

Heckington St Andrew's Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120526
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339718
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Hardy
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Tyreman
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, one of whom visited the school for half a day specifically to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. The inspectors spent the majority of their time observing pupils' learning. They observed 7 teachers as they visited 13 lessons or parts of lessons. In addition, they observed learning in two intervention groups where pupils received extra help to support their specific needs. Inspectors attended assembly, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the chair and vice-chair of governors and parents. They looked at pupils' books and a wide range of documentation including school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Questionnaires returned by 79 parents and carers, 107 pupils and 16 members of staff were analysed.

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

- attainment and progress in relation to school targets for Year 6 pupils
- the impact of teaching and the use of assessment on pupils' progress
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in at all levels in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and driving improvement
- the effectiveness of the school's work in developing pupils' understanding of community cohesion.

Information about the school

This is an average size school with similar numbers of boys and girls on roll. Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of particular needs, is average.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. With drive and determination the headteacher, with good support from her deputy, is giving clear direction to the school. Rigorous monitoring procedures provide senior leaders with an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result they are able to set the right priorities for improvement. Challenging targets are set and the exemplary use of assessment information to check pupils' progress enables targeted support to be provided where needed. This is having a positive impact on standards and proving particularly beneficial to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for vulnerable pupils.

In this welcoming school, pupils feel safe and valued because staff know the pupils well and provide good levels of care. Relationships throughout the school are good. The large majority of pupils are polite, have positive attitudes towards their learning and enjoy coming to school. They are keen to contribute to the school community and take their responsibilities seriously. This, together with the lively learning environment staff have created, contributes to a positive school atmosphere. Staff share a desire to improve teaching and learning and the overwhelming majority of those who responded to the staff survey indicated full support for the direction that the school is taking.

Children's skills on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are generally consistent with those expected for their age. Recent improvements in provision in this Key Stage are helping the children to make a good start to their learning. Throughout Key Stage 1 and most of Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress. However, progress improves rapidly in Year 6 where consistently high quality teaching has a significant impact on standards. This, together with excellent systems for setting targets and tracking of pupils' progress, is the reason why standards in English, mathematics and science are above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Inconsistent teaching and learning in earlier years is the main reason that progress is satisfactory rather than better. Teachers do not always use the good assessment information available to set suitably challenging work that matches the abilities of different groups of pupils. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always provide clear guidance on the next steps in pupils' learning. This is slowing the raising of attainment in writing which lags behind attainment in reading.

Successful partnerships have been forged with parents and outside agencies that promote pupils' well-being and development very well. The governing body works effectively to ensure the school meets its statutory responsibilities, although the school's promotion of community cohesion does not yet focus sufficiently on diversity within a national context. The school engages well with its local community but pupils do not develop a broad enough understanding of the wider national community. Because of a

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number of unresolved staffing issues that are beyond the control of the school, the full impact of the school's leadership and management has yet to be seen across the school as a whole. As a result, both leadership and management are satisfactory. Nevertheless, the clear identification of areas of weakness and successful action taken to bring about improvement, for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage, indicate the school is well able to sustain improvement into the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' writing skills by ensuring that in the marking of their work, spelling and grammatical errors are corrected and they are given clear guidance on their next steps in learning.
 - Make all teaching and learning good or better by ensuring that effective use is made of assessment information to plan learning tasks that are appropriately challenging for all ability levels.
 - Improve the school's promotion of community cohesion by providing more opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of the cultural diversity within the national context.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' attainment is broadly average from Years 1 to 5, but rises sharply in Year 6 where the teaching is often exceptionally effective and progress is at times outstanding. This accounts for the above average results in the Key Stage 2 national tests. Observations of pupils learning in lessons and other inspection evidence, show that learning in other years, although never unsatisfactory, varies in quality, in line with the quality of teaching, and this is reflected in pupils' progress. Although the more systematic use of assessment information to boost progress is beginning to pay dividends in these years, improvements in progress have been slower than hoped because the school is facing unresolved staffing difficulties. Staff have correctly identified the need to improve pupils' writing skills and more opportunities for creative writing, including topics that are more attractive to boys, have been introduced. These are having a positive effect on pupils' motivation. Evidence from lessons and the school's assessment information shows that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning because effective support is well focused on their identified needs.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is seen in their above average attendance. They behave well, have a good understanding of personal safety and how to avoid risks, whether on the internet or during journeys to and from school. They understand that exercise and a balanced diet are vital to their healthy development. The school council provides a useful forum for pupils' voices and pupils contribute well to the school and wider

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community in other ways, for example acting as buddies to younger pupils or raising money for worthwhile causes such as the Haiti earthquake appeal. The above average standards in basic skills and their good collaborative abilities provide a good base for their future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social and development are undoubted strengths, but pupils have few opportunities to engage with children whose cultural backgrounds are different from their own.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Whilst teaching and learning are satisfactory overall there are some good aspects throughout the school. For example, good relationships characterise all teaching and these form the basis of good class management. Teaching assistants work effectively to support pupils in lessons and, in the best lessons, good use is made of interactive whiteboards to stimulate interest and reinforce learning. Exemplary use is made of assessment information to identify the precise difficulties faced by pupils and track their progress towards their targets. This is particularly beneficial for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In many lessons information is also used well to

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

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guide the planning of learning tasks. In a Year 6 science lesson, for example, pupils made rapid progress in understanding molecular structures because pupils became engrossed in well-planned practical activities that matched their attainment levels. However, in some lessons in other years, the work planned is not pitched at the correct level and progress slows because the learning tasks do not offer enough challenge. While there is much good practice in the marking of pupils' work in mathematics and science, the marking of pupils' writing does not always provide pupils with a clear guide to the next steps in learning.

The curriculum gives appropriate attention to the teaching of literacy and numeracy while providing pupils with a range of enriching experiences. It is enhanced by a programme of visitors to the school and visits out of school. The school is in the process of developing a more topic-based curriculum using meaningful links between subjects. Attention is also being given to the application of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport and the arts. These are well attended. Pastoral care is a strength of this nurturing family community. Parents commented favourably on the sensitive care that is given to all groups of pupils, and especially those who may be particularly vulnerable.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is prepared to take difficult decisions. She is successfully negotiating the school through a period in which there have been significant staffing difficulties. These difficulties have slowed the full impact of the well-considered strategies for further improvement. Nevertheless, there is clear evidence of improvement. Leadership is being shared more widely and subject coordinators are responding very positively to their increased responsibilities. Staff morale has improved and there is strong support for the drive for improvement. Governors are very supportive. They recognise that they need to be less reliant on reports from the headteacher to fully act as critical friends.

The school has put in place secure arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of the pupils and for making sure that those working with them are properly vetted. Responsibilities are clear, so that the school provides a safe environment for all. Staff and governors take their duties to promote equal opportunities seriously, and leaders

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successfully ensure that discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. There is a good partnership with parents, from before their children start in Reception. This means that most feel well informed and fully involved in their children's education.

The school's work to promote community cohesion is satisfactory. Although the school has a strong understanding of its immediate community context, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to gain a meaningful insight into what life is like for others from different religious and cultural backgrounds.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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	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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Most children join Reception with knowledge and skills that are generally consistent with those expected for their age. Carefully planned induction arrangements, built on good links with home, help children to settle quickly. They are happy and secure because of the emphasis placed by all staff on their welfare and safety. By the time they leave Reception, almost all have reached the goals expected nationally and the majority exceed this level in all areas of their learning. Writing is the weakest area and opportunities that arise to develop children's early writing skills across all areas of their learning are not always taken. Provision has improved because staff have worked closely with the local authority to ensure that ongoing assessments are accurate and that this information is used well to guide planning and check on every child's progress. This is indicative of good leadership and management with adults working well as a team and focusing on meeting each child's needs. The classroom both inside and outdoors covers all areas of learning through a judicious balance of activities led by adults and those

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initiated by the children.

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

The questionnaires reflect a very positive relationship with most parents and carers. The comments made reflect considerable satisfaction. Parent and carers say that staff keep their children safe and that their children enjoy school. They are happy with their children's experience at school. A number also rightly comment positively about the support provided for pupils who have particular needs. Inspectors do not agree with the few parents who commented that these pupils do not receive adequate support. However, inspectors agree with those parents who expressed concerns about the progress their children are making. From the school's own monitoring of pupils' progress, senior leaders are aware that progress is uneven across year groups and action is being taken to ensure that progress is consistently good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heckington St Andrew's Church of England 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 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	54	33	42	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	68	25	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	52	32	41	6	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	39	38	48	9	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	35	44	37	47	5	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	44	39	49	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	39	48	61	0	0	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)	27	34	44	56	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	48	35	44	4	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	33	48	61	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	47	34	43	6	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	33	42	37	47	5	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	49	37	47	3	4	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 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

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

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>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. 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 pupil's 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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heckington St Andrew's Church of England School, Heckington, NG34 9RX
Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke to many of you and you were really helpful. We particularly enjoyed listening to your singing in assembly. I am writing to tell you the main things we found out about your school.

Children in Reception are given a good start to their school lives and make good progress. Most of you enjoy school, listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. You make more progress in some years than others and we have asked your teachers to make sure that in all of your lessons you are really stretched so that you make the best possible progress in all years. We have also asked that when teachers mark your written work, any errors are corrected and that written comments help you to take the next step in learning.

You understand the importance of being healthy. Most of you eat sensibly and take part in physical activities regularly. You learn to work and play well together and help each other. Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. We have also asked the school to provide you with more opportunities to learn about the customs and beliefs of a wider range of people.

We think that everyone at Heckington St Andrews can work together to do these things and that you will want to play your part by working hard.

Yours sincerely

Dr Kenneth Thomas

Lead inspector

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