

The Lincoln Manor Leas Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120438
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
Inspection number	313613
Inspection date	6 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Margaret White
Headteacher	Mrs June Austin
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2005
School address	Hykeham Road Lincoln Lincolnshire LN6 8BE
Telephone number	01522 681810
Fax number	01522 681810

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement and standards, personal development and well-being, teaching and learning and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data, the previous Ofsted report and the school's records of progress over time. A range of school documents and the questionnaires returned by parents were scrutinised. The inspector looked at parts of lessons, met staff, pupils and governors as well as holding conversations with outside personnel. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The Manor Leas Infant School serves the suburb of Hykeham on the outskirts of Lincoln. Although most of the pupils live locally, increasing numbers are drawn from further afield. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. A small proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. However, the proportion with statements of special educational need is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding school provides excellent value for money. It has improved significantly since the last inspection and is very well set to maintain this momentum. Standards remain consistently high because the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding and the school benefits from exceptional leadership. One delighted parent, whose views are echoed by many others, commented, 'My daughter has loved every moment at Manor Leas and has come on leaps and bounds. I have no concerns with this school whatsoever - a fantastic school'. The school has the respect of the community it serves and works very well with outside agencies, particularly in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Achievement is outstanding and standards are high. The children in the Foundation Stage make exceptional progress and reach standards that are well above national expectations. Skills they acquire in the Reception classes give them an excellent start to their education and provide a great deal for the school to build on when they start Year 1.

Standards in the national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics for seven-year-olds are significantly above the national averages every year. Current standards in Year 2 are high. All groups of pupils, and girls in particular, achieve outstandingly because the exemplary teaching ensures that learning is well planned and fun. The excellent teaching, based on a very clear understanding of pupils' potential, challenges them to develop their thinking skills. The school is ambitious in its English targets for pupils and is very successful at meeting them. This is because strong emphasis is placed on developing speaking and listening skills and on extending pupils' confidence in using a wide vocabulary in a range of contexts. However, even though boys' standards in reading and writing are well above the national average, they do not match those of girls.

Pupils who find learning difficult make excellent progress because they are supported very well, particularly by a team of dedicated teaching assistants and volunteers. The more academic pupils are challenged to reach their potential because they are encouraged to apply their skills to solve problems, particularly in mathematics and science. Pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve, thus their attitudes to learning are very positive and they achieve outstandingly, including in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils' artwork is also of high quality.

The personal development and well-being of all pupils are exemplary. The school makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It provides a rich range of opportunities for them to develop a sense of their own worth, to value and respect each other and contribute to the school community. The children really enjoy coming to school and attendance rates are above average. Staff respect and value the pupils and consequently they develop self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline; their behaviour is outstanding. The pupils work hard and play well together, forming excellent relationships with one another and with adults in school. They know how to keep themselves safe and they respond well to the many initiatives encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. In particular, there are frequent planned opportunities for them to take aerobic exercise and fruit snacks are available daily.

The school's leadership has systematically developed the quality of teaching and learning; it is now outstanding. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour and progress help to promote their excellent achievement and prepare them very well for their futures. A common feature is

the warmth of relationships that motivate pupils to do their best. Teachers and classroom assistants collaborate very effectively in providing a high level of support to develop pupils' independent learning skills. Tasks set encourage pupils to think and are closely matched to the range of ability in each class. Pupils find learning fun and make excellent progress. Teachers are skilled in asking open-ended questions to gauge the pupils' level of understanding and pupils are keen to respond because they know that their answers are valued. Interactive whiteboards are used very successfully and the teachers ensure that the pace of learning is good. They provide excellent feedback for pupils to make sure that they learn from their mistakes.

The curriculum is outstanding and strongly supports the children's personal, academic and physical development. It is moulded to the needs of the pupils to ensure that they remain interested and alert to the joy of learning. Lessons are imaginative and creatively link learning across subjects especially English, ICT and mathematics. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of additional activities including clubs, visits and visitors.

The school makes outstanding provision for the welfare of pupils. Arrangements for their protection are properly in place. They are very well cared for throughout the day and academic guidance is excellent. Although there are plans to refine the school's tracking and assessment systems to streamline procedures, these are very comprehensive and are key elements in pupils' success. Staff are very adept in using what they know about the pupils' level of understanding to inform the next stage of learning.

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She has promoted the ethos of high achievement and motivates and empowers her colleagues to settle for nothing but the best. Teamwork is at the heart of all of the school's success and every effort is made to ensure that all of the pupils can achieve their best. The role of the governors has been carefully nurtured but their systems for critically monitoring the work of the school require further development. The school's view of itself, although rather modest in part, is very accurate and the use of this information has sustained its high standards. The school defines clearly its strategy for further improvement, for example in improving boys' writing and strengthening further the transition between the Foundation Stage and Year 1.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Attainment on entry to the Reception classes is broadly similar to national expectations but includes a wide range of ability in each year group. The children make outstanding progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in their personal and social development and in their communication skills. This is because the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are outstanding and the school is highly successful in enabling the children to settle quickly. Furthermore, the staff are excellent role models. The curriculum places great emphasis on encouraging children to work together across a range of activities and the development of their speaking and listening skills. Their skills of investigating science and in using ICT are also very evident. Progress in these areas builds the children's confidence and strongly supports their developing knowledge and understanding of the world. The enriched curriculum and very effective teaching ensure that children are very well prepared for making excellent progress as they move through the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in boys' English.

- Develop the role of the governing body in monitoring the work of the school.

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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?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	2
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

10 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of The Lincoln Manor Leas Infant School, Lincoln, LN6 8BE

I really enjoyed my visit to your school earlier this month 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 assembly, listen to your singing and watch you playing games outside. I can understand why you enjoy your school so much as there are so many things that make your school very special. Here are some of them.

- You clearly want to do your best to learn in lessons and are prepared to work hard.
- The standard of your work is very good.
- Everybody understands the school rules and your behaviour is wonderful.
- Everybody tries to be friendly, thoughtful and helpful. Well done!
- All of your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and fun.
- The school provides an excellent range of activities and visits to keep you interested.
- The displays of your work are delightful.
- The headteacher is excellent.

You are very, very fortunate to be able to attend Manor Leas Infant School. Very few schools are as good as yours. This is because Mrs Austin and the staff really understand how to make learning fun and work very hard to help you. It is really important that you remember to thank them and continue to try your best, especially the boys with their reading and writing. I am also asking your governors to keep an even more watchful eye on the school's work. I would like to wish you all a merry Christmas and the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector