

St Botolph's CofE Primary School

Rookery Avenue, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7FE

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have successfully addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. The school is now good in all areas.
- The determination of the headteacher has led to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Governance is very strong. Governors provide an astute degree of challenge and support for the school.
- The progress made by current pupils has improved and is now in line with national figures in all subjects.
- The teachers know their pupils very well. Often, teachers' and teaching assistants' precise use of questioning and assessment helps pupils make rapid gains in their learning.
- Pupils read well, with enthusiasm and fluency. Typically, almost all pupils achieve the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' behaviour around school is impeccable and, in the vast majority of lessons, they are enthusiastic and productive learners.
- Pupils' overall attendance rates are typically above national figures. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils significantly improved in 2017.
- Parents speak highly of the school and the quality of education and care their children receive.
- The school's latest assessment figures show that the proportions of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, at the end of both key stages 1 and 2, were above the national averages.
- Children make a good start in the early years. They respond well to routines and are happy and inquisitive learners.
- The proportions of pupils who achieve at greater depth in all subjects at the end of key stage 1 are below national averages.
- Children in the Reception classes and pupils in key stage 1 do not always make the progress they could because teachers do not consistently make sure that pupils' prior attainment is fully considered.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes in the early years and key stage 1 by:
 - making sure that a greater proportion of the high prior attaining pupils in key stage 1 go on to achieve at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics
 - improving the effectiveness of the transition arrangements into the early years and year 1 so that pupils' rates of progress at these points do not lose momentum.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils of all ages to develop their critical thinking skills and resilience so that they consistently thrive in lessons as proactive learners.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her senior leadership team have worked with determination to address the actions from the previous inspection. Senior leaders have a shared vision for the school and a strong desire to provide a high standard of education for all pupils. As a result of their actions, the school is now good.
- Staff are aspirational for the pupils in their care. They have a good knowledge of the needs and characteristics of pupils. This knowledge has helped leaders to make the necessary improvements to teaching and learning, the impact of which is seen in the improved pupil outcomes.
- Teachers, including the newly qualified teacher, speak positively about the training and professional development they receive. As a result of some astute appointments and leaders' effective focus on staff training, the quality of teaching overall has improved from the time of the previous inspection.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that meets the learning needs of pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. During the inspection, strong evidence was seen of pupils' effective learning in many subjects. For example, pupils had written at length about a science topic on the moon and stars; their associated artwork was beautifully executed. Themed displays at the entrance to each classroom invite pupils in to immerse themselves in the learning.
- During the inspection, a planned science workshop for pupils and parents took place. This was a vibrant and interactive experience, very well attended by staff, parents, pupils and governors. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the extra-curricular clubs on offer to them, such as choir, yoga and netball. They also said they appreciate their visits out of school, for example to the Space Centre and Harry Potter World.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respond very well to the opportunities for spiritual reflection in the daily worship and through the thought-provoking displays they pass on the way into the main hall. Other display boards celebrate aspects of school life, such as healthy lifestyles, Olympic values, British values and the school's work to be a 'Rights Respecting School'.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding well. A range of intervention groups led by the skilled and effective support staff take place regularly. Through this carefully targeted support, disadvantaged pupils of all abilities make good progress when compared to other pupils nationally. The spending of the physical education and sport premium funding is effective. There is a strong school focus on fitness and health in the school; sports clubs are well attended and pupils experience success in a wide range of competitive sports.
- The leader for special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective because she has a clear view of the needs and abilities of pupils. She uses her knowledge to plan provision and monitor the progress of pupils. The school works effectively with parents and other agencies to make sure that the resources and additional funding available are used to improve pupils' outcomes. As a result of this work, outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are improving.

- The school's arrangements for managing the performance of teachers are effective. Leaders and governors make sure that pay awards are only applied where teaching has had an impact on pupils' learning and progress.
- The local authority has provided an appropriate level of support for the school in its work to ensure improvement. Leaders are now in a strong position to continue to raise standards and develop the entire work of the school with minimal external support.
- Leaders' work to strengthen teaching and improve outcomes for the most able pupils has led to some recent improvement. However, there is still scope for this to be further sustained in all subjects in key stage 1.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong and governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They speak with clarity and passion about the school. They do not shy away from holding senior leaders to account for the performance of the school and are meticulous in their approach to their duties.
- Based on their regular programme of monitoring, their active curriculum links and also through their informal visits, governors have a precise working knowledge of the school. This knowledge enables them to work closely with senior leaders in drawing up and monitoring the effectiveness of the school's development plan.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively, including those relating to safeguarding and the spending of the additional funding provided for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders place a high priority on keeping pupils safe and their procedures are stringent, in line with statutory requirements. All of the necessary checks and training are in place. Leaders and governors are aware of the particular safeguarding needs of their local community and have been proactive in addressing these through training for staff and support for families.
- The vast majority of pupils, staff and parents agree that this is a safe school. Pupils, in particular, speak with conviction about their safety and have the utmost confidence in school staff to support and protect them from harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The teachers know their pupils very well. As a result, positive relationships between adults and pupils promote effective learning.
- Teachers demonstrate secure knowledge in a wide range of subjects. This leads to effective planning for learning.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities make careful choices in selecting and using the high-quality learning resources provided for them, especially in mathematics. This helps them to use their time in lessons productively.

- Teachers have high expectations for their pupils and this is especially notable in the upper key stage 2 classes. For example, in a mathematics lesson, a teacher challenged pupils to explain their reasoning by urging, 'really convince me that you know it'.
- In a particularly successful lesson, pupils were observed critically reviewing a homework activity and using the information to discuss and plan the next steps in their learning. Parents offered positive views on the school's approach to homework; one described it as 'an extension of what goes on in the classroom'.
- The pupils want to learn and this enthusiasm is most effectively harnessed when teachers plan interesting activities which engage their thinking. Impressive examples of this were seen through a series of projects undertaken by Year 6 pupils. In one such project, pupils successfully applied a wide range of mathematical skills to design a fully costed imaginary theme park; in another, the project involved detailed planning of a class trip to the cinema.
- Pupils are confident and prolific writers and this is evident through the work in their books and in a number of displays around the school. Older pupils write at length and present their work well.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Pupils use phonics skills successfully in their early reading and, as they mature through the school, they become avid readers. For the very small proportion of pupils who still require support, the school wisely extends its formal teaching of phonics into Year 3. The school further promotes a love of reading successfully through its inviting and well-stocked library.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the previous inspection, especially in key stage 2. The impact of this can be seen in the pupils' work and in the improved outcomes in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Leaders and teachers are currently implementing a new approach to the teaching of mathematics in the early years and in key stage 1. This work is in its early stages and the positive impact is yet to be tested. Currently, the most able pupils in the early years and in Year 1 do not have enough scope to develop their mathematical skills at the rapid pace of which they are capable. Leaders are aware that this needs addressing through the school's new approach.
- Occasionally, teachers' feedback to pupils does not give consistent guidance for improving their work. Therefore, pupils are not always able to learn from their mistakes and develop resilience in their learning. They are, occasionally, unsure of the strategies available to them to get the help they need.
- At times, where teaching is weaker, pupils' progress slows and they lose focus. This happens when the activities are not well matched to pupils' needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are rightly proud of their school. Leaders provide an attractive range of learning spaces around all areas of the school, both within classrooms and in the central atrium. The creative use of displays and themed areas provides a striking and inspirational

backdrop for learning.

- The vast majority of pupils take pride in their work. Their books, particularly those in upper key stage 2, are a delight to see.
- Pupils spoke eloquently to the inspectors about their understanding of safety, especially in regard to the various possible forms of bullying. They were insistent that no bullying or racist incidents happen at their school. Likewise, pupils gave a clear account of the potential risks online and how to keep themselves safe.
- The school's work to support its service children and their families is noteworthy. In acknowledgement of the pressures these families may face, there is a weekly 'camo' club for pupils, where they can enjoy social time and also receive help with homework. The work extends further through coffee mornings and workshops for parents who wish to participate. An interesting and prominent display board shows whereabouts in the world members of armed forces' families are currently deployed, so that the whole school can share in the experience. The understanding of fundamental British values is well supported by this particular work.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around school is calm and well ordered. Their behaviour was observed to be equally good throughout the day, including at lunchtimes and breaktimes. During daily worship, pupils' behaviour was impeccable. They gave their full attention to the speaker and participated with respect and interest. The spiritual dimension to this daily activity held clear meaning for pupils.
- Pleasing examples of courtesy were noted throughout the inspection, such as pupils' politeness in the dining hall and through other simple acts such as holding a door open for visitors.
- Attendance for all pupils is typically in line with national figures and has improved further in the past year. The school has rigorous procedures in place for checking attendance on a daily and weekly basis. Home visits may be carried out, but these are rarely needed.
- The absence rates for disadvantaged pupils have historically been higher than for other pupils, but these reduced significantly in 2017. Nevertheless, the absence of disadvantaged pupils is closely monitored by the school, involving outside agencies where appropriate.
- Pupils behave well in the vast majority of lessons, showing positive attitudes to their learning. However, some of the younger pupils in key stage 1, and a few in Year 3, become restless in lessons and lose focus when the learning is not interesting enough or well matched to their needs and abilities.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2 have shown rapid and consistent improvement since the time of the previous inspection.
- The provisional data for 2017 shows that pupils make consistently good or improving

progress from their starting points in all subjects. This applies equally to the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and to disadvantaged pupils, although those pupils form a very small proportion within the school. The progress of the most able pupils is improving in all subjects, and similarly for all groups of pupils.

- Children enter the early years at a level of development which is broadly typical for their age and, occasionally, below. From their starting points, children make good progress and the majority enter Year 1 at a level of development matching the national expectation. For those children who do not achieve a good level of development at the end of the early years foundation stage, the school makes sure that they receive timely and effective support in order to catch up as quickly as possible. This includes any disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those who speak English as an additional language. During the inspection, an example of this support was observed in action. A skilled and effective teaching assistant worked with a small group of less-able Year 1 pupils to consolidate their early number skills. The pupils were clearly working through the activity with growing confidence and accuracy.
- Pupils read well, with enthusiasm and fluency. Typically, a large majority of pupils achieve the expected standard in the national phonics screening check by the end of Year 1, and almost all have done so by the end of Year 2.
- By the end of key stage 1 in 2017, provisional figures show that pupils' attainment at the expected standard was in line with the national average in reading, and above in writing and mathematics. The proportion attaining at greater depth was in line with the national average in mathematics and below in reading and writing; these figures for the most able pupils represent a significant improvement from 2016, when they were well below average in all subjects.
- By the end of key stage 2 in 2017, provisional figures show that pupils' attainment was above the national average in reading writing and mathematics, as was the combined score for all three subjects. All figures had improved from 2016, when they were also above the national averages in reading and writing, and below in mathematics. The proportion attaining at levels higher than expected was broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing and below in mathematics; again, an improvement from 2016 in all subjects.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is very small. However, figures show that these pupils typically make good progress, in line with other pupils nationally, and their average scores are improving in reading and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Provision and leadership in the early years are good because the experienced leader makes sure that activities are closely matched to the needs of the children. Alongside her team, she frequently reviews the children's progress by means of a key milestones review process. Children of all abilities and backgrounds progress well in all areas of learning.
- Children in both Reception classes benefit from a range of well-planned play and learning activities across all areas of learning. They make equally good use of the very

well-equipped indoor and outdoor spaces.

- Children enter the Reception classes at a level which is largely typical for their age, although some are below. Typically, the majority of children achieve a good level of development, at least in line with national figures, by the end of the early years. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- Both Reception classes are maths-rich and language-rich environments where children can begin to acquire key skills in literacy and mathematics through exciting and interesting activities. For example, children can enjoy books in the 'reading garden' and explore shapes and numbers in the construction and role-play areas. The adult-led activities are carefully planned and there are also opportunities for children to explore and create their own play and learning experiences. For example, during the inspection, a group of children were observed setting up their own 'café', carefully counting items on to plates and cutting 'pretend' food into segments.
- Adults' interactions with children are strong. Staff in both classes take many opportunities to support children in their play and learning by prompting, explaining, demonstrating, questioning and modelling language. As a result, children's speaking and listening skills are well developed by the end of the year.
- The physical environment is safe and secure, inviting and well organised. Children are cared for well and staff have received the appropriate training. All statutory safeguarding requirements are met.
- The children respond well to routines and expectations, showing good listening skills and cooperation. There is a calm, nurturing and happy atmosphere.
- Staff make sure they have frequent and positive contact with parents. Parents, through conversations with the inspectors, confirmed that their children are safe and happy at school. In particular, the staff were commended for their work to integrate children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities smoothly and sensitively into the Reception classes.
- Children join the school from a very wide range of pre-school providers. Consequently, they arrive at varying stages of readiness for school. There is more work to be done to improve this transition process, so that learning flows smoothly from one setting to the next.
- Similarly, there is scope to improve the transition from the end of the early years into Year 1, so that there is no loss of learning and pupils in Year 1 can build on the very good start they make in the early years, particularly with regard to mathematics.

School details

Unique reference number	132251
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10031146

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	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	409
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denzil Shephard
Headteacher	Debbie Wilson
Telephone number	01529 302698
Website	www.quarrington.lincs.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@stbotolphs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There is one newly qualified teacher currently on staff.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations at the end of year 6 for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 29 lessons or part-lessons, some jointly with senior leaders, across all classes. They looked at work in pupils' books, covering a range of subjects, abilities and year groups.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders with responsibility for the early years, English, mathematics, special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the sport premium, and with other teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair, and also a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils and considered the views of pupils who responded to the pupils' survey. They also spoke informally with pupils during lessons, lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the beginning and end of the school day; they also considered the 113 responses to the online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including the school development plan and self-evaluation summary, minutes of governors' meetings, the school's current information on pupils' progress and achievement, attendance records and documents pertaining to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Antony Witheyman	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Mace	Ofsted Inspector

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