

The Gainsborough Parish Church Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120621
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	327326
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Richard Cheetham

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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	304
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	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Howitt-Cowan
Headteacher	Mrs Tracy Fulthorpe
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Acland Street Gainsborough Lincolnshire DN21 2LN
Telephone number	01427612554

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2009
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Fax number

01427 811923

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This, larger than average, primary school serves an economically disadvantaged area of Gainsborough. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds but there are a small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Most pupils start school with levels of knowledge and understanding which are well below national expectations. This is a decline from the previous inspection.

The school offers childcare before and after school and during the holidays. This is managed privately and therefore is reported on separately. The school has achieved the National Healthy School status, an Activemark, and the FA Charter Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education and outstanding care, guidance and support. This is because the school has had the promotion of pupils' personal development and well-being high on its agenda so that these aspects of their growth are good. Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage although this has not been built on well enough in the past. Academic standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average although in Key Stage 1 they are below those expected. This is partly the result of some weaker teaching in Year 1. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Improvements in assessment have more recently been promoting good pupil progress in Key Stage 2.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and there are some emerging strengths. For instance, the senior and middle managers are setting a clear direction for improvement which finds its expression in the older pupils' recently improved academic progress. Subject leaders are now carrying out their roles more effectively. These are helping to redress a period when pupils made slow progress, especially in science and are now resulting in their making satisfactory progress overall. Key factors in this improvement have been the use of more challenging targets for the pupils and timely support from the Local Authority. This support has now reduced as the school has improved.

Leadership has also been effective in promoting the development of a good curriculum which is meeting pupils' needs well. It enables them to enjoy their time in school and to be safe. Leadership has also directed pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles, their community involvement and good behaviour. The evaluation of teaching and learning has not been rigorous enough so that areas for improvement have not been fully identified. However, the school has chosen the right priorities for whole school improvement and has good strategies in place. As a result of this and the improving leadership, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of the well-organised provision. Standards at the start of Year 1 are below average. Staff have worked closely with a local authority consultant to implement significant improvements. The headteacher has been effective in providing additional leadership and support to this area of the school. Transition arrangements enable children to settle well. Resources are accessible so that children can choose materials to use independently. Relationships between staff and children are very positive. Children behave and work well together and staff are good at guiding children to resolve disagreements. There is a good balance of teacher directed and free choice activities with an appropriate focus on language and literacy development. Staff set good models to extend children's vocabulary. The small outside area is used to best effect to provide a good balance of learning. Staff use the accurate records of pupils' progress and interests to plan learning activities to meet their needs well. However, there are few opportunities for children to take part in extended projects to develop sustained thinking and reflection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure pupils' good progress across the school so that pupils reach at least average standards especially in mathematics and science.

- Promote consistently good teaching and learning quality through accurate evaluations of strengths and weaknesses and rigorous follow up and support procedures.

A small proportion of 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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were declining and were well below average in 2008. Improvements in teaching and assessment procedures especially in Year 2, are leading to the raising of standards which are currently below average. These pupils have recently made good progress although their overall progress from the start of Year 1 has been unsatisfactory. At the end of Year 6, standards have been rising slowly and progress has recently improved significantly. Last year, standards were average in English but below average in mathematics and well below average in science. The proportion reaching the higher levels of attainment was below average. Improvements in teaching are leading to a rising trend in standards so that more pupils are achieving the higher levels. Standards are average in English and mathematics and pupils make good progress in writing and in solving problems. Standards in science are now just below average because of better subject leadership and the improving ability of pupils to plan their own investigations. Pupils who find learning difficult are progressing at a similar rate to others because they are supported well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about school, enjoy what it offers and display positive attitudes to learning. Relationships between pupils are good and most pupils behave well. Through the strong programme for personal and social education, pupils have a good understanding of spiritual, moral and social issues. They appreciate their own cultural traditions but their understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain is not fully developed. Pupils say they feel very safe and one volunteered, 'We usually all get along very well.' They know that there is always a supportive adult to turn to. Pupils develop a strong understanding of living in the school community and take their responsibilities such as peer mediators very seriously. Pupils help make decisions such as selecting school librarians. Pupils become more confident through their community links, particularly with the local churches. They enter local singing competitions and raise funds for a number of charities. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and participate fully in after school sports and activities. Their interest in learning and their good social skills alongside their improving academic achievement prepare them adequately for the next stage of their education. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In most lessons, teachers work well with teaching assistants to cater for the range of learning needs especially in the mixed age classes. Pupils are responsive and want to do well. Teachers are well prepared and use resources well to sustain pupils' interest. They organise learning soundly and teaching often focuses its efforts on two groups while others pursue independent

work. The focus groups change over the sequence of lessons. Pupils in these groups make good progress but teachers do not always intervene productively with others to ensure the same rate of progress and effort. Good features of teaching include, for example, accurate assessments of pupils' progress and target setting with pupils. Pupils are assessing their own or their friends' work and when coupled with teachers' helpful marking, this helps pupils improve further. Leaders recognise that the best features of teaching are not yet consistently applied, for example, occasionally teaching does not secure pupils' full understanding and in the early stages of Key Stage 1, pupil management is not always as strong as elsewhere. As a result, pupils in these lessons do not progress as they should. They have put measures in place which are beginning to address this.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum covers all the required areas and is enhanced well through the wide range of extra activities which make a strong contribution to pupils' learning and enjoyment. The provision for developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy has improved and is raising standards. The school provides a good range of programmes to support those pupils who need additional help. Curriculum planning is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets pupils' needs. Although some links are made between subjects, these are not yet explored fully. The introduction of programmes such as philosophy for children is developing pupils' good understanding of staying safe, keeping healthy and of citizenship. Provision in music is strong with school choirs taking part successfully in competitions. The curriculum is enriched extremely well with a range of visits, visitors to school and special themed weeks.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents strongly agree with their children that they feel safe, are happy and well cared for. This is because the school has a highly effective culture of care, underpinned by very secure procedures for health, safety and child protection. The school has effective strategies to handle pupils' misbehaviour. Staff know pupils extremely well and relationships are very warm, ensuring they feel confident to talk about any problems. The consistent focus on pupils' personal, social and health education contributes highly effectively to pupils' good personal development. The school has very good parental links to involve them fully in their children's learning, for example through family learning sessions. The school involves its pupils in supporting others who find learning more difficult or who lack self esteem so that they make good progress. Excellent links with outside agencies provide additional support. Extra activities, sometimes involving local secondary schools provide very well for pupils with specific talents. There are now excellent procedures to assess and track pupils' academic progress and their rigorous use is a major factor in the improvement to the rate at which pupils' now progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a clear sense of direction and communicates this effectively to staff and pupils. She works well with other senior staff whose contribution to school development has improved. For instance, subject leaders in English, mathematics and science have been instrumental in the recent improvement to the rate at which pupils make progress. With the

headteacher, they have set challenging pupil targets in the core subjects which is raising aspirations and subsequently improving standards.

The school's self evaluation is satisfactory. Close monitoring of pupils' progress is markedly improving achievement. However, the evaluation of the quality of teaching, for example, is not rigorous enough. Weaknesses in teaching do not ensure consistent educational provision for all pupils. Systems are in place to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school but are not yet fully effective. The school is making a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion and is working to strengthen its global links. The school uses its resources well by carefully deploying support staff and getting maximum use from the accommodation. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and are now monitoring the school's work more systematically. However, they are not providing the required level of challenge for the school.

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?	3
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 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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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	3
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

08 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Gainsborough Parish Church School, Gainsborough, DN21 2LN

Thank you for the way you welcomed us to your school recently. Thank you especially to the choirs who sang so well and clearly enjoyed it. I thought that you would like to know what we found out. The school is providing a satisfactory standard of education and the care, guidance and support you receive is outstanding.

Your personal development is good. You behave well and are good at looking after yourselves and others. You and your parents told us how much you enjoy all that school offers and we agree with you. The school looks after you excellently so that you feel safe and confident enough to help the school improve. You try hard and most of you are now making satisfactory progress. Those of you who need extra help are given good support. You enjoy a good curriculum and take part in many activities in school time and after school to make your work more interesting. You are very committed to living healthy lifestyles because you exercise a lot and eat the right foods. The excellent arrangements for you and your parents help you to prepare well for your transfer to secondary school. We have asked the headteacher to make sure that all the teachers help you to make even better progress and reach at least average standards especially in mathematics and science. We have also asked the headteacher to ensure that all the teachers find opportunities to share their good practice in teaching so that it improves the quality of learning across the school.

We found it a pleasure to meet you and wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Richard Cheetham

Lead inspector