

# St Bartholomew's CE Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120551
<b>Local Authority</b>	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	313666
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marina Gough

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	75
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Byrn Chappell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sally Birks
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 May 2003
<b>School address</b>	Leaveslake Drove West Pinchbeck Spalding Lincolnshire PE11 3QG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01775 640357
<b>Fax number</b>	01775 640357

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is set in a very rural location and draws pupils mainly from the local area. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, and their attainment when they join the school in the Reception class is usually below expectations. Almost all are from White British backgrounds. An average number of pupils have learning difficulties. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school at times other than the normal admission and transfer times varies from year-to-year but is currently in line with the national picture. The school is working towards the Healthy Schools status.

## 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 knows itself well. Under the strong leadership of the new headteacher the school is very successfully tackling a legacy of under-achievement in Key Stage 2. Because of the focus and commitment of a hard-working and dedicated staff team, gaps in learning are being identified and addressed, and the work of pupils across Key Stage 2 is already beginning to show real signs of improvement.

Standards are below average when the children start school in the Reception class. Children make satisfactory progress overall in the Foundation Stage, and good progress in Key Stage 1. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, pupils are now achieving well, because of good teaching, although standards are currently below average in Year 6. Throughout the school, reading and writing are relatively weaker areas of pupils' learning, and the school has put some good strategies in place to raise standards in these areas. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are satisfactory but pupils do not have sufficient access to computers.

Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons move at a lively pace and teachers are effective in the way in which they explain new learning to the pupils and the way they use questions to probe understanding. Teachers make good use of assessment information to ensure that activities are well matched to pupils' levels of ability. Most pupils respond well in lessons. Behaviour is very good for all age groups. Pupils enjoy coming to school and especially enjoy 'Children's Choice' afternoons which are an innovative part of the curriculum introduced by the new headteacher. The school encourages pupils to maintain a healthy lifestyle and does much to ensure their safety and well-being. However, because the provision for ICT is poor, pupils do not make enough use of computers as tools for learning. This means that older Key Stage 2 pupils especially are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they might be. There are not enough opportunities for children in the Reception class to learn through play.

The school is led well by an enthusiastic and determined headteacher who has set a clear and rigorous agenda for improvement. She enjoys the support of a very effective governing body. Subject coordinators are beginning to take a lead in developing individual subjects but their roles are at an early stage of development. The school has a good capacity to improve further, and gives good value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. From a below average starting point, the children make satisfactory progress overall. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and benefit from the positive example set by the Year 1 pupils who are in the same class. They quickly settle into the routines of school. Attainment in other areas of learning is broadly satisfactory, although slightly below the expectations in language and number. Teaching is satisfactory. Whilst the teaching has some good features, not enough emphasis is placed on the notion of children learning through play and some of the activities are too formal. The curriculum is satisfactory.

Basic skills of language and number are covered well, but there are not enough free and structured play activities to reinforce learning and help children to make their own choices and decisions about their work.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in reading and writing throughout the school.
- Improve the provision for ICT and its use to support learning.
- Increase the range of play opportunities for the children in Reception.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

In Key Stage 1, pupils build effectively upon the satisfactory progress made in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve well, attaining standards that are broadly in line with the national average. In Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well, but there are gaps in the learning of older pupils because of past weaknesses in teaching during a period when there were many staff changes. Attainment amongst the current Year 6 is slightly below average, although higher attaining pupils within the group are well challenged and are on course to attain the challenging targets that the school has set. The high percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities within the class also do well. Throughout the school, standards in reading and writing are relatively weaker than those in mathematics. The school is successfully addressing these weaknesses with strategies such as guided reading and increased opportunities for writing within a real and meaningful context. Standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory but pupils do not achieve as well as they might in this area because of a shortage of computers. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well because of the very good support they receive from teaching assistants.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils throughout the school are very well behaved. They are polite, friendly and considerate of others. The school council is excellent, and has had a real impact on some aspects of school life. Pupils are keen to talk about their work and say that they are happy to come to school. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Bullying is not a problem and occasional incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with swiftly. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are very tolerant of others and diversity is recognised and celebrated. The school does much to encourage the pupils to maintain a healthy lifestyle and provides opportunities for a good amount of physical exercise. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Whilst pupils work well in teams and cooperate well, their weak computer skills mean that they are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they might be.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, teachers plan and prepare activities and lessons well and use questions to very good effect to check understanding and to extend pupils' learning. Lessons move at a good pace and are lively and interesting. The

use of interactive whiteboards is good in some classes, but in others this resource is not used to maximum effect. Throughout the school, teaching assistants work very well with individuals and small groups of pupils, mainly supporting lower attaining pupils so that they can take a full and active part in all activities.

Assessment information is used well to track and monitor the pupils' progress and attainment, and to ensure that activities are well matched to the pupils' levels of ability.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, enriched by a good range of visits, visiting speakers and clubs. The available teaching time is used extremely well, especially the morning sessions which are split effectively into three lessons. Pupils speak with great enthusiasm about the Wednesday 'Children's Choice' afternoons which offer them a wide variety of sporting and creative activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good levels of care support and guidance. Good emphasis is placed on ensuring the pupils' well-being, health and safety, and governors play a good role in carrying out regular checks of the building and grounds. Child protection procedures are well known to staff, and teachers regularly undergo training in this aspect of their work. Pupils say that they know to whom they can turn if they are in trouble, and agree that the school is a happy place where everyone is looked after well.

The school has made good strides in setting targets to help pupils to measure their own progress and identify areas where they need to improve. However, the setting of targets is a recent initiative and so its impact on learning has yet to be measured.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The newly appointed headteacher has had a significant and positive impact on the school. She has rightly focused her attentions on raising standards at the end of Key Stage 2, and the tracking data indicates clear evidence of early but notable progress. Subject coordinators are now in place but they are at an early stage of taking the lead in their areas.

The school benefits from the input of a very strong and able governing body. Governors know the school very well and are extremely supportive of the headteacher and staff. Their new system of having lead governors to take responsibility for key aspects of the school's life and work makes efficient use of their time and maximises their individual areas of expertise.

The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate but focuses too much on the past and not enough on recent progress. As a result, some of the evaluations are a little too harsh. Under the leadership of the new headteacher, and with recent staff changes, the school has a good capacity to move forward.

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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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is 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
How well 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 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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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	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**

28 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Bartholomew's CE Primary School, West Pinchbeck, Spalding, PE11 3QJ

I am writing to thank you for making me feel so welcome when I inspected your school a short time ago. I think that St Bartholomew's is a good school. You all enjoy coming to school and work hard in lessons. I was very pleased to see how polite and friendly you all are, and I really enjoyed meeting the school council.

You all make good progress in lessons, although many of you still need to work harder with your reading and writing which are areas where you are not doing as well as you could. Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and they are doing a good job. You enjoy the activities that are provided for you, and you told me that you especially enjoy Wednesday afternoons when you have 'Children's Choice'. The school is a safe place for you to be, and you know that you can go to any adult if you have a problem.

The new headteacher is doing a good job and she knows exactly what needs to be done next to make the school even better. The governors are very helpful and do their work well. I have asked them to make sure that they increase the number of computers in the school so that you have more opportunities to use them to help you with your learning. I have also asked the headteacher to make sure that the Reception children have more opportunities for playing, as this is a really good way for them to learn.

With best wishes from

Marina Gough Lead inspector