

# The St Gilbert of Sempringham Church of England Primary School, Pointon

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120606
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313691
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanne Harvey

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	57
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Celia Paterson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Emma Hunt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 April 2004
<b>School address</b>	West Road Pointon Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 0NA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01529240465
<b>Fax number</b>	01529240465

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average sized school, serving the village of Poynton near Sleaford and several other surrounding villages. The number of children eligible for free school meals is similar to national average. There are very few children from other than White British backgrounds and none in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly less than in most schools and the number of children with a statement of special educational need is similar to most schools. A high number of children start and leave school other than at the normal times. The school has achieved Healthy School 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 where children make good progress. The headteacher is highly effective in leading the school, working in partnership with staff, governors and parents to promote its caring, respectful, inclusive and Christian ethos. One parent said 'I am incredibly happy with all aspects of this school. The atmosphere is very friendly and family orientated.' This view was representative of many who responded to the questionnaire and echoes the views expressed by staff, governors and children alike.

Ongoing improvements to facilities and resources support the further development of an already good and well-enriched curriculum. This ensures that pupils enjoy coming to school and that they are keen to learn and work hard. Children are offered a range of extra activities that appeal to most interests, extend learning and are highly valued by parents and children. The school is highly effective in promoting children's personal development and well-being, which is outstanding. Pupils behave extremely well. They are considerate, polite, and proud to take on extra responsibilities that make a real difference to life in school. This has come about because all adults are committed to ensuring children are happy, receive good care and are equipped with the skills to prepare them well for their future lives. Those who find their learning more difficult are also supported to achieve well. Leaders recognise that academic guidance can be improved still further by making sure that all children are clear about their next steps in learning, how to achieve them and how to measure their own success.

The quality of teaching and learning is good as a result of the effective measures for improvement introduced by the headteacher. Teaching is creative and lively in its approach, and uses rigorous assessments to plan work that challenges all children. Consequently, children's progress has quickened. Leaders recognise that this approach is not embedded throughout school. For example, the standards children reach and the progress they make in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2, have not yet quite caught up with those of mathematics. Children in the Foundation Stage do well because provision, including teaching is good.

Good leadership and management have brought rigour to systems for checking on the work of the school and clarity to action planning for improvement. These are being developed to ensure that all curriculum leaders are enabled to play their full part in quickening the pace of school improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children settle quickly into the stimulating environment of the Reception area, shared with Year 1 pupils. Good teaching ensures children progress well and is effective in encouraging them to be independent, to cooperate and to talk about their learning. Consequently, when they enter Year 1, most have achieved levels of knowledge and skills expected for their age and some have surpassed them. Adults plan enjoyable activities, both indoors and outdoors, that engage children and encourage them to work hard. Leaders recognise the need to underpin this planning by developing further the systems used to collect information about children. There is a suitable balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Plans to deliver these through more integrated themes are developing well. Evidence in school confirms that improvements to the teaching of early reading skills have begun to quicken children's progress here.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Quicken progress in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 by ensuring all teachers use accurate assessments to plan work that consistently challenges all children to do as well as they can.
- Ensure all children are clear about their next steps of learning, how to achieve them and how to measure their own success.
- Ensure that all curriculum leaders play their full part in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school in order to quicken further the pace of school improvement.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children's levels of knowledge and skills on entry to the school vary considerably year on year between subjects and between the extremely small groups that enter. Although skills on entry are currently broadly average it is difficult to draw comparisons between groups. Unsurprisingly, standards attained at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated. However, improvements made to the quality of teaching and learning have resulted in quickening progress in Years 1 and 2 which is now good overall. Indeed, children are on target to surpass the levels expected of them in mathematics and to equal them in reading and writing. Standards attained at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were above average, representing satisfactory progress for these children. However, whilst evidence in school suggests that children are currently on target to achieve average standards overall, this represents good progress in Years 3 to 6 from a low starting point for these children. An increasing number are on target to exceed the expected levels. Those children who find learning more difficult are supported well to make good progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Children have extremely positive attitudes to learning and love school. Children's spiritual, moral and social understanding is excellent because its development is embedded throughout the life and work of the school, underpinned by a strong Christian ethos. They grow in self-awareness, think in moral terms and reflect upon their feelings and actions with a level of maturity beyond their years. Children work and play together exceptionally well. They share ideas, listen to one another and celebrate each other's achievements. Children make a good contribution to the life of their school. They are particularly proud of the difference they can make to the enjoyment of others either as members of the school council or as captain or vice captain of their school houses. Their cultural understanding is developed well through initiatives such as the multi-cultural week, and a programme of assemblies.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers promote high levels of confidence and positive attitudes through excellent and trusting relationships, ensuring pupils work hard. Careful management ensures children's behaviour is exceptional. The best lessons are carefully planned. They are based on accurate assessment to ensure that work is well matched to children's needs and that the children are very clear about what they need to learn. These lessons feature practical 'hands on' activities to engage children and allow them to practice what they have learned. Good subject knowledge is used in

imaginative ways to ensure high levels of interest, engagement and challenge for all and that learning moves at a swift pace. Skilled teaching assistants provide support for individuals and groups which enables them to do well. Leaders recognise that these best features are not consistently applied across the school and that assessment is occasionally not accurate enough or rigorously used to ensure that all pupils are challenged to do as well as they can.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Good strides have been made in moulding a curriculum that is specifically suited to children's needs and includes activities that are relevant and interesting. Themed events, such as a multi-cultural week benefit children's knowledge and understanding across several subjects, helping them to learn well and providing them with lasting memories. Visitors and visits, including an exciting residential for older pupils, extend and enliven the curriculum. Provision for personal and social education is excellent and results in children's outstanding personal development. The school modifies its curriculum effectively so that those with specific educational or physical needs are included well. A suitable range of extra-curricular provision includes the arts, sports and the promotion of life skills, including gardening. Children are offered the opportunity to work with a music specialist and to learn a modern foreign language.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's inclusive, supportive and Christian ethos is successfully led by the headteacher, and children and parents readily acknowledge her influence on the quality of pastoral support they receive, which is very good. All the required checks are carried out on staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Systems for checking children's progress in mathematics and English are good. Consequently, those who need additional support are quickly identified and supported well. In other subjects these systems are still being developed. Some children say they find target setting helpful, but not all know their academic targets well enough, how to achieve them or how to measure their own success.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has united staff and governors around a clear vision and strategic direction. Governors carry out their role well and are increasingly able to hold leaders to account. The views of all stakeholders are valued. This is particularly evident in the way children and their parents talk about the school. The school is already an important centre for its community and it is central to the headteacher's vision that this aspect of its work continues to strengthen. In a relatively short time, a good capacity to continue to improve has been demonstrated, for example in the way that underachievement has been tackled and the quality of teaching and learning has been improved. Leadership is just beginning to be devolved. Systems are in place to develop the capacity of leaders and managers at all levels, but not all curriculum leaders have yet been enabled to play their full part in quickening the pace of school improvement.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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	3
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

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**Annex B**

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

23 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The St Gilbert of Sempringham CofE Primary School, Pointon, NG34 0NA.

I was pleased to meet you and all the staff and very much enjoyed the time I spent with you. Thank you for making me feel so welcome, talking to me and helping me to find out so much about you and your school. I particularly enjoyed hearing you sing so beautifully in assembly and seeing you proudly carry out the jobs that you do around school.

You go to a good school where all the grown-ups do their best for you. They look after you and care for you well. Your teachers and teaching assistants make learning interesting and enjoyable and they work hard to help you make good progress in lessons. Your excellent behaviour and good manners in class, around school and in the playground, help you to learn well too. It is clear that you are extremely happy at school. Your teachers and your friends help you to feel important and safe there.

Everyone at school is keen to find ways to help you do as well as you possibly can. Although most of you now make good progress whilst you are at the school, I think you could do even better, particularly in your early reading and writing. I would like to see you make at least as much progress and reach at least the same standards in these subjects as you do in mathematics by the time you enter the juniors. I would like those who lead the school to make sure that teachers' assessments of your work are always accurate. I would like them to use these assessments carefully to make sure you are always given work which challenges you to do as well as you can, especially those of you who sometimes find your school work easier. Teachers and teaching assistants are going to make sure that you are always clear about the next steps of your learning and how you are going to achieve them. The headteacher is going to make sure that everyone who has a role in improving the work of the school is enabled to play their part in making this happen as quickly as possible.

I am sure that the headteacher and all the other staff will continue to do everything they can to help you. You can play your part by continuing to behave well, work hard and come to school every day.

I would like to wish you the very best for the future.

Joanne Harvey

Lead inspector