

Welton St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy

School Drive, Welton, Lincoln, LN2 3LA

Inspection dates 4–5 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's determined leadership, with strong support from other senior leaders, ensures that the quality of teaching is good and, at times, outstanding.
- Pupils achieve well and, by Year 6, attainment is well above average in English and mathematics.
- Leaders and teachers carefully check the progress of every pupil to ensure that nobody falls behind.
- Skilled teaching assistants provide good support for any pupils who need additional help.
- The school accurately evaluates how well it is doing and what needs to be done to improve.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning contribute to the strong sense of community in the school.
- The governing body is very effective and provides the school with good levels of challenge.
- Pupils feel very safe and display a high level of respect for the feelings and wellbeing of others.
- The school has excellent capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small minority of lessons, lower attaining pupils are given work that is too easy.
- Occasionally, teachers' explanations go on for too long when pupils could be getting on with learning independently.
- Teachers' marking does not always place enough emphasis on the quality of handwriting and presentation of work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons. Some observations were seen either alongside the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed two assemblies and made a number of short visits to classrooms.
- They observed pupils at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. They had a telephone conversation with the school's education adviser and brief discussions with some parents and carers at the start of the school day, and during the inspection.
- Inspectors heard groups of pupils of different ages reading.
- The inspectors took account of the 81 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- They looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, samples of pupils' work, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety. They also looked at information on individual pupils' progress and teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Renee Robinson	Additional Inspector
Jonathan Sutcliffe	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Welton Sr Mary's CofE Primary Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 January 2013. When its predecessor school, Welton St Mary's CofE Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.
- The large majority of pupils are White British, with a small minority coming from different ethnic groups. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
 - teachers' introductions and explanations are not too long so that pupils have more time to work independently
 - pupils working at lower levels are always provided with suitably challenging tasks
 - teachers' marking places an appropriate emphasis on the quality of handwriting and the presentation of work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in Reception with knowledge, understanding and skills that are consistent with those expected for their age. Children make good progress during their Reception Year and, because of good and some outstanding teaching, this good progress continues in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Speaking and listening are particular strengths throughout the school and are developed, with great success, from the start of the Reception Year.
- At the end of Year 6, attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This was clear from pupils' work, from records of their progress and from the school's rigorous systems to track the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics.
- Close tracking of pupils' progress ensures that gaps in learning are identified and addressed quickly. This reflects the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination by striving to ensure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve equally well.
- A carefully structured programme for the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) helps to ensure that pupils acquire essential basic reading skills. As a result, pupils' scores in the 2013 Year 1 national reading check were above average. By Year 6, virtually all pupils display enjoyment in reading for pleasure and are very competent in the use of their reading skills for research and to gather information.
- Particularly good use is made of teaching assistants to support any pupils who would benefit from focused small-group work. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are helped to achieve targets that are well matched to their individual needs.
- The attainment of pupils in English and mathematics for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well above similar pupils nationally and close to other pupils in the school by the end of Year 6. This is because the school has used the funding well to provide additional individual and small group support, and additional resources to support children from service families.
- There are a small number of occasions, however, when progress slows because the work set for lower attaining pupils is not sufficiently challenging.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good and occasionally outstanding teaching enables pupils of all backgrounds to make good progress and achieve well.
- Teachers' good classroom management is based on excellent relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves.
- Teachers generally use questioning well to check pupils' understanding as lessons proceed. Probing questioning was a feature of outstanding teaching in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, where rapid progress was made in solving multi-step word problems because the teacher was constantly checking and reshaping pupils' learning.

- Teaching assistants are deployed well. They ensure that the work given to pupils who need extra help, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium, is carefully planned. Consequently, all make good progress towards their learning targets.
- Homework is given regularly and closely linked to work being done in the classroom. Pupils spoken to said that the right amount is given and that it helps them to make progress.
- Teachers make good use of opportunities for pupils to work with a partner or in small groups so they can talk with and learn from each other. This helps to promote their social, as well as their speaking and listening skills. Occasionally, teachers' lesson introductions go on for too long, with all pupils being given the same explanations when higher-attaining pupils are capable of moving on more quickly.
- Teachers typically set work at the right level for pupils of different abilities and ages, especially for pupils who need extra support. However, in a small number of lessons, the work planned for those working at lower levels is not sufficiently demanding. This restricts opportunities for these pupils and slows the pace of learning.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly. It is detailed and gives each pupil a clear idea about how to improve their work. Most pupils respond well to their teacher's advice. In a few instances, however, marking does not challenge pupils enough to improve the quality of their handwriting and presentation of their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' outstanding behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, makes a significant contribution to the calm and purposeful atmosphere that permeates the school. Pupils understand the need for school rules and follow them willingly. Pupils say that good behaviour is the norm and that school is a very safe and happy place. School records confirm that incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare.
 - Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning. They want to learn, and they tackle challenging work with enthusiasm. They support one another well in lessons. These positive relationships make a strong contribution to pupils' learning because they listen, share ideas and are willing to try their best for their teachers.
 - Pupils' enjoyment of school is demonstrated in their well above average attendance and punctuality at the start of the school day. The school is working hard to further improve attendance by reducing absence through family holidays taken during term time.
 - Parents spoken to during the inspection echoed the view that this is a harmonious and welcoming school to which their children enjoy coming.
 - Pupils say they feel valued as members of the school community. They are given many opportunities to take on extra responsibility; for example, as school councillors, buddies and as energy-saving 'carbon ambassadors'. Pupils also engage with the local community; for example through contributions to the Lincolnshire Show. Those spoken to during the inspection expressed a high level of satisfaction with all the school offered and could not think of any way in which the school could be improved.
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- Through lessons and assemblies, pupils are given the skills they need to manage everyday risks for themselves; for example, safe use of the internet, and road and fire safety. They have a firm understanding of different types of bullying, including physical bullying and persistent name-calling, and the pupils inspectors spoke to were unaware of any incidents.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- With strong support from the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, the relentless determination of the headteacher to improve teaching and raise achievement is the driving force in this successful school.
- Regular checks on teaching are carried out and agreed targets for improvement are set. Teachers and other staff are supported through training to achieve the targets set for them to improve their practice. There is a clear understanding that decisions about promotion and pay rates will be based on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Through regular meetings at which pupils' progress is closely analysed, teachers are held to account for pupils' achievement.
- Through the exemplary use of information on pupils' progress, teachers and senior staff identify any groups that may be falling behind and ensure that additional support is provided. For example, pupils eligible for the pupil premium receive targeted individual support, and steps are taken to ensure that they are able to take part in all that the school has to offer.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. The curriculum is enriched through music and the arts, and a variety of visits to places of interest and residential experiences. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to explore and learn about the world, and to investigate and find answers for themselves. The international dimension of the curriculum enables pupils to learn about different cultures and beliefs, and the interdependent nature of the global community.
- The school communicates with parents and carers on a regular basis. They know they can come to the school at any time if they need to, and they are encouraged to participate fully in their child's life at school. The school is keen to explore any concerns that parents and carers might have and further strengthen links between the home and school.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has successfully initiated and overseen the transition to academy status. Governors have an exceptionally clear understanding of the link between progress and achievement and how these relate to the quality of teaching. They fully understand the school's strengths and those areas in which it needs to improve. They know how its results compare with those of other, similar schools and hold leaders to account for its performance. The governing body oversees the management of teachers' performance effectively and makes sure that pay and promotion are justified by pupils' progress and achievement. It manages the school budget conscientiously and effectively. Governors ensure that the income received through the pupil premium is spent on the pupils eligible for it and for the purposes intended. Consequently, these pupils achieve as well as their classmates. Governors benefit from regular training and ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements, including those relating to pupils' safeguarding.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139187
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	411672

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hannah Clark
Headteacher	Nicola Gough
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01673 860339
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Email address	enquiries@welton-st-marys.lincs.sch.uk

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