

The Leasingham St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120528
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313653
Inspection dates	8–9 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Owen
Headteacher	Mr James Greenwood
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2004
School address	Lincoln Road Leasingham Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 8JS
Telephone number	01529 302388
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Although the school serves the village of Leasingham, 50% of the school's population are drawn from further afield. Inward mobility to the school is high; the proportion of children who join the school during the course of each school year is well above average. Nevertheless, numbers on roll have fallen since the last inspection. Almost all of the pupils are of White British backgrounds. Attainment on entry to the school is above that expected, although each intake reflects a wide range of ability. The range of socio-economic circumstances is broad. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above that of most schools. Children in the Foundation Stage and junior classes are taught in discrete year groups. Children in Years 1 and 2 are taught in the same class.

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 with outstanding features. It has improved significantly since the last inspection and is very well placed to maintain this momentum. The school leadership has systematically developed all aspects of its work, particularly the quality of teaching and learning, and the curriculum, to motivate the pupils to achieve their best. Standards are improving markedly. One delighted parent, whose views are echoed by many others, commented, 'We would like to thank the head and the staff for their dedication and their hard work that goes into making Leasingham School the happy, thriving hub of the community that it undoubtedly is.'

In the Reception class, children are becoming confident, enthusiastic, independent learners who achieve well. Standards are much improved in Key Stage 1 and pupils reach above average standards in the national assessments. However, girls do much better with their writing than the boys. This pattern continues in Years 3 to 6, where standards are above average but the boys' achievement in writing is below that of the girls. The school is very inclusive; it is particularly successful in integrating pupils, including a few with complex learning difficulties throughout the year. Because they are well supported, by a team of dedicated teaching assistants, those pupils who find learning difficult make good progress. The more academic pupils are challenged to reach their potential because they are encouraged to apply their skills to solve problems. This is particularly evident in mathematics and science.

The personal development and well-being of all pupils is exemplary. The school makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It provides a rich range of opportunities for the children to develop a sense of their own worth and to value and respect their peers. The strong church links underpin the moral values that are so clearly evident in the pupils' attitudes. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and attendance rates are well above average. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They know how to keep themselves safe and respond very well to the many initiatives encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils work hard and play well together, forming excellent relationships with one another and with adults in school. They willingly take on extra responsibilities such as involvement in school council work.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' high expectations help to promote pupils' achievement and prepare them well for their futures. A common feature is the warmth of relationships. 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 for themselves and are matched closely to the range of ability in each class. Although pupils find this way of learning enjoyable, staff are not consistent in evaluating how much progress has been made by individual pupils in these lessons.

The school makes outstanding provision for the welfare of pupils. They are very well cared for and their academic guidance is excellent. The school's tracking and assessment systems are comprehensive and are key elements in pupils' success. Teamwork is at the heart of all of the school's successes. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has nurtured the ethos of high achievement and has motivated and empowered his colleagues to settle for nothing but the best. The school's view of itself, although occasionally modest, has identified accurately those areas for further improvement. The school has the respect of the community

that it serves and works closely with other schools. The capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Children make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development, and in their communication skills. This is because the quality of teaching is good and the school has forged good relationships with parents. Staff are very successful in enabling the children to settle quickly into routines. The school places great emphasis on the development of the children's speaking and listening skills and on reading and writing. The teaching is lively and fun and this sparks the children's imagination and enthusiasm for learning. For example, the outdoor learning area has been carefully developed to provide an exciting range of opportunities for the children's independent activity. Children are developing a good understanding of the world around them. Almost all children attain above national expectations by the time they move into Year 1 because of the quality of their experience in the Reception class. Consequently, children are well prepared for Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise boys' achievement in writing.
- Refine the school's strategies for evaluating the quality of learning in investigative and practical activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. In Key Stage 1, pupils build successfully on their achievements in the Foundation Stage to reach standards that are well above average in reading and mathematics. In writing, girls reach standards that are high but boys' achievement lags behind. This remains the case in Key Stage 2 although recent whole-school initiatives are beginning to have a positive impact. Overall standards are rising again in the junior classes because the school has improved the quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, the rigorous application of the school's tracking and assessment procedures to set work at an appropriate level for groups of different abilities is beginning to challenge higher-attaining pupils. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. This represents good progress as the current cohort has a significant proportion of pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Nevertheless, ambitious targets have been set for the oldest pupils and they are clear about how to reach them. Standards in mathematics and science are rising sharply because pupils now benefit from practical investigations and problem solving activities that require them to apply their skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils really enjoy school and say 'lessons are fun'. Social skills are very well developed through a wide range of sporting, musical and other extra-curricular activities. The popular Year 6 residential visit successfully develops pupils' independence, confidence, initiative and teamwork. Pupils organise successful fundraising activities that benefit both the local and international community. School council representatives of all ages

take their responsibilities seriously. They have been influential in raising awareness about bullying and in making the playground more interesting.

Pupils are polite, very well behaved and friendly. They feel very safe and any problems are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils take an active part in community events and involve the local community in school activities, for example the orchid painting competition and the Musical Extravaganza. Standards achieved in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, combined with a keenness to learn, prepares the pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and is characterised by detailed planning, which is well matched to the different abilities of pupils in the class, interesting and enjoyable activities and effective guidance on how to improve. Teachers know their pupils well and enjoy excellent relationships with them. Consequently behaviour in lessons is outstanding. Pupils listen carefully to teachers, are keen to answer questions and willing to take turns. They try hard and are happy to help each other. Teaching assistants support the teachers well and help pupils who are vulnerable, or find learning more difficult, to take a full part in lessons. Assessment techniques are used well to help pupils check their own and each other's work effectively. Together with the sharing of success criteria at the beginning of lessons, this is helping pupils become responsible for their own learning so they can identify for themselves what they need to do to improve. Teachers mark work conscientiously, praising pupils frequently and advising them how they can improve. However, not enough marking corrects spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad, balanced and fully meets statutory requirements. Detailed planning ensures the curriculum is well matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities. Where possible, teachers link subjects to make learning more enjoyable and have a strong focus on investigative and practical activities. For example, Year 5 worked as 'Young Architects' to enable them to apply their understanding of measurement and realise the importance of being accurate. Throughout the school this approach, successfully engages the interest of the pupils although there is sometimes a lack of rigour in evaluating what pupils have learned.

Pupils enjoy the recent initiatives to help them become better writers. However, these new strategies have not yet been in place long enough to bring about a significant improvement in boys' writing. Pupils benefit from a large number of enrichment activities and a very good range of clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The welfare of the pupils is central to the work of the school. There is a very caring and supportive ethos which results in happy, well motivated pupils who clearly love their school. Outstanding induction procedures ensure a smooth transition into reception and onto the feeder secondary schools. Rigorous procedures are in place to ensure the safety, security and

health of the pupils. Staff are adept in using what they know about the pupils' level of understanding to inform the next stage of learning. Pupils have individual learning targets that are very well matched to their ability and are regularly reviewed and updated. The support provided for vulnerable pupils and those who find learning more difficult is exemplary. Teachers track pupil progress very thoroughly and use a wide range of intervention strategies to help those who find learning difficult. Parents speak highly of the help they receive. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and provide outstanding support. Parents receive regular information about the curriculum and their child's progress, which they find helpful and informative.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher leads from the front and has been resolute in his drive for excellence. He has nurtured a strong team spirit and the staff are taking an increasingly effective role in monitoring standards and improving pupil performance. There has been outstanding progress in recent years. Every aspect of school life has shown improvement, the most significant being on the pupils' personal development. Equal opportunities are outstanding. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated and standards are rising in each key stage. However, the full impact of some of the more recent initiatives, such as the refinement of assessment procedures are yet to have their full impact on standards. The leadership team have accurately identified those few areas that require further refinement and continue to strive for further improvement. The governing body is fully involved in strategic development and has become confident in its ability to hold the school to account, particularly in terms of understanding school effectiveness.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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?	2
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?	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 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	2
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

12 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Leasingham St Andrew's CofE Primary School, Lincolnshire NG34 8JS

We really enjoyed our visit to your school this month because everybody was so helpful and friendly. We particularly enjoyed our discussions with you and hearing your views on St Andrew's School. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, join in with your Pentecostal Service, meet the school council and see you playing games outside. We can fully 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
- everybody understands the school rules and your behaviour is wonderful
- everybody tries to be friendly, thoughtful and helpful
- your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and fun
- the school provides a wide range of activities and visits to keep you interested
- the school is very mindful to keep you safe and happy
- Mr Greenwood is determined to make sure that the school gets better and better.

You are very fortunate to be able to attend your school. Very few schools are improving as rapidly as yours. This is because Mr Greenwood 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 work hard. I know that you achieve well, but I am asking your teachers to keep on finding ways to help you to improve your writing, particularly that of the boys. The teachers should also be careful to check what you have learned from your practical investigations and problem solving. This sounds like more hard work but we know that you can pull together and do it.

Very best wishes for the future.

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector