

Thurlby Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120390
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	327267
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Martyn Skinner

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	199
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	27
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Didsbury
Headteacher	Mr Graham Clegg
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lawrance Park Crown Lane Thurlby Bourne Lincolnshire PE10 0EZ
Telephone number	01778423311

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2008
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Fax number

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Thurlby Community Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school in a rural area of South Lincolnshire. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Attainment on entry to the Reception year is typical for children's age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities is well below average. The school has been successful in gaining several awards, including the Sport England Activemark in 2007, the Football Association Chartered Standard Award in 2008 and the National Clean Air Award, also in 2008.

Before- and after-school childcare on the school premises is managed by a private provider.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Thurlby Community Primary School is a good school with many strengths and a well-deserved good reputation. It is an integral part of the local community with a strong family feel and a positive ethos which owes much to the dedication and commitment of staff to the welfare of all pupils. Mutual respect abounds and older pupils are delighted to support younger ones. Pastoral care is outstanding and parents testify to the high level of support that pupils receive. One parent summed up the views of many with the following comment: 'I don't want my children to grow up as I would love them to stay at Thurlby forever.'

As a result of high level of care, pupils love their school, feel safe and get on very well with each other. Behaviour is generally excellent. The school works extremely well in partnership with parents and outside agencies to promote learners' well-being. This is an outstanding area of the school's work. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is sensitively taught across the curriculum in ways that are meaningful through special themes and studies of different religions. Pupils' awareness of the diversity of British society has improved, but there are currently insufficient opportunities for pupils to mix with children from other backgrounds.

Most pupils, including those who find learning difficult, make good progress from the moment they enter the school. Standards are above average in all three core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement considering the pupils' broadly average starting points. Nevertheless, the school is not complacent and leaders are exploring ways of raising achievement from good to outstanding. The school recognises that progress in English and mathematics, though good, is not as rapid as it could be.

The curriculum is good, with clear and meaningful links between subjects helping pupils to enjoy and make connections in their learning. The school timetable has been reorganised since the last inspection and sufficient time is now given to all subjects, with the exception of physical education (PE) at Key Stage 1, where an insufficient amount of time is allocated to the subject.

Teaching is good. Pupils learn well in lessons that challenge and spur them to make good progress. Where teaching is strongest, relationships are excellent and children are fully involved in the excitement of learning. On occasions, pupils' work is over-directed and opportunities for them to take responsibility and direct their own learning are not always taken. Pupils greatly enjoy many practical activities throughout the school from Reception to Year 6. However, the lack of a covered outdoor area currently limits children's opportunities to play outside.

The school is driven forward by good leadership and management. Governors are fully involved in establishing the strategic direction of the school, with the chair of governors and the headteacher working in close partnership to raise achievement. Considering the advances made since its last inspection, the school is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children join the Reception class, their skills are broadly typical for their age. Skilled teaching, combined with excellent care, ensures they make good progress and they reach above-average standards in most areas by the time they enter Year 1. Adults nurture and care for the children exceptionally well and they flourish in the warm and positive environment.

Children settle happily and quickly become familiar with class routines, behaving very well and developing into confident young learners. The class teacher plans an exciting range of activities that cover all areas of learning. There is a good balance of organised and free choice activities. Children greatly enjoy learning through play, both indoors and in the outdoor area. However, there is no canopy outside and this is restricting the range of activities and the extent to which children can use the area during inclement weather.

Leadership and management of the EYFS are good, and sensitive induction arrangements prepare children well for their first days in school. Links with local pre-school groups are supportive and the EYFS leader is working with other settings in order to strengthen the sharing of assessment and pastoral information when children join at the start of their Reception year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress in English and mathematics from good to outstanding.
- Build on good provision in the EYFS to ensure free access to outdoor learning throughout the year.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. From broadly average starting points, pupils make good progress throughout the school and reach standards that are above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Although there was a significant dip at Key Stage 2 in 2007, the data shows that this group of pupils still made good progress during their time at the school. There are no significant differences between the progress of boys and girls or of pupils with learning difficulties and their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils show outstanding enjoyment in their learning and their positive attitudes contribute to their good attendance, which is consistently above the national average. They have a good understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy; they understand the importance of healthy eating and there is a high level of participation in the wide range of extra-curricular sports. Pupils make a good contribution to school life, for example, through their roles as members of the school council, classroom monitors and house captains. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and their personal development is well supported by a good personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils take responsibility for their own actions and have a clear view of right and wrong. Their behaviour in class and around school is outstanding and they feel safe from bullying or harassment. Their sense of social responsibility extends to a good awareness of the wider community. For example, there are close links with several nearby churches and other local village organisations. Pupils organise fundraising for local and national charities, including communities in the Sudan and Uganda. Their good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, along with their very strong interpersonal skills are providing a firm basis for their future development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well because they are taught well. Lessons are appropriately structured and teachers manage pupils effectively so that positive relationships are developed. Pupils' positive attitudes to work contribute strongly to the quality of learning. They sustain their concentration and interest for lengthy periods, working very diligently, both independently and in collaboration with others. In the most successful lessons, teachers make extensive use of questioning and discussion to check progress and to give pupils the opportunity to hear each other's ideas. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) appropriately to capture the interest of children and plan lots of variety into the presentation of lessons. Consequently, children are keen to learn and to do their best. Teaching assistants are generally well deployed to support the work of class teachers, providing clear and positive input to help children make progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities which make learning exciting. Teachers make good use of meaningful cross-curricular links to enhance learning. Themed days and weeks, such as the recent 'Spanish Day', are very much enjoyed. The school modifies its curriculum effectively for pupils who find learning difficult and who make good progress alongside others. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including many sports clubs which are very well attended. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is good, with those identified in all age groups given regular opportunities to explore higher levels of learning. The timetable is well managed to ensure sufficient coverage of all subjects, with the one exception of PE in Year 1 and 2, which sometimes receives less than the required two hours a week.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a very caring environment so that all pupils can flourish. The excellent nurture is reflected in pupils' obvious enjoyment of school life. Teachers know pupils and their families very well. This means that staff are highly tuned to the needs of every child and are extremely caring and vigilant in their response to each individual. Excellent links with external agencies ensure that vulnerable children promptly receive the attention they need. Pupils receive good support and guidance in their class work. Their attainment is assessed regularly and records are used well to plan additional support. Most pupils have a clear understanding of how their work is assessed and whether they are making as much progress as they should. They are involved in setting their own targets and judging their own success. However, a few children are less certain of their targets and how to meet them. There are rigorous procedures for child protection and ensuring safety in school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, ably supported by his new deputy, effectively communicates a clear vision for the school, in which each child is highly valued. The judgements the school reaches about itself are carefully considered, accurate and well-grounded in a range of evidence, including a systematic programme of monitoring and review of the quality of teaching and learning. Areas for development are correctly identified and the school makes generally good use of performance data about individual pupils. Highly motivated subject coordinators speak enthusiastically about the work of the school to enhance pupils' learning. The leadership team is currently being re-organised to include the English co-coordinator, so that mathematics and English will both be represented at all strategic planning meetings to help the school implement further improvements to teaching and learning.

The school has very effective partnerships with other schools, outside agencies and community groups, with whom it works closely and by whom it is highly regarded. The school makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion and accepts that it does not currently do enough to provide opportunities for interaction with pupils from different backgrounds. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the views of parents and pupils and are responsive to both groups. The school is well aware of the next steps that need to be taken and has shown evidence of a good capacity for further improvement.

Governors play an active role in providing challenge and support to the school. They make a good contribution to establishing strategic direction and are clearly focused on continuing to raise the achievement of all pupils. Leaders and managers ensure that safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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
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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 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?	1
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	2
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?	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
The extent to which 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 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?	1

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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 November 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Thurlby Community Primary School, PE10 0EZ

Thank you very much for the way you helped us with the inspection of your school. You were very friendly and told us lots of interesting things about how you learn and what you most enjoy about school. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and we noticed that you are particularly good at working together in lessons - keep it up!

We agree with you that you are at a good school where you are being very well cared for. In fact, staff are excellent at looking after you! Your headteacher and teachers are also doing a good job in helping you make good progress and in introducing some new ideas to make your learning even more enjoyable.

So that the school can carry on getting better, we have asked your teachers to:

- Help you make even better progress in English and mathematics.
- Make sure that the youngest children have more opportunities to learn in their outdoor area.

I wish you all a very happy future as you continue to behave well and work hard.

Yours sincerely,

Martyn Skinner

Lead inspector