

Dunholme St Chad's CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120569
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
Inspection number	313676
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Brown

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	155
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Maurice Keyte
Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Ruff
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2002
School address	Ryland Road Dunholme Lincoln LN2 3NE
Telephone number	01673 860597
Fax number	01673 860597

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than the average sized school. Almost all of the children are from White British backgrounds with a very small number from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils entitled to a free school meal is below average. The proportion of children who need additional support because they find learning difficult is in line with that found nationally. A number of these children have a statement of special educational need. Significant numbers of pupils join the school after the normal starting point. Almost half of the current Year 6 joined the school in Key Stage 2, with 8 pupils joining in the last two years, 4 of those joining at the beginning of Year 6. The average level of development for children starting at the school is usually in line with national expectations. The school has an Active Schools Award.

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. It has now emerged from a period of change and development that has been a cause of concern for a minority of parents. Changes in the locality caused the number on roll firstly to increase, and then to fall, requiring changes to the organisation of the classes and alterations to staffing. During the last year there was a sequence of three headteachers in six months. The situation is now stable and the school is functioning well, although it is clear from some of the parental responses in the inspection questionnaires that not all parents fully understand what is happening in the school. Nevertheless, there has been good progress since the last inspection. The new headteacher is giving a clear direction to the work of the school and has the strong support of the governors and staff. The leadership and management of the school are good, therefore its capacity to continue to improve is strong.

The pupils attain standards that are above the national average in all areas. They make good progress at all stages and their achievements are good. Last year, at the height of the changes in the school, the pupils in Year 6 performed very well in the end of year assessments for English, but underperformed in mathematics and science, which were not then the focus of the school's development. This shortcoming has now been addressed, and evidence from the school's tracking data indicates that pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to outperform national expectations in all three subjects.

The personal development and well-being of the pupils are good. Pupils have excellent opportunities to take part in sport and other activities which makes their understanding of what they need to do to be healthy outstanding. The Christian ethos that forms the basis for the work of the school is very apparent in the highly effective way in which all pupils are included in all aspects of its work, whatever their background or needs. The pupils usually behave well, and even the youngest, understand the 'Golden Rules' and steps to good behaviour that the staff have introduced. A minority of parents expressed concerns about the standards of behaviour, but there was no evidence to show that all staff were not well equipped to deal with the difficulties posed by specific behavioural issues. Indeed, the calm, balanced and measured approach is one of the strengths of the staff team who believe that, 'every child must be given equal opportunities to thrive.'

Teaching and learning are good. Great teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants make classroom organisation particularly effective. This work is effectively supported by the good quality curriculum, where there are particular strengths in literacy and numeracy, as well as personal, social, health and emotional learning. The care, guidance and support that the pupils receive are good and all statutory requirements are fully met. Staff have thoughtfully evaluated what works well and what has worked less well. Pupils have targets for literacy, which work well, address their needs and guide the next steps of their development. However, when it became clear that the system of targets for numeracy and science were less effective these were dropped and a whole school approach has yet to be implemented.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Staff work closely with the adjoining pre-school group, allowing a smooth transition into school life. Good quality teaching by all the staff in the Reception class helps the children to settle quickly and enjoy all aspects of school. As a result, most children exceed the expected levels

by the time they move into Year 1. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good, resulting in productive curriculum planning with interesting topics for the children to follow. This ensures there is a careful match of the tasks and activities to children's needs. This is backed up by accurate assessments and systematic observations by the staff. This enables them to track the children's progress and target interventions appropriately making their learning effective.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend, develop and personalise the target setting process for pupils taking into account the level of their skills and the full range of their specific needs.
- Find new ways to develop and extend communication between home and school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From the time they start at the school to the time they leave, pupils' progress at a faster than the normal rate. By the end of Year 2, teachers' assessments in reading, writing and mathematics show that standards are above the national average and steadily improving. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, results in the national assessments for English, mathematics and science are above those normally found. The exception to this picture occurred last year when, despite very high results in English, the outcome of the Year 6 assessments in mathematics and science were below the national average. The staff have now taken steps to rectify this deficit and the recent assessments of the current Year 6 indicate that pupils will once again attain results that are above those expected in all three areas.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupil's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Behaviour is good because there are clear 'Golden Rules'. The school teaches pupils right from wrong and a host of other important skills through the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) initiative. The very few who occasionally disrupt learning improve due to the quality of care they receive from the school staff and outside support. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of exercise and a balanced diet. They feel safe and are well prepared to cope with risks in the wider community. They have a good awareness of road and water safety. Pupils enjoy coming to school because lessons are often fun and playtimes are valuable opportunities to be with friends. Attendance is good and the school monitors this aspect carefully. Pupils make a good contribution to school and village life, taking on responsibilities such as school council work with pride. As a result, together with their good basic skills in English and mathematics, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is consistently good across the school. Pupils make good progress because teachers plan effectively to meet all pupils' needs. Teachers make lessons interesting by providing much practical work. Pupils enjoy this approach and have many opportunities to try their ideas out and then discuss them with a partner or in groups. Teachers have a clear understanding of what

needs to be learned, which they share with pupils at the start of lessons and recap at the end. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to provide good support for the very few individuals who need extra help to moderate their behaviour. Classrooms are lively and stimulating. Teachers are skilled at assessing and tracking pupils' progress, although the best use is not made of all information to set pupils individual targets to reach in mathematics and science.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is accurately focused on developing pupils' knowledge and skills in literacy, numeracy and science and builds well on their prior knowledge. Teachers are increasingly exploring links between subjects to meet the needs of learners better and to make lessons more interesting. Enrichment of the curriculum is good. The range of visitors and visits brings lessons to life for pupils. The wide range of after school clubs, with strong emphasis on good health and fair play, is a good feature of the school. Pupils' emotional well-being is well provided for through the strong emphasis on personal, social and health education. The curriculum benefits from the positive use of information and communication technology. The curriculum meets the needs of those who need extra support with their learning well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are happy and secure with all necessary procedures in place to protect them in school. All the staff support pupils' personal development very effectively. The school tracks pupils' academic progress well and teachers are now making good use of the information to target improvements for groups and individuals in literacy. There are group targets in numeracy, but not a consistent system for individual targets. Effective links with the high school ensures transfer arrangements are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, the leadership team and the governors have a clear and accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas in need of development. Staff morale is good, a direct result of the effective teamwork across the school. Everyone is hardworking and committed to the school's success. The positive attitudes and good relationships have allowed the new headteacher to work with staff to review what works well and what needs to be improved. The governors are very effective, supporting and promoting the school, and in acting as a critical friend overseeing the developments and checking progress.

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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	2

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

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

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	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

31 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dunholme St Chad's CE Primary School, Lincoln LN2 3NE

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school. I would like to share with you what we found when we spent time in your lessons and talked with you and your teachers.

We think you go to a good school. We could see that there have been many changes at your school and we can understand why some of your parents are still concerned about what has happened in the past. However, we now think that the school is settled and working well again. We were particularly impressed by the excellent way you understand about keeping yourselves healthy, and that so many of you have great opportunities to take part in sports and other activities.

One of the things that really pleased us was the fact that the standards you attain are better than those normally found in most schools. We could see that your teachers and teaching assistants work really hard to help you to learn. This is not just about the subjects that you study, such as English and mathematics, but also about helping you to understand about yourselves and how you get on with others. We were really impressed with some of the ideas they have introduced.

When we were discussing your achievements with your teachers, we asked them to try to find ways in which they can use their ideas for literacy targets, which work so well, and introduce something similar for mathematics and science. We also asked Mrs Ruff and the governors to explore new ways to tell your parents what is happening in school. We were worried that some of your parents do not understand the changes that have taken place and what is happening, or what is working really well.

Thank you once again for your warm welcome.

All the best for the future.

Roger Brown

Lead inspector