

Coningsby St Michael's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120567
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339724
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Ian Jones

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	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Sean Westaway
Headteacher	Mr John Orrey
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Ten teachers were seen at least once, and the inspectors visited 20 lessons. Meetings were held with governors, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the work of the school, and looked at policies related to the safeguarding of pupils, documents to support the school's self-evaluation, and the school's assessment data. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from 83 parents and carers, and looked at responses from 25 staff and 149 pupils.

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

- how well assessment is used and whether there is enough challenge for pupils across the school, particularly in English and mathematics
- what the school is doing to improve the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics
- the effectiveness of new leaders and managers in strengthening capacity for improvement.

Information about the school

This school is larger than average. Most pupils are of White British background, with a small proportion from other backgrounds. Approximately half the pupils have at least one parent posted to RAF Coningsby. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements, is broadly average. Early Years Foundation Stage education is provided in two mixed age Reception and Year 1 classes. A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection. The school has achieved the Active Mark for sport.

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

3

Main findings

This is an improving school. The headteacher has made a significant impact since his appointment last year. He is building a strong staff team and has enlisted their support to drive school improvement and to raise standards. They have responded positively to his sharply focused leadership and, as a result, there is a clear sense of common purpose. The very large majority of parents and carers are pleased with their children's experience at St Michael's. One, echoing the views of others, said 'My children are very happy at school, it encourages them to do well and strive to be better.' Parents of younger children have responded positively to initiatives designed to involve them further in their children's development. They appreciate the regular opportunities to visit the Early Years Foundation Stage and review the 'Learning Journeys' showing the latest achievements of their children. The very large majority of parents believe they are well informed about their children's well-being and progress.

The school provides a good level of care. It provides well for lower attaining pupils, those who are vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the majority of these pupils make good progress. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well by the school. These features contribute to an environment where pupils feel safe and secure, and they behave well. The school is a cohesive community, although it has more work to do to extend pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures of Britain.

In recent years standards have remained broadly average. The rate of pupils' progress has quickened and is sometimes good. This is not as secure in mathematics, where there are limited opportunities to develop understanding through problem-solving and investigative work. In science, more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to develop their analytical skills. The quality of marking has improved of late, but does not provide enough good guidance as to what pupils need to do next to improve. The headteacher is well aware of the challenge to raise standards and to accelerate progress in order to make sure pupils in Year 6 reach above national averages.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory; some good teaching was seen during the inspection. Regular feedback from the monitoring of classroom practice is helping staff to understand what good teaching looks like. However, there is not enough sharing of good practice. A system introduced this year records and evaluates how well pupils are doing, and this is beginning to have a beneficial effect as teachers are held to account for the progress of their pupils. However this process is too new to demonstrate a significant impact on standards.

The school's self-evaluation is mainly accurate and the school development plan

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provides a helpful guide to improvement. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is therefore satisfactory. Although the headteacher has been in post for a relatively short time, he has a good grasp about what needs to be done and, with the support of senior leaders, has made an effective start to remedy the weaknesses identified.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science by:
 - embedding the new tracking system to ensure pupils make good progress as they move through the school and intervening when improvement slows
 - ensuring regular, ongoing assessment in lessons to check that pupils make good progress and are on track to reach ambitious targets.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning from satisfactory to good by:
 - developing a consistent approach to teaching all the relevant skills in mathematics and science, with an appropriate emphasis on investigating and measuring
 - ensuring that tasks are consistently challenging and tailored to meet the needs of all pupils, especially for the more able
 - providing clear feedback to pupils on the next steps to take in their learning
 - sharing the good practice which exists within the school.
- 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**

Almost all pupils say they enjoy school. They work and play together in harmony. Pupils show a good understanding of issues relating to healthy living and have a good understanding of personal safety. Pupils, parents and carers all agree that the school is a safe place to be. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility around the school. They willingly take turns to supervise the outside doors at break times, supervise the healthy tuck shop and take responsibility for supervising younger children around the school. Pupils also make a useful contribution to school life through involvement in the school council and the collective worship council.

Observations in lessons and a review of pupils' work show that most pupils are making satisfactory but accelerating progress, while standards overall were broadly average and rising. When pupils are engaged in purposeful and relevant learning, progress is clearly evident. Where assessment is used well and pupils of all abilities are suitably challenged, progress is good, but this is inconsistent. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because they receive regular good quality support in small groups from a teacher or teaching assistant.

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Progress in writing is improving. In an effective letter writing lesson, pupils of different ability levels were provided with greater challenge through careful questioning by the teacher. They were motivated to work independently to consider how to write effectively. At the end of the lesson, pupils evaluated each other's work against success criteria. This enabled pupils to reflect on their efforts and how they could improve further. Such examples point the way forward for the school.

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	3
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	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 and support staff have good relationships with the pupils. Classrooms are well organised and stimulating but not all staff have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, they do not always give them sufficiently challenging work matched to their ability. The recent addition of much-needed computer equipment adds to the effectiveness of lessons but some pupils have had limited opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills in the past. The school enriches the curriculum by educational visits and visitors. The recent arts festival on the theme of Africa successfully engaged pupils in a range of music, dance, and art

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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activities; it contributed well to their awareness of other cultures and to their enjoyment of school. The pupils' take-up of extra-curricular activities shows that many benefit from the after-school clubs available.

The committed staff have a good understanding of how to help individuals with specific learning needs, and they provide carefully planned and targeted support. The special needs coordinator demonstrates a resolute approach to meeting the needs of the lower attaining pupils and involves parents and carers well. As one appreciative parent commented, 'My child has special needs but has made wonderful progress... he really enjoys school and is encouraged all the way.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: 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?

Leaders have a clear agenda for improvement and, as a result of action taken to date, standards are rising. Senior leaders have begun to monitor accurately the quality of teaching and focus on accelerating pupils' progress through regular meetings to discuss individual pupils' performance. Improvement is supported by the analysis of the increasing data contained in the tracking system. Governors have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and limitations, and are beginning to hold the school to account for tackling important weaknesses. The headteacher and chair of governors are encouraging other governors to be more involved and provide more challenge and support.

Engagement with parents and carers is a developing strength of the school and a large majority expressed positive views. This reflects the good relationships that exist between parents, carers and the school. The school regularly communicates with parents and the new headteacher has gained their confidence. The school has a welcoming and caring feel and this is important to the school, as reflected in the good procedures and requirements regarding child protection, safeguarding and health and safety. The school's inclusive ethos supports equal opportunities and pupils' entitlement to education. The school promotes cohesion well within its own community, helped by the good relationships established with pupils by teachers and support staff. There are positive links being developed with schools and organisations at national and international levels although this is at an early stage.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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	3
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

Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage because of an induction process that involves parents and carers well. Children behave well and are keen to join in with activities they have chosen or those led by an adult. A recent focus on improving provision has had a positive impact; this includes better teaching and developing the use of the outside area to promote learning. On occasions, children's progress slows because groups are not assessed well enough, although this is improving. At times teaching inspires children: during the inspection a magical flying carpet transported them to foreign lands, where they explored and photographed wild animals. Here progress and enjoyment for children was effectively promoted by the learning environment, which included a jungle corner where their imaginations ran wild. Adults have an appropriate knowledge of the learning and development needs of children and this is reflected in staff planning. There is an appropriate emphasis on early literacy and problem-solving, although displays of children's work do not always contain enough of their own work, especially their early writing. Relationships are positive and good attention is paid to personal safety and health issues. Adults work well together and have the children's interests at heart.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of the 83 questionnaires returned were very positive and parents and carers believe that this is a caring and supportive school. They are especially pleased with the way the school keeps pupils safe. Parents and carers are also pleased with the way the school meets their children's needs and the progress their children are making. Several expressed positive comments about the positive and 'friendly family ethos' of the school. A very small minority were concerned about behaviour but the inspectors saw no evidence to support their view.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Coningsby St Michael's Church of England Primary 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 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 269 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	54	36	43	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	48	42	51	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	30	56	67	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	40	44	53	6	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	45	46	55	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	42	42	51	5	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	43	44	53	3	4	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)	24	29	47	57	4	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	39	48	58	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	34	44	53	6	7	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	25	53	64	6	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	53	36	46	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	51	38	46	2	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 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.



25 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Coningsby St Michael's Church of England Primary School, Lincoln, LN4 4SJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school last week. We were impressed with your politeness and courtesy. We particularly liked your super work displayed around the school celebrating your recent African Arts Festival; you told us how much you enjoyed taking part, too.

We judged yours to be a satisfactory and improving school. We agree with your parents and carers that the school takes good care of you. Here are some of the main things we found:

You behave well, both in class and around the school.

You know how to lead safe and healthy lives and enjoy helping each other.

Teaching is satisfactory and you make sound progress in lessons. Those of you with special educational needs make good progress because of the extra help you receive.

You get on well together and with the adults in school.

There is still a lot of work to do to make St Michael's even better. Your governors, headteacher and staff know how to improve it. I have asked them to raise standards by:

- keeping a closer eye on your work to ensure you make good progress
- giving you better help and challenge in mathematics and science
- giving your teachers more opportunities to see models of good and outstanding teaching so that they see how to challenge you all to do as well as possible
- giving you clear information so that you know what you need to do next to improve your work.

I am sure you will play your part in helping by continuing to work hard and to follow closely advice from your teachers.

Yours sincerely

Ian Jones

Lead inspector

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