

Washingborough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120679
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number	291831
Inspection date	8 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Glynn Storer

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Stephen Jones-Crabtree
Headteacher	Dr Barbara Davies
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001
School address	School Lane Washingborough Lincoln Lincolnshire LN4 1BW
Telephone number	01522 801355
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector in one day.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves the village of Washingborough and surrounding communities on the outskirts of Lincoln. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and, of the few who are of minority ethnic heritage, none are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The number of pupils registered for free school meals is low but this does not reflect accurately the levels of hardship in the community. Children's attainment on entry to nursery is below that normally expected of three-year-olds. The total numbers of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, are average for a school of this size. However, these numbers vary markedly from one year group to another, as do numbers of pupils entering or leaving the school part way through their primary education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Washingborough Primary provides a good education for its pupils. The headteacher, senior leaders and governors, are striving for excellence in all aspects of the school's work and this is already being achieved in some areas. The school therefore provides good value for money.

Children's attainment on entry to Nursery is often below that normally expected of three-year-olds and in recent years there has been a declining trend. However, children get a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. Standards have risen strongly in recent years, so that in 2006, overall standards at the end of Year 6 were significantly above the national average in all core subjects. The vast majority of pupils achieve well. The 2006 statistics suggest that pupils' achievements were satisfactory rather than good. However, that year's figures were adversely affected by particularly high levels of pupil mobility. The school's detailed and thorough tracking of pupils' progress shows that, of those who spent the whole of Years 3 to 6 in the school, nine out of ten pupils made at least the expected rate of progress and an above average proportion exceeded national expectations in the progress that they made, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Pupils achieve well because teaching, learning and the curriculum are good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and so set work that is challenging and moves pupils on. They also put time and effort into teaching pupils to be effective learners. This is time well spent because of the very positive impact that it has on pupils' attitudes and learning behaviour and therefore on the progress that they make. Another important factor in the raising of standards and achievement has been the strong emphasis that the curriculum gives to the teaching of skills, for example, of literacy, numeracy, investigative science and information and communication technology (ICT). However, this skills-based approach does not yet extend to all other subjects, and the school rightly regards this as an area for development.

The curriculum also embodies a very systematic approach to promoting pupils' personal development which, along with excellent standards of care, guidance and support, results in outstanding levels of personal development and well-being. In this respect, there are particular strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and in their outstanding contributions to school and wider community.

The excellent leadership provided by the headteacher and senior leadership team has been the driving force behind the school's impressive record of improvement since the last inspection. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are exceptionally rigorous, yet entirely supportive. As such, they effectively underpin staff and whole-school development because they give a strong, clear and accurate direction to all of the school's work. The introduction of curriculum teams is giving leadership roles to more staff and involving staff at all levels in school improvement initiatives. Though potentially beneficial, some of these have yet to impact fully. The school works well with others for the benefit of its pupils. Most parents value and support the school. However, inspection findings endorse the view expressed by the school and by a number of parents: pupils would benefit further if parents had a better understanding of and a greater involvement in their children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the skills-based approach to teaching and learning to all subjects.

- Seek ways of giving parents a better understanding of and involvement in their children's learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievements and the standards that they attain are good. There has been a declining trend in children's attainment on entry. Many children now enter Nursery with knowledge and skills that are below and, at times, well below those normally expected of three-year-olds. This has resulted in an apparent drop in standards, both at the end of the Foundation Stage and at the end of Year 2. However, the school's meticulous tracking records show clear evidence of good progress and achievement in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. For example, even though the results of the 2006 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 were below the national average, virtually all pupils made the expected amount of progress in Years 1 and 2, and, in reading and writing, over half made better-than-average progress. Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 were significantly above the national average in 2006 and the school's most recent assessments indicate that current pupils are firmly on course for above average scores. Even though many of these pupils started Key Stage 2 at a higher level than those currently in Year 3, tracking again confirms that almost all pupils who spent the whole of Years 3 to 6 in this school made at least satisfactory progress and, for many, progress was good, especially in writing and mathematics. There are currently no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls or of pupils of differing abilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Attendance is well above the national average. Pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy school because teachers make lessons interesting and fun. Pupils relate extremely well to staff and fellow pupils and behave well in lessons and around school. By the time that they leave, most are very mature and confident. They show this in conscientious working habits and by striving to succeed. As a result, they are extremely well-prepared for secondary education and the world of work. Their work on safe and healthy lifestyles is also having a good impact, for example on the numbers of pupils who walk or cycle to school. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is outstanding. This is evident, for example, in the way pupils avoid unnecessary waste by recycling water from drinking fountains. The school council and the headteacher's 'Friday Chatters' Tea Party' give pupils a real voice in the life of the school. The council is rightly proud of its achievements in making the playground a safer and more enjoyable place and councillors are looking forward to being involved in the appointment of a new class teacher. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are sensitive to things of beauty, have good insights into human emotions and act on an understanding of what is right. This, along with effective partnerships with schools in other countries, prepares them really well for life in a multi-cultural society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment procedures are thorough and teachers generally make good use of assessment information to track pupils' progress and to inform the targets that they set for individuals and groups. In this respect, teachers' expectations are suitably high. Targets are challenging and, because lesson planning is geared to enabling pupils to meet their targets, this is a key factor in the good progress that most pupils make. Learning support assistants do a good job. They are well trained and committed to the pupils they support, especially those who are vulnerable or those with learning difficulties or disabilities. When teaching is most effective, it is because teachers and learners contribute to lessons equally. This is often the case because of the very consistent approach that all teachers bring to the task of teaching pupils to understand their learning and to learn more effectively. Occasionally, however, teachers are too slow to react to the small minority of pupils whose approach to learning is still too casual and when this happens, these pupils do not make the progress that they could.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. There is a good emphasis on promoting literacy and ICT skills throughout the curriculum. Cross-curricular links are effective. They make pupils' learning in other subjects more relevant and appealing. However, the school has yet to extend its successful approach to the teaching of key skills across the curriculum as a whole. Consequently, pupils' learning is not as consistently effective in all subjects and, as a result, this issue is already high on the school's improvement agenda. A strength of current arrangements is the systematic provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. This promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well and has a really positive impact on the choices that pupils make. The school enriches its effective basic curriculum with a good range of educational visits, visitors and special events, which bring learning to life and add much to pupils' academic and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Standards of care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils thrive in the school's very positive atmosphere. They feel secure because teachers and supervisory staff are attentive to their needs and readily provide guidance in matters of personal development. There are secure arrangements for safeguarding pupils. They say that bullying is rare and that staff deal quickly and effectively with any incidents that occur. Checks on the suitability of staff and procedures for child protection are thorough and meet current requirements. Governors are conscientious in checking the school and ensuring that there is prompt action to minimise potential risks to pupils or staff. Procedures for checking pupils' progress are extremely effective. Staff set targets and, through constructive marking and on-going dialogue, ensure that pupils get the necessary guidance to improve their work. Learning support assistants give sensitive support to pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, which enables many of these pupils to progress at a similar rate to most others.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is an excellent leader, whose example and passion for the school inspire all who work there. Her vision, along with her rigorous monitoring of standards and quality, has been central to building a consistency of expectation and approach that adds considerably to the quality of teaching and learning. She motivates staff by giving them all a real part to play in improving the school. Consequently, the senior leadership team provides excellent support. Their role is planned systematically and results in accurate school self-evaluation and extremely well-focused planning, which gives the school an exceptional capacity for further improvement. The leadership potential of other staff is promoted through the work of the curriculum teams, though this work has yet to impact fully on standards and quality across the curriculum as a whole. Governors support the school effectively. They gather a wealth of first-hand information and are very good at holding the school to account for what it achieves. The school enjoys the strong approval of most parents but senior staff and governors have recognised that pupils would benefit if the school provide more opportunities for parents to understand and be involved in their children's 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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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 behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	1

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
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

9 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Washingborough Primary School, Lincoln, LN4 1BW

You may remember that I visited your school a little while ago. Thank you for making me so welcome and for taking time to talk to me and to answer my questions. I particularly enjoyed speaking with the school council. You are right to be proud of how much school councillors and many other pupils do to make your school a better place.

I thought that you would like to hear what I found out because I now know that there are many really good things happening in your school.

- Almost all of you make good progress in English, mathematics and science and overall standards are high.
- You enjoy school because teachers, visitors, educational visits and special events make learning interesting and very enjoyable.
- You all get on exceptionally well together and almost all of you behave well.
- Your teachers and other adults help you when you have problems, make sure that you are safe and give you really good advice about your work.
- Dr Davies, the staff, governors, pupils and members of the local community work hard to improve the school.

Because Dr Davies, quite rightly, wants everything to be perfect, there will always be something that she wants to do just a little bit better. That is why your school is so good. Therefore, I only have two things to ask the school to do and they are things that staff and governors were already thinking about.

- I would like the staff to press on with their ideas for planning topics that help you to learn the most important skills in every single subject.
- I would also like staff and governors to find more ways to help your parents understand how things are done in school and to be more involved in your learning.

I hope that you will all continue to work hard and do well.

Yours sincerely

Glynn Storer

Lead Inspector