

The Saint Hugh's Catholic Primary School, Lincoln

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120617
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313696
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Georgina Beasley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	253
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Michael O'Donoghue
Headteacher	Mr Gregory Hughes
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2003
School address	Woodfield Avenue Doddington Park Lincoln Lincolnshire LN6 0SH
Telephone number	01522501137
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils who attend this above average size primary school start in the Reception year with broadly average attainment, although it varies from year to year. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average and a few speak English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are more boys on roll than girls.

The school has recently gained the Gold Artsmark and Healthy Schools Awards.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has some outstanding aspects. Teachers' commitment to pupils' achievement and excellent relationships result in excellent personal development and well-being, typified by pupils' positive attitudes, exceptionally good behaviour and classroom environments that are purposeful and conducive to good learning. The school's strong focus on pupils' personal development results in high levels of self-esteem and produces an acute understanding of their own and others' feelings. High levels of care ensure everyone knows exceptionally well how to stay safe in school and nurtures an equally strong awareness of healthy living. As a result, pupils enjoy school greatly and attendance is good. Nearly all parents feel fully involved. They value the school's caring ethos and its commitment to ensure their children are 'rounded individuals by the time they leave'. Very strong partnerships enrich pupils' learning experiences highly effectively and enable them to make a good contribution to the school and local community.

Teaching and learning are good. The school has revised the way it tracks pupils' progress. Consequently, the leadership team, teachers and pupils have a clear understanding of progress and achievement in core skills and can target learning accordingly. There are some examples of excellent practice in which teachers plan learning with exceptional precision, reviewing and guiding learning very effectively. However, in a few lessons, teachers do not identify precisely enough what they want pupils to learn. As a result, the pace of learning slows and the needs of those who would benefit from an extra boost are not always targeted consistently well.

Achievement and progress are good. Standards are above average. Pupils are currently making particularly good progress in writing. Teachers plan imaginative ways to motivate pupils' writing across the curriculum. This has raised boys' achievement in particular. Improvements in the curriculum for children in the Reception year and in the quality of target setting throughout the school are resulting in focused support and guidance for pupils' personal and academic learning. Individualised teaching ensures that pupils who need extra support to learn effectively make excellent progress. The particularly rich curriculum gives superb opportunities for those with a particular gift or talent to excel, and helps all pupils to develop effective skills for their future well-being.

Leadership and management are good. The excellent leadership of the headteacher and governing body has contributed much to the effectiveness of the new senior leadership team. Together, they are committed strongly to pupils' achievement, providing exceptionally clear direction and purpose. The school has good capacity to improve. Focused monitoring of its work and accurate self-evaluation have led to strong recent improvement. Nevertheless, there is more to be done to ensure that these processes become routinely established, so the excellent practice in some classes is spread across the school to maximum effect. Numerous changes in staff over the last few years have been managed well.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Considerable and successful efforts to provide pupils with a broad range of experiences in all areas of learning have been successful. Teaching and learning are good. Careful assessments and tracking of progress help adults to target precisely the learning needs of individuals and groups of children. As a result, progress is good and an average number of children reach expected goals in all areas. This is particularly so in personal development where progress is

excellent. Planning for learning indoors and in the outside area supports teaching effectively and meets diverse needs. However, the adults sometimes tend to direct too much, limiting opportunities for children to develop their own ideas and imaginative uses of resources.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers' plans always focus sharply on the quality of learning, so all pupils are challenged to achieve even higher standards.
- Make sure processes that have led to recent improvement are now used routinely by everyone, so where excellence is identified it is spread across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress and, by the end of Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement since this group of pupils started in the Reception year is good. Pupils' work and assessment information indicates that standards are still rising with girls reaching higher levels than boys. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science, reflecting sustained good achievement since the last inspection. The differences in boys' and girls' achievement, evident in the present Year 6 when they were in Year 2, have largely disappeared. Pupils who need extra support to learn achieve extremely well owing to very well-planned and targeted teaching in small groups. Pupils' good skills in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) prepare them well for later life. Standards in other subjects, especially art, music and physical education are high.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' show great sensitivity and respect for others' feelings and spontaneously applaud each other's personal and academic achievements. Through the rich curriculum and numerous extra-curricular activities, pupils develop very good respect and awareness of their own cultural heritage and learn to respect the cultures of people from different countries. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to eat healthily. Their excellent sporting achievements reflect their extensive engagement in physical activity and ensure they keep fit. Pupils enjoy school greatly. They find it a safe place to be and report hardly any aggressive behaviour. Consequently, attendance is good. Pupils' contribution to school life is good. They make excellent contributions to the local and church communities through sporting and musical activities. There is further scope to develop the leadership roles of school council members and in involving them in making decisions on aspects that directly affect their lives in school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers think carefully about the best way to present lessons. For example, they use film clips, debates and interesting resources to capture girls' and boys' imaginations equally. Teachers' planning usually identifies precisely what to teach to meet pupils' individual targets, focusing intently on their different learning needs. On the few occasions when this is not the case, it is

because planning focuses on what pupils will do, rather than what they must learn. The pace of learning then slows and the precision with which learning is supported is less effective. Many teachers target questions to particular pupils, drawing them into discussions and probing and challenging their ideas effectively. This helps pupils to develop the skills to learn for themselves. Teaching in small groups is used highly effectively to support pupils who need specific help to achieve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum has improved tremendously since the previous inspection and provides pupils with rich and varied experiences. Teachers plan together to ensure that interesting work is provided for pupils, often making it relevant for them by linking elements of different subjects. Pupils use ICT confidently to enhance their work. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities makes a very strong contribution to pupils' attainment in many subjects, adding much to their personal development and enjoyment. The school's excellent personal, social and health education raises pupils' self-esteem and awareness of the community, as well as showing them how to keep healthy and safe. Excellent art, music and sporting events provide all pupils, including those with particular gifts and talents, opportunities to develop specialist skills. An annual production, music tuition, and regular performances by the choir and small orchestral groups, in school and the local community, produce a strong musical and expressive arts tradition. French lessons and an Italian club enable pupils to learn foreign languages.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support for pupils' personal development are very strong. All members of staff understand and follow rigorously the comprehensive procedures for keeping pupils safe and healthy. Consequently, all government requirements are met fully. Pupils feel very safe in school knowing that if they have a problem, adults will listen and take immediate action. Pupils' academic progress is tracked carefully so that teachers can identify pupils who are struggling and those whose gifts and talents need extra encouragement. Pupils understand assessment procedures and target setting because they are so well involved in deciding their targets. They understand that, 'Targets help you to work towards improving your levels. Because of teachers' support and comments, you want to work really hard and get better.'

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good. Its strength lies in the work of the headteacher who, with the very good support of the newly formed senior leadership team and excellent governing body, is constantly reviewing and evaluating initiatives, and finding new ways to improve their impact. This, together with the school's good self-evaluation gives the school exceptionally clear direction to its work. Subject leaders contribute well to improving provision in their subjects and their work has led to recent improvement in pupils' progress, particularly in the Reception unit and in writing. Targets set for pupils' attainment and for staff in their performance management are challenging and hold teachers to account for the progress of their pupils. The school is now seeking to consolidate its improvement initiatives, so they become routine and sustain further development. Governors are very involved with the school

and they have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They play a lead role in the strategic planning for the school's ongoing development.

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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?	1
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	1

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	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

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?	1
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	1
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of The Saint Hugh's Catholic Primary School, Lincoln, LN6 0SH

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. Thank you especially to those of you who took the time to talk to us about your learning and achievements.

We agree with you that yours is a good school and it has some outstanding aspects. In particular, we are impressed with your excellent attitudes and behaviour which result in you getting along with each other extremely well and ensure you learn well in lessons. Your smiles and friendly greetings show you enjoy school. Your attendance is good. You know how to keep yourselves and each other safe and take great care not to hurt anyone's feelings. Your teachers are doing a good job. They work closely together to plan some exciting activities for you to do. The curriculum is rich, particularly the number of clubs, extra-curricular activities, art, music and sporting events. These help you to develop particular talents, to keep fit and healthy, and to learn the skills you will need as you get older. Well done on achieving the Gold Artsmark and Healthy Schools Award, a reflection of the strong contribution you make to the school community. We have asked for improvements in your teachers' planning, so they are all clear about what they want you to learn in lessons. You can help them by continuing to know your targets as well as you do and knowing what you need to do to improve your work.

You have an excellent headteacher who works closely with all the staff, governors and parents to make sure the school becomes even more successful. Everyone is keen to make sure that the school continues to improve and to get even better over the coming years. We have asked the adults to spread out the excellent features of your school, so it becomes outstanding in everything.

We wish you all the very best for the future. Have a safe and enjoyable summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

Georgie Beasley

Lead inspector