

The Welbourn Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120542
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313662
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2009
Reporting inspector	George Derby

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	68
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 Sue Milton
Headteacher	Mr Steven Horsley
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	High Street Welbourn Lincoln Lincolnshire LN5 0NH

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2009
Inspection number	313662

Telephone number
Fax number

01400 272798
01400 272798

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	13-14 January 2009
Inspection number	313662

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small voluntary controlled school. Due to extreme staffing difficulties, it has gone through a period of considerable turbulence since the last inspection. This has had a big impact as the school has just three classes. Staffing is now stable, with some new teachers appointed just over 12 months ago. A new headteacher was appointed in late 2006.

The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just above average and the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is double what is typically expected. The number of pupils admitted at different times during the year has increased and, unusually, in an area where pupil numbers are dropping, the number of pupils in this school is growing. All pupils are from White British backgrounds and there is a higher proportion of girls than is usual, although this varies from year to year.

Because cohorts of pupils are very small, the knowledge, skills and understanding of children when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) vary from year to year. They are generally in line with what is expected, but can be above and occasionally below. The pupils generally come from areas which have positive social and economic features. The school has gained an Activemark award for its commitment to helping pupils keep fit and healthy.

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 which achieves its mission statement, 'learning to live and living to learn', well. The school has very high expectations of its pupils and itself. Numerous parental comments praise the headteacher and say how he has changed the school for the better. They also praise the calm 'family atmosphere' and the strong communication, which results in parents feeling very much included in what goes on. One stated, 'the school is like one big family...run exceptionally with brilliant standards of teaching and pastoral care'.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and the school fosters in them a real desire to learn. Pastoral care is excellent. Pupils love school, have outstanding attendance and concentrate really well in lessons. They find learning exciting. This is partly because of the effective programme of activities, with its links between subjects, which makes learning come alive but also because of interesting and lively teaching. Behaviour is exceptional and relationships are outstanding; pupils respect each other, listen to others' views, collaborate and cooperate.

The headteacher leads the school well and, with the outstanding contribution that the governors have made, has much improved it over the last three years. Overall leadership and management are good. The road has not been an easy one to travel because of severe staff turbulence. Some aspects of provision have been weak and a legacy of underachievement in some year groups has persisted, particularly in mathematics and writing. Governors took decisive action to ensure that the headteacher had enough time to undertake the development work needed. This was despite serious financial and budgetary problems. Although not quite out of the wood yet, through the sterling work of the highly skilled governors, the relatively new but highly committed staff team and a reformed senior leadership team, the school has been transformed. Pupils' progress over the last 12 months has been good and for some pupils extremely rapid. Standards are rising and the Year 6 group are on track to reach average standards from a below average starting point. A clear focus is on each individual. Challenging targets are set for pupils to reach, and extremely careful tracking has enabled the staff to know precisely what to do to support learning further.

The school knows itself well and is well placed to improve further. It has strong links with the local community and is extending these through the Church to help communities in Zimbabwe. It recognises that, by encouraging pupils to respect others and by reaching out to the local community, it supports community harmony. Staff do not rest on their laurels and there is a great enthusiasm about how they can improve their already good teaching. They recognise that the way that they set criteria for different groups of pupils to know how well they are doing in lessons could at times be sharper. Although activities are generally well matched, sometimes opportunities are missed to set a greater level of challenge for some higher attaining pupils. The school has set itself a high goal of becoming outstanding in a few years' time. It knows the steps that need to be taken. Staff have done much to develop their subjects. However, their work in fully monitoring and evaluating their subjects, and especially teaching and learning, is not yet robust enough.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Over the last 12 months, the new EYFS teacher has tackled previous underachievement and improved provision well. With the support of the headteacher, the provision has been led and

managed effectively. Children now make good progress academically as well as in their personal development. They are looked after well and kept safe. Children settle quickly, develop confidence, and have excellent relationships with each other. The current group entered school with average attainment and are now on track to reach the early learning goals, with a good number exceeding these. Assessment is accurate and progress tracked well.

Provision has been organised well to ensure that the EYFS children have activities which are appropriate to their age, stage and ability. Children have a good balance of self-chosen activities and guided learning. There are reasonable opportunities to learn outdoors in the well-designed and sheltered external area. Teaching is good. Children are well supported by the teaching assistant, who teaches them separately at times. When children are taught together with Years 1 and 2, work is planned well, so that it is appropriate to children's needs as they progress towards the early learning goals. All children's needs, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are well met. The teaching of phonic skills is satisfactory but staff have not yet had formal training.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the challenge for more able pupils and provide success criteria matched to the needs of the different ages and ability groups in the classes.
- Extend the work of subject leaders so that they take responsibility for the monitoring and evaluating of all aspects of their subjects and especially of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In 2008 standards rose and, in Key Stage 1, were average in reading, writing and mathematics, and above average in science. Overall progress was satisfactory, although there was still a legacy of underachievement for some more able pupils. The Key Stage 2 results rose by a big margin and were above average in English, mathematics and science. The percentage reaching the higher level (Level 5) was average. This group started with an above average profile, so this represents satisfactory achievement, although their progress as they moved through school has been uneven. However, in the last year or so, progress accelerated because staff made very effective use of the excellent tracking system introduced by the headteacher. As a result teaching improved and pupils made good progress and some exceptionally so in mathematics. This enabled them to catch up and reach the above average standards that were expected. All year groups are now making good progress towards the challenging targets set for them, including those with difficulties in learning. The support for pupils with weaker mathematical skills is excellent and these pupils make extremely rapid progress. Pupils are currently on track to reach above average standards by the end of Key Stage 1, with more pupils attaining the higher level. The pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are on track to reach average standards. This represents good progress from their below average starting points. Standards in writing have also improved with pupils now making consistently good progress across the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' enjoyment of school is excellent and they are thoroughly involved in making decisions about how the school runs. Their ideas are acted upon through the school council and eco committee. They demonstrate a rapidly growing self-assurance and, by Year 6, are extremely confident and articulate pupils. Through many enterprise and financial management projects

and the development of basic skills, they are well prepared for the future. There is considerable depth to their reflection on matters about themselves and the world and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their behaviour is exceptional, relationships are excellent and pupils say there is no bullying. Their knowledge of how to keep themselves safe is excellent. Pupils' awareness of how to keep fit and healthy is good but the school council is developing a project around healthy snacks as they say that many pupils currently arrive with chocolate type food at breaktime! Local community involvement is good. Pupils see themselves as very much part of their local community, raising funds and taking part in activities such as the school choir supported by local professionals and volunteers. They are expanding their horizons to links with a community in Zimbabwe. Despite this being an all white community, much is done to promote awareness of other faiths and culture and pupils show they are prepared well to live in a multicultural society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good because of the effective use of thorough assessment and the regular checking of pupils' learning. Staff's enthusiasm rubs off on the pupils and helps make learning fun. Pupils have incredible powers of concentration, work highly productively and try to get everything they do correct. They know what is expected of them and many know whether they have learned enough through the clear success criteria regularly referred to in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to regularly assess their own learning. Activities are usually well matched to pupils' abilities and needs and success criteria are identified for the whole group. However, there are missed opportunities in some lessons to stretch the more able pupils and to set different success criteria for different groups in the class. Some excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT) was seen to support learning but some staff do not make best use of their interactive white boards. However, pupils say the use of ICT supports them well in school and at home, especially through the learning tools, produced by the headteacher, for the school website. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to lessons, especially in the EYFS and for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Occasionally, during periods when pupils are taught all together, the skills of the assistants are not fully utilised.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Staff have been successful in making the curriculum relevant to pupils' needs and preparing them well for the future. Staff have developed themes and topics which are challenging and interest the pupils. The addition of Spanish throughout the school is a big hit. The way that staff now plan learning has helped pupils understand the relevance of what they do and why literacy and numeracy are important. It has also helped them see a purpose for writing. There is clearly a depth of study, especially in the humanities, subjects which were weak at the last inspection. Personal, health, social and citizenship education are well planned. Staff are careful to ensure that the National Curriculum programmes are included. They link these to the individual topics, although they are not mapped on the overall plan to ensure that complete coverage of the National Curriculum programmes can be checked from the outset. There is a vast array of clubs after school, which include those for sport, leisure, and academic interest, with a high take-up by pupils. Links with other schools for sporting activities and modern foreign language support are strong.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care for the pupils is outstanding and parents strongly support the view that children feel safe and are particularly well cared for. Safeguarding requirements are met and attendance very rigorously monitored. Pupils' health and safety are very well promoted and risk assessments are accurate. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the school makes good use of external professionals to aid pupils' development. Academic guidance is good. Staff have a detailed knowledge of each pupil and work closely with parents and other agencies to support them. The school's excellent tracking system enables staff to quickly identify those who are underachieving and to keep a close eye on how pupils are progressing towards their challenging and specific targets in English and mathematics. These are to be extended to include science. Assessment in these key subjects is thorough but not all subjects are assessed to the same extent and this is an improvement which the school plans to make. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly. Pupils are well informed about their progress through comments which are supportive but also tell them specifically how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good improvement since the last inspection is a result of the effective work of the headteacher and his partnership with governors. Governance is excellent. Governors are extremely knowledgeable, highly organised and bring a great range of expertise to the school. They challenge the leadership of the school extremely well and hold staff accountable for achievement and standards. They have thorough systems to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. Many also 'roll their sleeves up' and help out in lessons, practically with the building and use their skills to check on finance. As a result, the school has virtually eliminated its deficit. The senior leadership team includes two governors, and has been a very effective force in addressing the issues which arose from the staff turbulence and in setting the school on the right track. The monitoring of the headteacher is thorough, leads to effective self-review and to careful adjustments to practice. Subject leaders have not yet extended their roles sufficiently with regard to all aspects of monitoring and evaluation, especially teaching and learning but have made a big contribution towards the development of a revised, effective curriculum.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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?	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
The extent to which 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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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?	2
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?	2
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	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

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

15 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Welbourn Church of England Primary School, Welbourn, Lincolnshire, LN5 0NH

Thank you for showing me around and telling me about all the things you do at school. This was very helpful. I found my visit a real pleasure and I was very grateful for the enthusiastic way you talked about how much you enjoy learning. You told me that teachers make learning fun and you are really keen to go on visits to make what you are doing 'come alive'. The 'boat project' in Class 3 was certainly a good example of how your teachers are helping you link what you learn in different lessons.

Your headteacher and staff have done a lot to improve the school and you and your parents are very positive about all the changes that have been made. Your excellent behaviour, outstanding attendance, and extremely good relationships are all products of how the staff go the extra mile to help you in school. Well done!

Their good teaching, exciting lessons and the programme of activities, in and out of school, also contribute to all of this and to the good progress you make. Your governors provide excellent support and you were very grateful for the way they helped some of you who were struggling with learning when they acted as 'learning mentors'.

There are many positive things about your school and I have asked your headteacher and governors to make a few further improvements. These are to help you make even better progress and reach even higher standards.

- I have asked them to think about how they can challenge you even more, especially those who can learn faster than others. So, when staff list the success criteria to help you assess what you have learned, I have suggested they think about different criteria for the different groups in the class.
- You know that your staff have different responsibilities, including for subjects. I have asked them to take on a greater role in checking on how you are doing, how you are taught and how they can make what you learn in subjects even better.

Best wishes and good luck for the future

George Derby

Lead inspector