

The Market Rasen CE Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 120577 |
| Local Authority | Lincolnshire |
| Inspection number | 327310 |
| Inspection dates | 9–10 June 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Ian Jones |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements, it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 267 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Douglas Lambie |
| Headteacher | Mr Paul Thompson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23 May 2006 |
| School address | Mill Road Market Rasen Lincolnshire LN8 3BL |
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and some other subject leaders, governors, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at policies and documentation on teaching and learning, the curriculum, the procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, minutes of governors' meetings, the school development plan and information about the Early Years Foundation Stage. They analysed a total of 110 parents' questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- equality of opportunity for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- progress in writing, especially amongst boys
- the school's procedures and the use of assessment to check and track progress
- the effectiveness of subject leadership.

Information about the school

This is an above average sized school in Market Rasen, Lincolnshire. There are fewer pupils claiming free school meals than average. Pupils start school with skills that are typical for their age. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority groups. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those pupils with a statement of educational needs, is a little above that found nationally. The main needs are moderate learning difficulties. The school has achieved Healthy School status and holds the Artsmark (Gold) and Investor in People awards. A before-school breakfast club operates from the site. This provision is not managed by the governing body and will be subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Following a sharp decline in achievement in 2006, the school has turned the corner and is improving. It provides a satisfactory education for the pupils and some elements of its work are good.

Standards of attainment are average overall by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6. They are highest in mathematics, although standards were average in the 2008 standardised tests. At Key Stage 2, standards in writing fell short of what was expected in 2006. The school is successfully addressing this relative weakness, and, with the support of the local authority, has made steady improvement so that writing standards are now broadly average. Whilst the rate of progress has improved for boys and girls to satisfactory levels, boys do not do as well as girls. At Key Stage 1, pupils achieve satisfactorily, with boys and girls achieving in line with the national picture. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory and children achieve satisfactorily by the time they leave the Reception Year. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend well. They behave well and make safe and healthy lifestyle choices. They contribute well to the work of the school by taking on roles that benefit others, as shown in the work of the school council and the play leaders. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, including in the Reception classes. Some good and outstanding teaching was observed on which the school can build, and progress was good for pupils in these lessons. In the satisfactory lessons seen, learning does not challenge all pupils well enough because work is not closely matched to their needs and expectations for what they can achieve are not as high as they could be.

An appropriate system is in place to check how well pupils are doing in reading, writing and mathematics. The quality of marking in writing is improving following a new policy introduced last term. The school plans to extend this policy to other subjects, where marking is encouraging and affirming, but rarely tells pupils what they need to do next to improve. The school provides good pastoral support and guidance for pupils. Staff know them well and take good care of them. They make sure that they feel welcome and are included in all activities.

Under the guidance of the headteacher and with the support of the deputy headteacher, staff are pulling more closely together to improve the school. Senior leaders have recognised the need to focus the school on raising the achievement of specific groups such as boys, and have achieved some success in this, although there

is further work to be done. Subject leaders manage satisfactorily although some are not as involved in monitoring as they could be. Self-evaluation is satisfactory overall and the school has identified which aspects of its work need to be improved. However, systems lack rigour and in the past the school has been slow to meet some of the challenges required. Nevertheless, the changes, together with increasing commitment and energy amongst senior leaders to raise standards, are having a positive impact on developments and helping to provide a satisfactory capacity for improvement. Governance is satisfactory. Individual governors are supportive of the school, but they do not hold leaders sufficiently to account for the quality of the school's work.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and accelerate the rate of pupil progress by:
 - providing work that is well matched to the needs of learners, particularly boys' writing at Key Stage 2
 - ensuring teaching has high levels of expectation across the school
 - providing pupils with increased opportunities to learn through problem-solving and investigative tasks.

- Embed procedures for assessing, marking and tracking pupil progress and use the information provided to:
 - set consistently challenging targets
 - swiftly tackle any underachievement
 - hold class teachers accountable for the progress made by their pupils
 - ensure pupils are given clear guidance as to how to improve their work.

- Ensure that leaders at all levels have a greater impact on accelerating the rate of progress by:
 - ensuring that school leaders rigorously evaluate teaching so that improvements in teaching and learning are brought about and sustained
 - ensuring that governors have a clear and accurate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses to enable them to hold the school to account for the quality of education it provides.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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| 3 |
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Pupils enjoy learning and achieve satisfactorily across the school. Progress seen in most lessons was satisfactory but where teachers planned more stimulating and challenging lessons, pupils made better progress. From average attainment on entry to Year 1, standards are currently average in Year 2. At Key Stage 2, school leaders recognise that some pupils have not achieved well enough in recent years. Inspectors observed that effective measures are being taken to begin to improve the provision and to eradicate any underachievement. However, attainment in writing is

still an issue for the school to address, especially among boys. Teachers are currently adapting their lessons to take account of the interests of boys and consequently, progress is beginning to quicken. Despite there being some catching up to do, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 by the time they leave has increased to average levels; the number of boys reaching the higher levels in writing is not as high as it could be. Whilst achievement in science is satisfactory overall, not enough lessons allow pupils to participate in investigative and practical work.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, and pupils are well-mannered and polite. They work and play well together and are keen to take part in the range of school activities offered. Levels of attendance are above average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and adopt healthy lifestyles by taking part in a range of physical activities in lessons and after-school clubs, including swimming in the school pool.

Pupils contribute well to the school community by taking on responsibilities in the classroom and around the school such as school councillors and play leaders. They participate well in a range of local community events and raise funds for many good causes whilst learning about teamwork. For example, during Fair Trade Week, pupils worked in mixed-age teams to produce fair trade products. These were then sold to parents and members of the community and the profit used to buy Oxfam gifts, such as a goat.

Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future well-being because their skills are suitably developed in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils have a good moral understanding of right and wrong and have good social skills. They form good relationships and respect each other’s opinions, although their knowledge of other faiths and cultures is not as well developed.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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|---|---|
| Pupils’ attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress | 3 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress | 3 |
| How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning? | 3 |
| To what extent do pupils feel safe? | 2 |
| How well do pupils behave? | 2 |
| To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles? | 2 |
| To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community? | 2 |
| Pupils’ attendance ¹ | 2 |
| How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | 3 |
| What is the extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development? | 2 |

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Although teaching is satisfactory overall, the picture is very variable and some good and better lessons were seen. However, a significant number of lessons are satisfactory. In these lessons work is not sufficiently well matched to the needs of learners and so for some pupils the pace of learning slows. On occasions, more able pupils are not well challenged, having to complete easier tasks before they can move on to more demanding ones. The best lessons feature knowledgeable and confident teaching which fires pupils' imagination and enjoyment and they make good progress as a result. The skilled use of questioning is also a good feature of teaching in some lessons. Teaching assistants are deployed appropriately to provide satisfactory support for those with moderate learning needs.

Most lesson plans have clear objectives and are detailed. However, teaching does not consistently refer to the stated learning objectives other than at the start of the lesson. Assessment is not used effectively to match work to challenge the most able. A formal system for tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics is now in place. It is being used to identify any underachievement and is now being embedded into the school's routine work. However, teachers' marking is inconsistent across the school and, with the exception of writing, does not offer enough helpful advice on the next steps in learning.

The school has rightly identified the need to refine its curriculum, which is satisfactory overall. Aspects of health and citizenship are dealt with suitably and contribute to pupils' personal development. A good range of visits and visitors stimulate learning well and the wide range of after-school clubs are enjoyed by many. Pupils enjoy gardening and take part in a range of sporting and other activities.

Pupils are cared for well. Vulnerable pupils are supported and guided sensitively to help them integrate with others. They appreciate the good support provided by their teachers and enjoy good relationships with them. The school provides a stimulating learning environment and displays around the school are often colourful and stimulating.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| The use of assessment to support learning | 3 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team has accurately identified areas for improvement and is addressing them appropriately. The school is developing a more strategic direction to

ensure that issues are tackled and that the rate of progress for pupils is quickened. Leaders recognise that there is still much work to do, particularly in raising achievement in writing for boys and for more able pupils. The new marking policy is beginning to have a positive impact but procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching lack rigour.

At the time of the inspection, safeguarding arrangements met the legal requirements and there are suitable arrangements to ensure equality of opportunity. The school has a clear plan to promote community cohesion, but has not yet had the opportunity to evaluate its effectiveness and stronger links are forged with some community groups than others.

Although individual governors are committed and supportive of the school the governing body has not acted swiftly enough in the past to deal with underachievement because its role as critical friend to the school is not developed enough. The deployment of staff and appropriate use of resources result in satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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|---|---|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 3 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly and enjoy school. They are given equal opportunities to encounter a wide range of experiences in both classes. Children's progress is satisfactory, and leads to broadly average standards by the end of Reception, although they are currently lower in communication, language and literacy especially writing. Children's misconceptions in writing are not always challenged quickly enough, and there are limited opportunities to practise writing in books. Activities are suitably planned to provide children with a reasonable balance of adult-led tasks and child-initiated activities. Teachers and teaching assistants work together to support the children effectively in small groups and they closely observe their progress. The outdoor environment is used appropriately to extend all areas of learning. The provision is managed satisfactorily by the coordinator.

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

The questionnaires indicated a high level of support and confidence in the school. A number of parents made additional comments and there was much consistency in terms of what was said. Parents spoke particularly positively about how their children enjoyed school, and of the care and commitment of the staff in developing pupils' confidence in themselves and their abilities.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Market Rasen CE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 110 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 222 parents and carers registered at the school.

| | Always | Most of the time | Occasionally | Never |
|---|--------|------------------|--------------|-------|
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 82 | 23 | 4 | 1 |

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|---|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate. |

Common terminology used by inspectors

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| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |



11 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Market Rasen CE Primary School, Market Rasen, LN8 3BL

Thank you for being so helpful and polite when we visited your school. I am writing to let you know what we found out.

It was good to hear how much you like coming to school and enjoy learning. It was also good to hear about how safe you feel in school and that there is always someone to talk to if you have concerns. You behave well and you know a lot about keeping healthy and safe. Those of you involved in the school council take your duties seriously and many of you take responsibility to look after the school environment.

We think that you go to a satisfactory school. Your teachers and other staff help you to achieve satisfactorily, although some of you could do better. The school takes good care of you and helps you to get on well together. The curriculum is satisfactory and you have some good opportunities for after-school activities.

The headteacher and the senior leaders want the school to become even better and so we have asked them to do several things to help improve the school.

- Make sure that there is more good teaching in the school so that you all to make better progress, especially the boys in writing.
- Improve marking to help you know how well you are doing and what to do next to improve your work. We have asked them to check how well you are doing and give quick help to those of you falling behind.
- We also want school leaders and governors to be more involved in checking how well the school is doing.

We hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully
Ian Jones
Lead inspector

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