

Skegness Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120475
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339703
Inspection dates	29-30 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Godfrey Bancroft

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Hall
Headteacher	Sue Roy
Date of previous school inspection	27-28 March 2007
School address	Cavendish Road Skegness Lincolnshire PE25 2QU
Telephone number	01754 762059
Fax number	01754 765226
Email address	sue.roy@skegness-inf.lincs.sch.uk

Age group	3-7
Inspection date(s)	29-30 September 2009
Inspection number	339703

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, and held meetings with senior staff, teachers, groups of pupils and school governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, details of professional development for staff, lesson plans, assessment and tracking information and 57 parental questionnaires.

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

- the action the school is taking to promote improved attendance
- how successful is the school's focus on improving progress and standards in reading and writing
- whether the pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to meet their targets
- the effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its role.

Information about the school

The school is a little larger than most of its type. Some children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start school in the Nursery, while others join at the beginning of the Reception year from various other early years' settings. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for a free school meal is above average. The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is below average, but is rising steadily. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A significantly high number of pupils start or leave the school at times other than the beginning or end of the usual school year.

The school holds, amongst other awards, the Basic Skills Award, Healthy School status and Activemark. The school runs a breakfast club and shares its site with a Children's Centre.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school in which children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a flying start and continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. The school lays a firm foundation for pupils' personal, social and emotional development on which their good academic progress is based. Everything possible is done to ensure that those who face the greatest challenges in their lives or are potentially vulnerable have all the help they need. Parents' and carers' views are accurately summed up by a parent who wrote, 'The staff are open and friendly and I can see my child is learning more all the time.'

Standards when children start are well below those expected for three and four year olds, with skills in communication, language and literacy being very low. By the time children move into Year 1 standards remain lower than expected for their age. However, because of the good care and teaching they receive, progress in the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Similarly, because of good teaching pupils continue to do well in Years 1 and 2. In recent times a steady year-on-year improvement is evident, with standards becoming ever closer to the national average. This is because the school has focussed closely on the development of the pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements in mathematics are a real success story, with pupils attaining broadly average standards in the last two years, a pattern that is set to continue. The concerted emphasis on promoting higher standards in reading and writing is a more recent introduction. The green shoots of improvement are evident and can be seen during lessons and in pupils' books. Even so, pupils have not yet had enough opportunities to use their basic skills in the context of sustained, independent writing. Pupils currently in Year 2 have made good progress and are on course to attain broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This looks likely to be repeated by the pupils in Year 1, some of whom are already exceeding the expected levels in mathematics. In this respect some higher attaining pupils have made exceptional progress. Pupils with special educational needs and the rising number who speak English as an additional language all do well.

Attendance remains below average and too many pupils still do not arrive on time. The school is doing all it can and steady improvement is evident. However, some parents are not doing enough to support the school in its attempts to improve attendance and there is still a concerning number of persistent absentees.

The school benefits greatly from effective leadership of the headteacher and

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

supportive teamwork amongst staff. The school does not currently have a full complement of governors and some are very new to their role. Even so, governance is satisfactory and governors are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about the school. Arrangements for governors to evaluate the quality of provision are evolving, but do not focus closely enough on measuring the success of the initiatives identified in the improvement plan. The headteacher's skill in identifying what needs to be improved, recent developments in resources and accommodation and steadily rising standards all serve to illustrate the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Fully embed the developments to improve standards in reading and writing by
 - promoting greater consistency in the ways in which speaking and listening are taught
 - maintaining the focus on developing the basic skills of speaking, reading and writing and helping pupils to understand how these dovetail together
 - providing regular opportunities for pupils to undertake sustained writing, independently.

- Maintain the drive to bring about improved attendance and punctuality by
 - reinforcing the message to parents about the importance of their children attending school regularly and turning up on time
 - continuing to celebrate and reward good attendance.

- Develop the role of the governing body in promoting school improvement and evaluating the quality of provision by
 - further enhancing the links between governors and subject leaders
 - creating stronger connections between the school's plans for improvement and the focus of governor's work to evaluate the quality of provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils say they enjoy school and this is evident in their response during lessons and around the school. One pupil commented, accompanied by nods of agreement from his friends, 'We learn all sorts, lots of new stuff everyday.' Lessons are typified by enthusiastic learning. Whilst pupils are eager to participate and answer questions many often struggle to put their thoughts into words. That said, lower attaining pupils, those who have special needs and those who speak English as a second language, all do well because of the good support they receive. Consequently pupils make good progress and attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. Behaviour is good. Sometimes pupils lose concentration, but with their teacher's help they soon get back on track.

Pupils are well informed about how to stay safe and take care of themselves. They find the school to be a safe and secure place in which to learn. They are confident

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

that, should they struggle or have a problem, staff are always ready to give the help they need. There are good opportunities for pupils to take regular, vigorous exercise at playtime and during the lunch hour. The need to eat healthily is constantly reinforced especially in the much appreciated 'Jolly Munchers' breakfast club. Pupils also make a positive contribution to their community. They are keen to take responsibility and to help around school wherever they can. Members of the School Council are proud to fulfil their duties. On the wider front they readily contribute to charities, are delighted to give concerts to community groups and to take part in community events, such as the 'Jolly Fisherman's Walk'. Their understanding of other beliefs and cultures is developing well, supported by the successful integration of a rising number of pupils from other parts of the world into school.

The average standards that pupils attain means they are prepared satisfactorily to contribute to the world of work in later life. In this respect their progress is supplemented by the development of good social skills. Spiritual development is also good and is given a high profile. Typical of this, during the inspection, was the participation by pupils in an excellent dramatic production, led by the 'Rhubarb' theatre company as part of the East Coast 'SEAS' community project.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons which carefully consider the needs of pupils of all abilities. Teachers have high expectations and the celebration of pupils' efforts and successes motivates them to learn. Together with teaching assistants teachers ensure that each

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

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

child has work that is at just the right level, making full allowance for the stage they have reached. Lessons are often exciting and enjoyable, although, just occasionally the pace of progress slackens when pupils are expected to sit on the carpet and listen for a little too long. Teachers rightly place a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills. This is proving to be very effective in mathematics. Developments focussing on the improvement of speaking and listening and reading and writing have been introduced more recently. This means they have had less time to impact on standards and are not yet fully embedded. Some inconsistencies remain in the ways that speaking and listening are taught and the links between this and pupils' reading and writing, whilst developing well, are not always as smooth as they might be.

Assessment systems work well and teachers make good use of the accurate information they gain to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. They also involve pupils well in these processes, ensuring that they understand what is expected of them and are helped, at the end of lessons, to gain an insight into how well they have done.

The curriculum meets pupils' learning needs well and builds effectively on their previous learning and knowledge. For example, staff in Years 1 and 2 continue to apply the best principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage, because these are well suited to the level of development reached by many pupils. Many themes also contain practical activities and embody playing and working out of doors, which help to make learning come alive for many pupils. Pupils also benefit from access to a good range of additional activities and educational visits. In all subjects good attention is paid to the development of basic skills. For example, teachers always take care to emphasise the importance of using the correct vocabulary. Teachers and other staff never lose sight of the importance of pupils' personal development. The social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) are given an appropriately high profile.

Pupils are cared for well. A significant emphasis is placed on the importance of pupils' personal, social and emotional development. All staff are tireless in their pursuit to ensure that pupils feel safe and are able to thrive. The response to any pupils who appear at risk of falling behind is prompt and programmes are swiftly put in place to help them catch up. The school's team of highly skilled teaching assistants play a prominent and effective part in this aspect of provision. The support for any potentially vulnerable pupils is outstanding. The monitoring of these pupils' progress is sensitive and effective, with all interested parties suitably involved.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2
---	---

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a clear direction for the school and involves staff well in identifying what needs to be done to bring about improvements. Suitably challenging targets for attainment are set and often met successfully. Subject leaders lead their subjects effectively and provide good support for their colleagues. This is especially true of literacy and numeracy and the current focus on raising standards.

Arrangements to evaluate the quality of provision are thorough, although the most recent outcomes have proved to be a little modest.

Governors are great ambassadors for the work of the school. Although several are recent appointees, they are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about the school's work. They also benefit from good training opportunities. Even so, arrangements for governors to evaluate the quality of provision are not linked closely enough to the schools' main priorities for development.

In terms of safeguarding pupils, staff and governors undertake their duties rigorously. They are constantly alert to ensure the site is safe and all the current regulations to affirm that adults are suitable to work with children are in place. Child Protection procedures are also effective, enabling staff and partners beyond the immediate school to be promptly alerted to any problems. Governors and staff are effective in tackling any form of discrimination and in promoting community cohesion at all levels. The headteacher and governors have also evaluated the school's contribution to community cohesion.

The school engages well with parents and other stakeholders, including pupils, to gather and respond effectively to their views. The wise use of resources, such as in the development of the outdoor areas and the new computer suite, combined with pupils' good progress mean that the school provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Staff work very effectively to promote children’s personal, social and emotional development, and this results in rapid progress for this aspect of learning. Progress in communication, language and literacy, whilst good, is sometimes slower because children are often coming from particularly low starting points. Even so, by the time they join Year 1 children have moved forward in every aspect of their learning. This is because they gain from good teaching that focuses closely on the individual needs of each child. There is also a good balance between activities that are supervised directly by adults and ones in which children can learn independently. Even so, there are times when children are left to learn on their own for a little too long. Whilst they sustain their interest well they would benefit from a little more adult intervention and guidance. Behaviour is excellent and children play and work together in a friendly and helpful manner, although their progress in this respect is sometimes restricted by their poor communication skills. The outdoor areas provide a superb setting for learning and the governing body has invested wisely in this respect.

Teachers and teaching assistants help children to settle in quickly. They are meticulous in recording children’s progress and give careful consideration to the next steps in learning for each child. They are also constantly vigilant in ensuring that children are happy and safe, which underpins children’s progress effectively.

Communication with parents and carers about how well their children are doing is excellent. The school also provides some superb opportunities to guide and help parents to support their children’s learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The vast majority of parents have very positive views of the schools' work and are happy with the experience it provides for their child. Even so, some would like more information about their child's progress. The inspectors are of the view that the school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress. Teachers are very accessible and there are daily opportunities to meet them in the playground when children are dropped off in a morning and picked up at the end of the day. Additionally, teachers are always willing to make appointments to discuss children's progress and to allay any concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Skegness Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 266 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	61	19	33	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	38	16	28	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	20	35	29	51	5	9	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	39	31	54	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	56	22	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	25	44	28	49	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	58	22	39	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	40	31	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	28	49	25	44	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	40	29	51	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	32	31	54	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	47	26	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	34	60	21	37	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

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.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



30 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Skegness Infant School, Lincolnshire PE25 2QU

You may recall that I visited recently, with Mrs Hackney, to inspect your school. The visit was a great pleasure and we were impressed by many of the things that you do. You behave well and work hard. We thought the drama you did with the Rhubarb Theatre group was brilliant; what a treat it was for everyone. Above all we were delighted to hear that you enjoy school and feel safe. Certainly the staff care for you very well and you know that you can always go to them for help. You can also be proud of the work you do and the progress you make. Well done. We think your school is a good school that is improving all the time. We were also pleased to hear that you and your parents think the school is good as well.

Mrs Roy, the staff and governors are always working hard to make your school even better. With this in mind we are asking them to -

- continue with their plans to help you to improve your speaking and listening and reading and writing
- work closely with your parents and carers to make sure you attend school as often as you should and arrive on time. The inspectors think that some of your parents and carers could do more to help the school with this.

Finally we are asking Mr Hall and the governors to look even more closely at how well Mrs Roy and the staff are doing and to help the school with the things it needs to do to improve.

I would like to close by wishing you all the best for the future. Keep on working hard.

Yours faithfully

Godfrey Bancroft
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone [08456 404045](tel:08456404045), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.