

Hogsthorpe Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120452
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313621
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Marina Gough

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	51
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Edward Martin (acting)
Headteacher	Mrs K Nicholls
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Thames Street Hogsthorpe Skegness PE24 5PT

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is situated close to the major seaside town of Skegness. The school caters for children from the immediate locality and from further afield. Pupils come from a mix of socio-economic backgrounds and the area overall is deemed to be one of high social disadvantage. Most pupils are of white ethnicity. There are exceptionally high levels of mobility within the school because many parents are seasonal workers. The issue of mobility is compounded by the fact that some families repeatedly move in and out of the area. The children's attainment when they join the school in the Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is well below the level expected for their age. The majority of these children have not benefited from pre-school education. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than the national average and a high percentage of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has received the Active Mark and is working towards the Healthy Schools Award.

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 that has come a long way and improved well since its last inspection. It has a good capacity for further improvement. The staff team is now stable and this is having a very positive impact on all aspects of the school's life and work. The school has a good appreciation of its relative strengths and weaknesses. However, in its efforts to improve, the school does not always take time to celebrate its many achievements and staff and governors are sometimes too modest in their self-evaluation.

Year groups are small and attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and in other year groups, varies considerably from year to year, although currently below average overall. However, the key factor is that pupils of all ages and abilities make good and at times very good progress, from their very different starting points. This is shown in the excellent systems in place for tracking the achievement and attainment of individual pupils.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their behaviour is good, although one or two pupils present challenging behaviour, which is dealt with very well by the school. Pupils of all ages have very kind dispositions and are caring of one another. They know how to keep safe and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and the school places a strong emphasis on them having regular physical exercise.

Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers plan well so that activities build on what the pupils know and can do. They give good feedback to the pupils so that they know how to improve their work further. Support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, enabling them to make good progress and to achieve their individual targets. Teaching assistants make a good contribution in class especially when they are working on a one to one basis with pupils who need additional help with their work.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is enriched by a good range of clubs which the pupils really enjoy attending. Over recent years, the school has justifiably devoted a good deal of time to literacy and numeracy in order to improve the rate of pupils' progress in these areas. However the school has accurately identified making more imaginative use of the long morning sessions as a priority so that the teaching time available is more equally distributed amongst all subjects of the National Curriculum.

Levels of care, support and guidance are good throughout the school. Good safeguarding procedures are in place and staff are vigilant about meeting the needs of the most vulnerable children. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, but the school does not always encourage parents to contribute enough in terms of agreeing ways of achieving the agreed targets in individual education plans.

Leadership and management are good. The school benefits from the strong and effective leadership of the headteacher. Her main strengths are her relationships with the pupils' families and the steps she has taken to break down the many barriers to learning that some of the pupils face. Governors are supportive and helpful, but their role as 'critical friend' to the headteacher is not sufficiently well developed. It is difficult for the school to recruit and retain governors and currently the governing body is without a chair of governors.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The children in the EYFS are taught alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils and they benefit from the positive example of these older pupils. The EYFS children make good progress and achieve well. They settle in quickly and love the many practical experiences that are on offer and especially enjoy working in the outside area. The curriculum is good, although there are some missed opportunities for physically linking indoor and outdoor play experiences to enrich further the children's learning. Teaching is good and effective use is made of ongoing assessments to plan the next stage of the children's learning. The teaching assistant is used well to enable the classteacher to spend quality time individually with the children. Parents are pleased with the arrangements for supporting children when they start school. The EYFS is well led by an imaginative practitioner who ensures that the children's welfare and well-being are priorities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make more imaginative use of the long morning sessions so that all subjects receive a good balance of teaching time.
- Develop the governors' ability to take a more strategic and questioning role when decisions are made about the school's life and work.
- Encourage greater involvement of parents of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in identifying ways of helping their children to achieve their individual targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Over the years, pupils' attainment, as evidenced by national tests, has been variable. This picture is consistent with exceptionally high levels of mobility, wide ranges of ability amongst the pupils, and the fact that some pupils have real barriers to their learning. These factors have been further exacerbated in recent years by difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers. The staffing is now very stable and pupils of all ages are benefiting from good teaching which is enthusing them in their learning and resulting in good progress for all ages and abilities. Standards at the end of Year 6 are often below the national average but they represent good progress for the vast majority of pupils from their levels of attainment when they started at the school, whether in the Reception class, or for many, at a much later point.

Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well and achieve their individual targets over time. However, much of this is due to the hard work of the school and there is recognition that greater efforts have to be made to support parents in helping their children achieve their agreed targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The vast majority of pupils are kind, considerate and polite. They behave well in and around school and understand the impact of their actions on others. The school council is effective in representing the voice of their classmates and takes a good role in bringing about changes and in supporting charitable causes. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. Nevertheless, attendance is still slightly below the national average because of the highly mobile school population. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, and take part in a good amount of physical activities throughout the week. They make

a positive contribution to the school community. Their understanding of the world of work is limited and their economic well-being is further compromised by their often weak basic number and language skills. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although pupils' awareness of cultural diversity is a little patchy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers know their pupils very well and are sensitive to their individual needs. Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed so that they can provide additional support where it is most needed and facilitate learning. The school is well equipped with computers which are used well as a learning tool and which are popular with the pupils. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to bring learning to life and to enable pupils to access new and different life experiences. Teachers use a good range of styles to engage the pupils' interest and the best learning seen during the inspection was in activities where there was a highly practical focus. At times, some of the introductory sessions to lessons are a little overlong.

Great strides have been made in developing assessment systems since the last inspection so that teachers are now able to build step by step on pupils' prior learning and identify quickly when they need additional support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and good attention is paid to subjects such as personal, social and health education and citizenship. An emphasis is placed on the pupils using computers as vehicles for learning. The balance in the curriculum is compromised by the long literacy and numeracy sessions that take place most mornings and which take up the whole morning sessions. The school has recognised the need to make more creative use of this optimum teaching time to ensure a more appropriate distribution of time amongst all subjects of the National Curriculum. The school provides a good range of additional learning opportunities including after school clubs, which are well attended. Visitors to the school strengthen links with the community and help to enrich the pupils' learning and extend their experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school knows its pupils and their families very well. Much has been done to support pupils by working with families and helping to remove some of the barriers to learning that exist.

Many parents are now on board and are starting to come into school regularly for events such as assemblies. Links with external professionals are good and the headteacher and governors have rightly identified the need to set up further initiatives with a sometimes very mobile local community to create better working links. Child protection procedures are in place and are well understood by staff and governors. The school is safe and good emphasis is placed on helping the pupils to develop healthy lifestyles.

Academic guidance is good and pupils have a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Targets and regular 'improvement' sessions provide them with time to talk about their work with their teachers. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are

appropriately involved in reviewing their progress towards their individual education plan targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the staff and school well and has been a driving force in bringing about the improvements suggested at the time of the last inspection. She successfully combines her leadership role with her teaching commitment. Her ability to work with parents and the local community is one of her great strengths and she is slowly but surely engaging parents as partners in their children's education. The school is making good efforts to work with the local community and to become a focal point although there is still some work to be done.

The school has difficulty in recruiting and retaining governors and is currently without a chairperson. Many governors are new to the role and whilst they bring a good deal with them in terms of their own diverse backgrounds, they lack experience of governance. Training is planned, but in the meantime, their ability to challenge the headteacher effectively is limited. Governors visit school regularly and are very supportive and helpful.

The school's development plan is a good working document that is realistic and achievable. Monitoring of teaching and the rigorous tracking of attainment and progress of pupils by the headteacher and other staff is effective in bringing about continued and sustained improvement.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

19 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hogsthorpe Community Primary School, Skegness, PE24 5PT

I am writing to tell you what I found out when I inspected your school a short time ago and to thank you very much for the lovely welcome I received. I enjoyed talking to you and could see that you all work hard. I was pleased to find out how well you behave in lessons and I noticed how kind you are to one another.

Your teachers do a good job and go to a lot of trouble to make lessons exciting for you. They know you well and you feel happy about telling them about any problems you are having. At the moment teachers are spending quite a lot of time teaching you literacy and numeracy. Whilst this is helpful in some ways, it means that there is not enough time left for some of the other subjects. I have asked your teachers to see whether they can make the mornings more interesting by cutting down the time given to literacy and numeracy and putting in some extra subjects.

Some of you have difficulties with your work and you get good help in class from your teachers and teaching assistants. I think that as well as this help from school it would be great if school and home could work in even better partnership. This way you could make even faster progress towards your targets.

You told me that you like coming to school and that you really enjoy the visits from people outside and all the clubs that you can join after school. The school council is doing a good job and I was pleased to hear about the sponsorship of the young boy from Africa. (I hope you don't forget to pay back the money you borrowed from your headteacher!)

Your headteacher is leading the school well and is constantly looking for ways of making it even better. The governors like coming into the school to visit but they need to have a bit more training so that they can do other aspects of their work with more confidence.

Best wishes

Marina Gough

Lead inspector