

North Cockerington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120580
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
Inspection number	291789
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Miller

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 on roll	
School	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Anne Stratford
Headteacher	Mrs Jean Stark
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002
School address	School Lane North Cockerington Louth Lincolnshire LN11 7EP
Telephone number	01507 327258
Fax number	01507 328651

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

North Cockerington Church of England Primary School is a much smaller than average sized school. It is situated in the village of North Cockerington, near Louth in Lincolnshire. There are more boys than girls in most year groups. Pupils enter the Foundation Stage with broadly average levels of attainment. However, the number joining or leaving the school, other than at the usual time of first admission, has been increasing in recent years and is above average. Most pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low, as is the percentage for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is well below average. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but the proportion with a statement of special educational need is average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some significant strengths. It provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well and make good progress from average attainment on entry into Reception to above average by the end of Year 6. However, the school knows it still has work to do in order to raise further pupils' standards in science. This is partly because more effective whole school assessment systems for the subject are still in the process of development. This is an inclusive school, which knows itself well and has the learning and welfare of its pupils at the heart of its thinking and planning. It has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity for further improvement. The inspection confirms the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness.

A key factor in the school's success is its fostering of the pupils' outstanding personal development. A very high priority is placed on promoting social skills and moral understanding. Consequently, attitudes and behaviour are excellent and parents praise the approaches their children develop towards school and learning. The school provides a safe environment and a very friendly atmosphere. There is a strong sense of community, which extends well beyond the school's gates, and pupils develop responsibly as future citizens. They show very good levels of concern for each other's welfare, rights and general well-being. There are further significant strengths in the pupils' spiritual development and their appreciation of each other's achievements. Pupils have an active voice in school life, and value the school as a place to work and play. Pupils are cared for well. Pastoral support is strong and academic guidance good. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well. The standards pupils' achieve in key skills helps to prepare them well for their future lives and education.

Learning is promoted well through good teaching and a good curriculum. There are some new and developing initiatives where themes and topics are used to create effective links between subjects. These are making the learning of key skills increasingly more meaningful for the pupils. Teachers are enthusiastic about this approach. They are developing the curriculum further through the current review of the school's approach to the national strategies. Teachers use assessment well as a tool for raising achievement particularly in English and mathematics. Their questioning skilfully challenges and involves pupils. However, the school has yet to identify formally pupils who may be gifted and/or talented in order to boost the quality of their learning even more effectively.

Leadership, management and governance are all good. Staff cooperate well and share ideas in the planning of improvements. The school appreciates the importance of promoting home-school links, and working partnerships with parents are good. However, many of the current governing body are relatively new and in the process of undergoing training to enable them to monitor the work of the school. Consequently, the systems through which governors and headteacher work in partnership to monitor teaching are being reappraised. Nevertheless, staff and governors work hard together to create the right conditions within which pupils can prosper. In conversations at the school gate, parents stressed how well their children are being challenged and not allowed to stand still or rest on their laurels. As one parent put it, 'This school is like a breath of fresh air, the headteacher has got it sussed.'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress, especially in their personal development, and are prepared well for their work in Year 1. They learn to cooperate, care and support each other particularly well. Consequently, children's attitudes to learning are good. Effective curriculum planning and supportive teaching result in children in Reception and pupils in Year 1 working together well side-by-side. Both year groups enjoy their learning experiences because they have good opportunities to explore, investigate and discover together. There are good links with parents, who praise the quality of information and support they receive from the school, the atmosphere for learning, and the ways their children make friends.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise further pupils' standards in science, by continuing to develop, implement and act on more effective whole school assessment systems for the subject.
- Ensure the headteacher and governors develop their growing expertise in the monitoring of teaching in order to refine further their evaluation of learning.
- Ensure the specific identification of pupils who may be gifted and/or talented in order to improve further their attainment and aspirations.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Above average standards, and good achievement were seen during the inspection. Progress is good from Reception to the end of Year 2, when pupils attain above average standards. This is reflected in the teacher assessments. At Year 6 in 2007 an above average percentage of pupils gained the expected level in the national tests and the progress they made between Years 2 and 6 was good. Girls were in the majority in 2007 and gained above average standards, whilst the boys were well above average. Nevertheless, results in science have been lower than in English and mathematics. Raising pupils' standards and achievement in science forms an important part of the school's improvement plan. Standards in tests for higher attaining pupils were around the national average, and met the school's predictions. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and a very significant strength. Pupils are confident, polite and careful of each other's welfare. The school is an orderly and respectful community. Pupils help each other and value each other's contributions. They repay very well the trust the staff place in them, and readily accept responsibility. They feel safe in school and attendance is above average. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils are self-motivated because they are challenged well and have fun in learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Because of the pupils' willingness to take responsibility, they make a strong contribution to the life of the school and wider community. Pupils exhibit a strong sense of belonging to the school, and show a clear understanding of right and wrong. Their spiritual development is particularly good because pupils are enabled to value the achievement of others. They develop self-confidence and self-esteem through the excellent

working relationships. Pupils of all ages feel free to express opinions, and their views are valued. They are prepared well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good, with some outstanding features. Consequently, pupils enjoy lessons and learning is good. Because teachers plan lessons well the activities move on at a pace. Expectations are high on the part of both teachers and pupils. Staff and pupils set themselves high standards, but understand the value of being able to learn from mistakes. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well and help pupils to make good individual progress because they understand their needs and have good subject expertise. Where there is excellent teaching, staff use questioning very effectively to enable pupils to think through and explain their ideas. Furthermore, because of the mixed year groups, teachers have developed ways of explaining things which reflect well pupils' differing abilities and learning styles.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curriculum planning is good, making effective links between subjects and ensuring suitably challenging work for the different groups of pupils in mixed age classes. The school keeps up-to-date with new national initiatives, including those for literacy and numeracy. Through its partnership with other schools, some more challenging work for potentially higher attaining pupils is provided, as in mathematics. However, the school does not yet identify pupils who may be gifted and/or talented in order to focus formally on specific enrichment and enhancement work. Pupils have a very good understanding of citizenship and democratic processes, particularly through elections to the school council. The range of well-attended extra-curricular activities is good. Since the last inspection, the school has taken full advantage of its new playground and sports facilities. These have benefited children in the Foundation Stage, particularly in their physical development and enjoyment in learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and pastoral support provided are very good. Procedures for safeguarding children are met fully, reflecting important priorities for the school. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Consequently, such pupils make good progress in terms of their individual circumstances. The school has good links with its partners and agencies in providing support for specific pupils. Adults show good concern for pupils' physical as well as emotional needs. Good academic guidance is based on careful monitoring of pupils' progress. Parents find the school's reporting systems helpful. Because the school is approachable, parents have access to regular information on their children's progress. Marking by teachers is regular and, together with verbal advice, provides pupils with good guidance as to how to improve. Nevertheless, assessment procedures in science are less well developed than in the other tested subjects. Teachers are working hard on improvements in this area.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good because of good teamwork and the commitment to improvement shown by all staff and governors. The headteacher makes a very important contribution to the success of the school because she has high expectations not only of herself, but also of the pupils and staff. This approach is valued by parents. Self-evaluation is honest, although occasionally a little modest. The monitoring of individual pupils' progress is a particular strength. Targets offer suitable challenge because they are based realistically on an informed understanding of the pupils and their abilities. Any potential underachievement is identified quickly and action taken. Although there is a positive emphasis on the monitoring of pupils, the monitoring of teaching is less formal. The headteacher and governors are working towards a manageable system, which will enable them to record more objectively the ongoing quality of teaching. Nevertheless, the school's leaders and managers ensure the pupils get a fair deal and receive a good education.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

7 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of North Cockerington Church of England Primary School, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 7EP

I would like to thank you all for welcoming me so warmly during my two days at your school. I was impressed by the smiles on your faces, which continued throughout the days. As we talked with each other, you helped me to understand why you enjoy your learning so much and are keen to come to school. You have much to celebrate.

These are the things I found are best about your school.

- Together with your teachers and staff, you make the school a welcoming place.
- You behave very well, help each other, and enjoy being involved in learning.
- You are friendly and play an active part in your school and community life.
- You achieve well and make good progress during your time at the school.
- The adults at your school look after you well, in both your work and play.
- Your teachers and governors are determined to ensure you continue to improve.

This is what I have asked your school to do now.

- Develop further the ways in which your teachers mark and assess your science work to help you achieve even more in this subject.
- Make more time for your headteacher and governors to visit your lessons. This is to help them understand and note how well you are taught so you can be helped and supported even more in your learning.
- Develop additional ways in which those of you who may have any special gifts or talents can be helped to make even better progress.

In your school's main entrance there is a framed picture with a quotation from a famous journalist. It says that adults should give children both roots and wings. Your school is successful in giving you both. Because of this, you can play an important part in helping your school to become an even more successful community.

With all best wishes for your future

Michael Miller

Lead inspector