expected for children of this age. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, achieving standards that are well above national averages in reading and writing at the end of Year 2. Progress accelerates through the junior years and standards are exceptionally high by the end of Year 6. The recent whole school focus on raising standards in reading and writing has had a very good impact, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. The school plans to turn the spotlight onto mathematics next in order to raise the good and high standards in this subject to the same levels as those in English and science. Results reflect the frequently outstanding teaching. Teachers build carefully on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Because relationships are so good, lessons progress rapidly and the teachers use their comprehensive subject knowledge to ensure that pupils' tasks are set at the right levels for their ages and abilities. Pupils respond by concentrating extremely hard and trying their best. Finally, but no less importantly - this is a caring school. The quality of care, guidance and support received by every pupil is exemplary, contributed to by governors, teachers

and the extensive team of support staff. As a result of the positive atmosphere and high quality support, pupils thrive and their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Attendance is satisfactory; however the school is not content with this. Governors are working with parents to improve pupils' attendance further.

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

- Further improve standards in mathematics so that they match the exceptionally high levels in English and science.
- Ensure the recently introduced spelling, handwriting and marking policies are embedded and consistently applied throughout the school by all staff.
- Continue with the work to improve pupils' attendance rates.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' attainment on entry to Reception is generally below that expected. Right from the start, pupils make excellent progress and their standards at the beginning of Year 1 are above average. Results were well above average at the end of Year 2 in 2006 in reading and writing. They were above average in mathematics. At the end of Year 6, standards were exceptionally high in Science and English in 2006. They were well above average in mathematics. The challenging targets were exceeded in all areas. About half of pupils reached the higher than expected level 5 in English and mathematics and over 70% did so in science. Pupils continue to work at this very high level. Despite standards being exceptionally high in science, the school is not resting on its laurels. It has identified the need to increase opportunities for investigational learning in the subject in an effort to increase motivation and interest further for pupils. Results over recent years have indicated that pupils have made outstanding progress, as was the case in 2006.

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

### **Grade: 1**

In this school, every child matters. The school ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely good. Excellent relationships throughout the school create a happy, supportive and harmonious school community in which pupils feel valued for what they can offer. By Year 6, pupils display admirable levels of maturity. Their enjoyment of school life is reflected in their highly positive attitudes to learning and their excellent behaviour. They enthusiastically share personal knowledge and understanding and show good levels of awareness for their safety and well-being. The school has high regard for pupils' opinions, sometimes discovered through questionnaires, and positive action is taken about the outcomes. The active school council has a positive influence on developing the school's policies and provision, such as the new behaviour policy and the resources for break and lunchtimes. The school's emphasis on helping pupils develop life skills is reflected in the pupils' good contributions made to the school community, such as being buddies to younger pupils,

team representatives and helpers in assemblies. They gain good knowledge of a healthy lifestyle through the wide variety of physical activities and a well planned personal education programme. They are well prepared for the next stages in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

All teaching is at least good, with much outstanding practice in evidence throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons most carefully for the range of ages and abilities in the classes so that the pupils learn rapidly and make outstanding progress. Lessons are interesting. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is transmitted through confident classroom practice. As a result, pupils are thoroughly engaged in lessons, as is seen by their excellent behaviour. Teachers use questions extremely well to promote thinking, to assess learning and to involve all pupils. Paired discussions enable pupils to explore their own ideas in depth. Teachers use a range of different learning styles, which pupils say they enjoy very much. Classrooms are very attractive environments, helping to stimulate the pupils' interest and great desire to learn. Teaching assistants are prepared well for their work. They support pupils with specific learning difficulties and disabilities well and make a strong contribution to those pupils' rapid progress. A good start has been made in improving marking, handwriting and spelling. The school knows there is work still to do to ensure these are fully and consistently embedded across the school.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum provides extremely well for pupils' wide range of learning needs and contributes well to their personal development and progress. The curriculum is particularly effective because pupils have so many exciting and interesting things to do which allow them to practise their basic skills in different ways. Statutory requirements are fully met. The development of creative and innovative plans to link work in different subjects, particularly geography, history, and music, are enhancing the enjoyment of both pupils and teachers. The school has created an excellent outdoor classroom, with a memorial garden to a former pupil. This provides even greater opportunities for creative teaching and learning. The headteacher has a firm belief that 'the Arts give soul to a school'. Pupils enjoy high-quality experiences in music and a wide range of pupils' art work is on display around the school. Pupils benefit from making educational visits and have the opportunity to learn French. A wide range of extra-curricular activities appeals to the interests of many pupils and adds much to their enjoyment of school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

One parent commented, 'the school offers a secure, safe environment in which pupils achieve very well'. Very good induction procedures help reception children to settle happily into new routines. There are excellent systems in place to check and maintain pupils' progress and from this a wide range of challenging targets are set. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to support pupils' learning needs. The school takes its responsibilities in safeguarding pupils very seriously and ensures procedures meet current guidelines. All staff are sensitive to pupils' feelings and anxieties, particularly of the most vulnerable. There are good links with neighbouring primary and secondary schools. Careful attention is paid to health and safety issues and child protection. Pupils are supervised very well both in and out of school. The school provides a secure, healthy working environment, ensuring that external agencies are promptly referred to as and when required.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher has outstanding dedication and a clear vision for the school. He gives a strong sense of direction, with a well-articulated focus on raising standards and on promoting the care and well-being of pupils. His relentless desire for continuous progress challenges the school to improve even further. He is well supported by his deputy, staff and governors who have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. Together they are a very effective team. Although standards are exceptional, there is no hint of complacency and expectations are very high. The school knows where even further improvement can happen. Planning is thorough. Action taken to tackle the school's priorities has a significantly positive impact, and is reviewed and evaluated frequently through the year. Subject leaders use their assessments of pupils' progress well to judge whether standards are high enough. They develop creative solutions to improve areas identified for improvement. Governors fulfil their role well and their involvement in monitoring and evaluating the impact of developments is good. The school has good communications with parents. Their views are sought and acted upon on a regular basis, and increasing use is being made of the school's informative website.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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	1
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

7 December 2006

Dear Children,

William Alvey CE Primary School, East Road, Sleaford, NG34 7EA

Thank you very much for making Mr Phillips and me so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, watching you learn and looking at your work. We thought you would like to hear what we liked about your school and how it could get even better.

What we liked about your school

- You are friendly and confident, and happy to talk about what you were doing.
- You work very hard and are achieving high standards.
- You behave well in lessons and enjoy what you do, especially when you are working together or have practical activities to do.
- You have some good ideas about how the school can improve.
- Your headteacher and other grown-ups working in the school look after you and make sure that everyone behaves well and is happy. This makes sure that you can get on in lessons.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants work hard at their teaching and try to get it right for each one of you.
- Your parents really like the school and feel you learn well.

What we have asked your school to do to make it even better

- Your teachers should find ways to help you get even better at maths by giving you more problems to solve. You can help by working as hard in maths as you do with your reading, writing and science.
- Your teachers should make sure that your handwriting and spelling gets even better. You can help by trying hard to improve these important areas of your work.
- Your teachers will help you improve your work by giving you some good ideas about how you get better even better when they mark your work. You can help by reading what they say and trying out the suggestions.
- You and your parents need to make every effort to be present at school when school is open for lessons during term time.

We feel certain that everyone at the school will continue to work hard to help you learn in the future. You have some challenging targets for 2007. Continue to work hard and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Weston Her Majesty's Inspector