

The Skegness Seathorne Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120476
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313631
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	382
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	Mrs H Nuttall, Mr P Tong
Headteacher	Mr Iain Cameron
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Count Alan Road Skegness Lincolnshire PE25 1HB

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average size primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage with only a small number from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than that found nationally. A larger number of pupils enter or leave the school other than at the usual age partly linked to the local tourism industry. Following the recent resignation of the Chair of Governors, two members of the Governing Body are sharing this role.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a school that provides a satisfactory quality of education. This judgement matches that of the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness. Many pupils like coming to school. They say they particularly enjoy playtimes and think that when they were new to the school they were made welcome. Pupil's personal development is satisfactory. Behaviour is good, as is the pupils' understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Most parents are pleased with the quality of care and education provided.

When children enter the nursery their knowledge and understanding are slightly below the expectations for their age, especially in their ability to communicate with others. The school's tracking data shows that pupils make inconsistent progress as they move through the school. In recent years standards at the age of seven have been close to and sometimes slightly above national averages but standards at eleven have been below average. Assessments show that in Years 3 and 4 some pupils have made little progress. The school has introduced better systems to check and track progress and to provide support for those who need extra help. However, many of these improvements are relatively new and not yet fully embedded. While the majority of pupils now make satisfactory progress some, including the more able, could achieve even more especially in reading and writing.

The quality of teaching, learning and curriculum planning is satisfactory. Staff manage pupils well so that lessons are conducted in a calm and orderly manner. However, pupils are given too few responsibilities or opportunities to discuss their ideas and extend their communication skills. The stock of books in the library and across the school, as well as resources for the teaching of information and communications technology (ICT), are limited and do not support learning well enough.

The pastoral care of pupils is warm and supportive and the help given to those with additional learning needs is often good. However, the school does not have such effective systems to identify and address the needs of higher attaining pupils. While the school now has satisfactory procedures to check and track the progress pupils make better use could be made of data to ensure the highest level of challenge in all areas. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. However, the monitoring of the work of the school lacks rigour, and senior staff have not always identified well enough the areas for further improvement. With recent changes of staffing and senior responsibilities and good governance the school has satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with levels of knowledge skills and understanding that are slightly below those typical for their age, especially in their ability to communicate and in their personal development. They get off to a good start in the nursery because of the mostly good teaching. Throughout the Foundation Stage, they make good progress in their personal development because of the high levels of care. A sound balance between activities organised by teachers and those initiated by children themselves helps to ensure that they make satisfactory progress in all other areas. However, standards are still slightly below what is expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Staff work hard to provide consistent routines and a wide range of experiences to support children as they develop

their independence and learn new skills. Children enjoy the range of activities provided in a safe and secure environment. However, some opportunities to develop children's language and stimulate their imagination are missed. Links with parents are good and many speak highly of the support their children receive. The new Foundation Stage leader is a good role model who is seeking to ensure that there is a uniform and rigorous approach to planning, teaching and assessment to help ensure that children make consistent progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the monitoring of the work of the school is systematic, rigorous and evaluative.
- Make full use of assessment information to provide consistently challenging activities for all pupils.
- Give pupils more responsibilities and opportunities to be involved in their own learning and discuss their ideas.
- Improve the stock of books and resources for ICT to extend pupils' learning across the curriculum.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Teacher assessments indicate that in recent years standards at the age of seven have often been slightly above national averages and these pupils made good progress. However, standards at the age of eleven have been much more variable and often below national averages. Some pupils have done better in mathematics than in English, where fewer pupils, especially boys, do as well in reading and writing as other areas. Standards in the Year 6 national tests in 2008 were below average and lower than in 2007. Data show that many pupils, including those who had initially done well at the age of seven, often made little progress in Years 3 and 4. In the last year many changes have been made to planning, teaching and the curriculum which are beginning to make a positive impact on learning. While standards at the age of eleven remain below average, most pupils now make satisfactory overall progress. Most groups such as boys and girls, those with additional learning needs, transient pupils and the very small number speaking English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. However, some, including the most able, could achieve even more.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Most pupils are well behaved and are positive about their school. However, the need for a 'calm down room' provides evidence of occasional inappropriate behaviour by a small number of pupils. Despite this, pupils say bullying is rare and when it occurs it is dealt with effectively. Prefects show initiative and fulfil their duties responsibly. However, there is no active school council to give pupils a voice. In addition, pupils are not given enough opportunities in some classes to talk about what they are learning. As a result, there are missed opportunities for collaboration and co-operation. While spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about a range of cultures. Consequently, they are not always able to extend their understanding of how different groups in society work together. Attendance is slightly below the national average. Pupils understand

the importance of keeping safe. They have a good awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle although more remains to be done to convince them and their families of the benefits of healthy packed lunches. Pupils steadily develop confidence because their efforts and achievements are rewarded, such as through certificates, 'star of the week' and 'golden playtime'. Pupils know right from wrong and most relate well to each other and to adults. They develop their workplace skills satisfactorily because opportunities to learn about the world of work begin early, such as through the use of Tizzy's shop in the EYFS.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall although somewhat inconsistent across classes and key stages. Positive features include the effective management of pupils and the praise and encouragement offered. The quality of support to those with additional needs is effective and enables many of these pupils, including those new to the school, to make similar progress to their peers and grow in confidence. Teachers use questions well to check what pupils know and understand. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to make choices in their learning or to take part in regular, planned tasks where they discuss their ideas with a partner. In lessons it is sometimes a few confident boys who dominate discussions while other pupils are passive and offer little. This does not do enough to help all pupils develop a more mature and expressive vocabulary, which in turn affects pupils' reading and writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of activities to promote learning across the school. Visiting specialists, including in physical and environmental education, help to enhance the school's curriculum. Visits, visitors, such as theatre groups and a satisfactory range of after school activities extend pupils' experiences and broaden their horizons. Changes are currently taking place to extend the links between subjects to help promote wider understanding and increase levels of enjoyment. The school plans to further develop important skills, including problem solving, and bring learning alive for pupils. However, this initiative is in its early stages of development. ICT is not given enough emphasis at present and resources are limited with few classroom computers to practice the development of skills. The stock of books in classes and the library is limited. Some parents have concerns that the school day does not always start promptly. Inspectors confirmed the lack of a prompt start at the beginning of the day and after break times.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are happy and feel welcome in the school's positive ethos of care and support. Staff have good relationships with pupils, which gives everyone the confidence to learn and develop. Any risk of bullying is carefully managed by the staff. The pupils' own anti-bullying committee contributes to reassuring those who feel vulnerable. Policies and practice are in place to ensure pupils are fully safeguarded and a healthy lifestyle is promoted effectively. The welcome to pupils and visitors by administration staff is of high quality, although the level of support at

lunchtime is more variable. While the school tackles non-attendance with parents in partnership with the local authority, this is having a limited impact on raising attendance.

Pupils are supported satisfactorily through tracking progress and setting targets for literacy and numeracy. However, neither tracking nor targets are refined enough yet in their implementation to have a marked effect on standards. Overall, the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory and instances of effective group work and individual support lead to some of these pupils making good progress. The marking of pupils' work by teachers often helps with clear advice on how to improve. Occasionally, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and identify ways of making it better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Governance is good. Governors do not make excuses for recent low standards. They work successfully to hold the school to account for pupil's achievement. The large staff team and long-serving head teacher share a commitment to the school and local community. This has enabled them to work through sometimes difficult periods with a tight school budget. High staff turnover has made it difficult to ensure consistency of approach throughout the school. Parents' views of the school are mostly positive although there are some perceptive concerns about school organisation, and concerns that links with parents are not fully developed. Pupils are all encouraged to play their part in the life of the school and the area, making a sound contribution to community cohesion. While there are satisfactory links with other schools and organisations senior staff have struggled at times to keep abreast of educational change or to welcome challenge to their strategic decision making. Subject leaders now carry out more focused checks of pupils' work and of the quality of teaching and learning. These identified where issues lay, and action was taken to improve planning and teaching. Senior staff are now very confident that the quality of education is much improved. However, the inspection indicates there are still inconsistencies because monitoring procedures lack evaluative rigour in identifying the exact quality of education provided and areas for further improvement. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

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?	3
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
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?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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	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

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

1 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Seathorne Primary School, Skegness, PE25 1HB

Thank you very much for looking after us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you in lessons, at lunchtime, in assembly, and especially when we spoke to several of you in a range of activities.

These are some of the best things we found:

- You enjoy coming to school and particularly like playtimes.
- Most of you behave well and get on with other pupils and the adults around you.
- The school gives you advice on what to eat and provides healthy meals and lots of opportunities to be active and fit.
- Those of you in the nursery and reception are cared for and looked after well.
- The governors help the school by asking lots of questions about what is happening and why.

Yours is a satisfactory school. To improve your school we have asked that:

- The headteacher and staff check what happens in school more carefully to make sure everything is the best they can provide.
- Teachers make sure that work is just a bit harder for most of you to help you make even more progress.
- The staff give you more chances to take on jobs in the school and to discuss your ideas.
- The school needs more computers and books for you to use every day.

To help your school even more please try hard to take part in all discussions so that you improve the way you communicate with others and try to encourage those who look after you to ensure you attend school regularly.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector