

Dunston St Peter's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120520
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313649
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Marina Gough

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Len Bannister
Headteacher	Mr Graham Boyall
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Back Lane Dunston Lincoln LN4 2EH
Telephone number	01526 320027
Fax number	01526 321604

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than other primary schools nationally. Since the last inspection the number of pupils on roll has risen by 50% and the school is now almost at full capacity. A higher than average proportion of pupils join the school during Key Stage 2. Almost all pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties is average, but the school has a higher than average number of pupils who have statements of special educational need. The school has achieved a number of awards over recent years, including the Activemark, Healthy Schools Award, Young Enterprise Award and Bronze Eco Award.

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 an outstanding school that knows its strengths and relative weaknesses very well. It has made excellent progress since its last inspection. Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, the school has flourished over recent years. Staff and governors have worked closely together to raise standards and improve provision through a rigorous process of self-evaluation. The school gives excellent value for money.

From their very different individual starting points in Reception and in later years, pupils achieve extremely well and make excellent progress. Standards are usually above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The school has a deservedly excellent reputation for the way it meets the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils with statements of special educational need do particularly well because of the high levels of staffing and the very positive way in which pupils support one another. Pupils who join the school at different times in the year make excellent progress. These pupils are given additional support to enable them to settle in quickly and to ensure that work reflects their individual needs.

The sense of community within the school is very strong, and pupils of all ages thrive within a culture that celebrates achievement and effort. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, and pupils of all ages thoroughly enjoy their learning. They have very good social skills and are used to working in teams, considering the views of others, and reaching a compromise when necessary. These qualities, together with their good basic skills, mean that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education. Teaching is excellent, and has many strengths. Teachers match work extremely well to pupils' different needs, so that all pupils can learn and make rapid progress. Very good use is made of assessment information to guide lesson planning, and in English, pupils receive excellent guidance about how to improve their work further. The practice of pupils using criteria for measuring their progress and success in mathematics is not as consistent as it is in English.

The school provides a good curriculum for all pupils that is enriched by an excellent range of additional learning activities, such as after school clubs and visits to places of interest. However, although all subjects are taught, the teaching time is not always fairly distributed and the long morning teaching sessions are not always used to maximum advantage. Levels of care, support and guidance are excellent, and staff and governors pay excellent attention to all matters of health and safety. The safeguarding of children has a very high priority.

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. He has paced change very well over recent years, so that much has been achieved without the small staff becoming over-burdened. His outward looking philosophy means that this small school is not isolated or insular. The school's involvement in the 'Network for Learning' and local cluster of schools has been instrumental in providing excellent opportunities for the pupils, staff and governors to work with other schools and in widening their horizons. The governing body plays an outstanding part in the leadership and management of the school. Governors are forward thinking and experienced, and they bring a wealth of different expertise to the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The provision for Reception children is excellent. The children's attainment when they join the school in the Reception class is very variable, ranging from occasionally above average in some

years to below average in others. Children make excellent progress in their first year in school. The attainment of the current group of Reception children was broadly average when they started school. They are on course to attain above the levels expected for their age by the time they move into Year 1. They enjoy taking part in a range of excellent activities that capture their enthusiasm for learning. The curriculum is excellent. There is a really good mix of free and structured play activities, which encourage the children to learn, practise and master new skills. Teaching has many outstanding features, including the excellent use of ongoing assessments to ensure that children are fully stretched. Since the last inspection, the school has developed an excellent outside learning environment that is used to maximum effect.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make better use of the available teaching time in the long morning session.
- Improve the pupils' knowledge of their learning in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils of all ages and abilities make excellent progress as they move through the school. The attainment of the current Year 2 group is above average and pupils achieve very well. The attainment of the current Year 6 group is above average showing excellent progress for this small group that contains a high percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and a high number of pupils who have joined the school part way through Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, the most able pupils are fully extended by their involvement in various gifted and talented initiatives. Pupils with learning difficulties receive excellent support from experienced staff so that they are able to take a full and active part in all activities, and make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils who arrive at different times of the year achieve exceptionally well because the school has a finely tuned and up to date tracking system that enables staff to keep a constant check on the performance and progress of all individuals. Staff are quick to spot any pupil who is experiencing difficulties or is not making the expected progress and immediate action is taken to put matters right. This excellent use of assessment is instrumental in ensuring that all pupils achieve their best.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are excellent. Pupils have high levels of enthusiasm, a thirst for learning, and confidence in their ability to master new skills. Pupils are very accepting and tolerant of those who have difficulties with aspects of their learning or behaviour. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Through the 'Network for Learning', pupils have recently taken part in a celebration of African arts, working with other local schools and African artists. There are many opportunities for pupils to help those less fortunate than themselves, and inter-school sports events help them to learn how to enjoy the thrill of victory and graciously accept the disappointment of defeat. Pupils have a very strong understanding of how to be healthy and safe, and talk with maturity about ways in which they can achieve a healthy lifestyle. Work linked to the recently gained Young Enterprise Award has given pupils a real insight into the world of business and has spurred them on to open up their own savings bank. Pupils have experience of organising aspects of school life and value the opportunity to express their views through the school council. Pupils of all ages thoroughly enjoy coming to school and so attendance is well above the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is often outstanding because of the skilful way in which teachers manage and organise mixed-age classes so that they can effectively meet the individual needs of the most and least able pupils. Lessons are very well planned, and are based on thorough assessments of what the pupils already know and can do. Questions are probing, stretching pupils fully, and are used to check their understanding. Resources are used extensively to enliven learning and do much to strengthen pupils' understanding. Throughout the school, excellent use is made of the well-trained and experienced teaching assistants who unobtrusively give individual support where it is needed, and make ongoing observations of pupils' progress. Pupils enjoy learning and are not afraid of making mistakes. They are responsive and enthusiastic and highly self-motivated. The use of information and communication technology is a strength of both teaching and learning and does much to bring subjects to life for the pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is good. It meets statutory requirements and good attention is given to the development of key literacy and numeracy skills. However, the available teaching time in the long morning sessions is not always used to best advantage with some over-long English and mathematics sessions taking time away from other subjects. French is taught in all classes and is a popular subject. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is excellent, and does much to boost the pupils' social, emotional and moral development. The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, including the immensely popular yoga sessions, which impact significantly on pupils' spiritual awareness as they consider the beauty of nature and the value of peace and tranquillity.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides excellent levels of care, guidance and support. Pupils know they can approach any adult for help, and benefit from the additional support of a designated 'pastoral carer'. Governors and staff place the highest priority on ensuring that pupils are safe and constantly seek out training that will further enhance their skills and raise their awareness of safeguarding issues. Excellent systems are in place to ensure that regular health and safety checks are carried out. Pupils receive excellent guidance about how they can improve their work further overall so that they can reach their potential. In English, pupils are able to explain how they can improve their work further and use given criteria well to evaluate the quality of their own work. This level of guidance has only just been introduced in mathematics, and so pupils are not yet as knowledgeable about what they need to do to achieve higher levels in their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Although this is a small school, it has extremely wide horizons and is constantly looking for its next challenge. The headteacher very successfully combines his teaching commitment with his management responsibilities and leads very much from the front. The school is innovative, and this is reflected in the intranet the governors have set up to enable them to gain access to the school diary, meeting notes and policy documents. Governors are very proactive and are fully involved with the staff in the process of school development planning. Rigorous monitoring by the headteacher and governors has led to the school having a very clear picture of its relative strengths and weaknesses. The school's capacity for further improvement is excellent because of the high rate of improvement to date and shared commitment and enthusiasm of staff and governors.

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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	2
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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

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?	2
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	1
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

2 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dunston St Peter's CofE Primary School, Lincoln, LN4 2EH

I am writing to thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school a short time ago and to let you know about what I found during the inspection. I really enjoyed spending time in lessons with you and talking to you about your work and the school. I am pleased to hear that you really enjoy coming to school and that you know how to be healthy and keep fit. Your behaviour is excellent, and you know that occasional incidents of misbehaviour are quickly dealt with so that they do not become a problem.

You work extremely hard in lessons, answering questions, and getting on with what you have been asked to do, and your teachers do a great job in making your lessons interesting and exciting. All of you make excellent progress and so when you leave school at the end of Year 6, you are often doing better in English, mathematics and science than pupils of the same age in many other schools. You have great fun in school and I know you especially enjoy all the different activities that are provided, such as the French lessons and the Thursday afternoon carousel activities. I did notice that some of the morning English and mathematics lessons are a little long, and I have asked the headteacher and teachers to look at ways of using the morning teaching time in a more effective way. I was exceptionally pleased to hear how safe you feel in school, and that you would be confident about sharing any problems with a member of staff. Your teachers help you to know how to improve your work, especially in English, and I have asked them to give you the same guidance in mathematics, so you know exactly what you have to do to move onto a higher level.

I think your headteacher and governors do an excellent job in leading and managing the school. They go out of their way to make sure that you have the best education they can provide, and offer exciting opportunities, such as the many sports tournaments you play in, and activities such as the African dance, drama and drumming festival in which you took part recently. I am pleased to say that Dunstan St Peter's is an excellent school.

Best wishes

Marina Gough Lead inspector