

# The Hackthorn Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120572
<b>Local Authority</b>	LINCOLNSHIRE
<b>Inspection number</b>	313677
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Patricia Cox

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	44
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jo Bennison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mel Oyston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 June 2005
<b>School address</b>	Main Street Hackthorn Lincoln Lincolnshire LN2 3PF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01673 860295
<b>Fax number</b>	01673 860295

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

All pupils in this very small school are of White British heritage and have English as their first language. There are almost twice as many boys in the school as girls. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is lower than the national average. Few pupils are identified as being entitled to free school meals, although this figure may be distorted because the school does not provide school dinners. Attainment on entry to Reception varies considerably from year to year, from well below to much higher than national expectations, because of the low numbers involved. For example, there are only two children in Reception this year. Many pupils join the school during Key Stage 2. There has been some disruption in staffing in the past two years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This exceptional school provides its pupils with an excellent education and helps them to thrive personally and socially. It works particularly well with parents, who hold it in very high esteem. One parent wrote 'Hackthorn is how all schools should be, preparing the child for their future, working with parents to ensure the child becomes the best they can be'. Pupils thoroughly agree, enjoying all their lessons and the many activities the school provides outside the school day. The school has gone from strength to strength since the previous inspection and has outstanding capacity to improve. This is due to the headteacher who has an unswerving focus on ensuring that each individual pupil fulfils his or her potential. Leadership and management and the value the school gives are outstanding. The excellent teamwork in the school means that all the staff and governors are committed to the ethos of care and achievement. Pupils quickly learn to become part of the team. Those who are new to the school value and fit into the Hackthorn way of life very rapidly. All pupils demonstrate their excellent personal development and well-being in their care for each other and their full involvement in the decisions that are made. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage of education and for their future lives.

Teaching and learning are outstanding because teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They know individual pupils and their potential extremely well and plan their lessons carefully to cater for all ages and abilities in the class. The excellent curriculum is designed carefully to ensure that skills and knowledge are built on consistently. Consequently, pupils' achievement is outstanding. Provision for the Foundation Stage is good and the children achieve well. Standards in the present very small Reception group are close to national expectations overall. The pupils in Year 2 are attaining levels above the average. Standards in Year 6 are usually exceptionally high, but are closer to the national average this year. This is because most pupils in Year 6 joined the school recently and there is a high proportion with learning difficulties. Progress is particularly good in English and science, although it is not quite as strong in mathematics. Those who find it more difficult to learn receive outstanding support and therefore do particularly well.

The school takes excellent care of its pupils and they trust all the adults who work with them. Very close working relationships with others, like the local secondary school, are utilised to provide further opportunities, for example, for the more able. The school is developing very good methods for assessing the progress each pupil makes in reading and writing, but not yet in mathematics. This information is used extremely well to provide additional support for those who need it. Pupils are fully informed about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, but the systems for target setting are not yet linked completely to assessment.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in mathematics even further so that standards match those in English, and develop the assessment systems to include mathematics.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and most reach the goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1 and some exceed them. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, test results have varied over the years, due to the extremely low numbers of pupils involved.

Results have tended to be similar to the national average at the end of Year 2 but are currently above average because there has been a significant improvement in reading and writing this year, although not quite as much in mathematics. The results at the end of Year 6 have usually been exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science, and were all well above average in 2006. Results in English and science have generally been slightly better than those in mathematics. Pupils make exceptionally good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, and the school sets challenging but achievable targets for individuals. However, their progress in information and communication technology (ICT) is somewhat hampered by the lack of broadband access. The school makes considerable efforts to overcome this deficiency. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the progress pupils make.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to work and school, as reflected in their well above average attendance. They take extremely good care of each other at work and play, older ones often supporting younger ones and helping them to learn. Their behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around the school. They take their many responsibilities seriously and carry them out responsibly, growing into mature and courteous individuals. Pupils thoroughly understand how to keep themselves and one another safe and are particularly conscientious about living healthily. They work extremely cooperatively in teams and make the most of the many opportunities to make a contribution to the school and the wider community. All pupils' views are sought and acted on routinely. There are very close links with the local church and history society, and pupils initiate contributions to charities. They are exceptionally thoughtful when considering the values and views of others. Pupils say that they cannot recall any instance of bullying and say, 'There's sometimes a bit of squabbling but teachers sort it out very quickly'. They have a good understanding of their own and other cultures. Although there are few people of other ethnic groups in the area, the school works hard to develop their understanding of life in a multicultural society, through visits and visitors.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers work extremely hard to make learning interesting and enjoyable, and to support pupils in developing their skills. Therefore, pupils are very good learners who know how to approach their work and the strategies they need in solving problems. The outstanding relationships in classrooms ensure that lessons run smoothly. Teachers use their very good knowledge of individual pupils to adjust the challenge and pace of the lesson so that, as pupils report, most tasks are just right for them. However, very occasionally the work is too hard. Teaching is lively and enthusiastic and resources are used very well to illustrate and enrich learning. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the lessons, particularly through their work in supporting the progress of children in the Foundation Stage and pupils with learning difficulties.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is rich and enlivened by a very good range of visits and visitors, adding to pupils' full enjoyment of school life. The excellent programme for personal, social and health education

makes a good contribution to their understanding of how to stay healthy. While shortcomings in the accommodation limit the provision of a full gymnastics curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 2, the school works extremely hard to make alternative arrangements. The very wide range of clubs and activities outside the school day make a particularly strong contribution to this provision. In spite of the school's considerable efforts to install broadband access, this has not proved possible. Access to the Internet is therefore erratic, although the school does its very best and provides the fullest ICT curriculum possible in the circumstances.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school takes extremely good care of the pupils' physical and emotional needs and gives them outstanding guidance on how to take care of themselves. All risk assessments are carried out and pupils are often involved in the process, so that they are able to foresee possible problems and cope with them. The necessary checks are carried out on all who work in the school and child protection procedures are robust. Methods for guiding and supporting the pupils in English work very well. Teachers work closely with pupils to show them what they have learned and to set targets for the next steps in learning. However, these procedures are not quite as stringent in mathematics.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher has extremely good procedures for checking how effective the school is, including regular teaching in both classes. He has a realistic view and has identified the key priorities for improvement. The staff support him well and are enthusiastic about carrying out their roles. Responsibility for curriculum planning and evaluating the progress being made is shared between all staff, who are developing well their ability to lead and manage their key stages. Planning for school improvement is focused very well on those areas that require improvement and the subsequent action is rapid and effective. Governance is good. Governors are involved very well in the life of the school and take a critical view of its work. Their ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the school is developing well.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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**

2 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of The Hackthorn C of E Primary School, Main Street, Hackthorn, Lincolnshire, LN2 3PF

It was a pleasure to meet you when I visited your school recently and thank you so much for the way you helped me. I really enjoyed our discussion in the playground and when I talked to the children in Year 6. I thought you might like to know what I found out about your school.

First of all, I want you to know that I thought you were extremely polite and well-behaved. You are a credit to your school. You take really good care of each other and get on very well together. But you're very lucky to go to Hackthorn and I agree with you that it's a really good school. Your teachers know a lot about how well each of you is learning in reading and writing and they fill in the tracking sheets with you so that they can help you to get better. I've asked them to do this in maths as well.

Everyone works very hard to make your lessons interesting and make sure that the work you do is just right for you. I was pleased to hear you say that this is the same in all your lessons, because that's why you do so well with your work. You make really good progress, especially in English, although you could do just a little better in maths. I think you could help by trying to do a bit better.

The school gives you lots of exciting things to do and takes very good care of you. I'm sure that you'll continue to be very successful because Mr Oyston and all the adults work very hard to make sure that things carry on improving.

My best wishes for the future

Mrs Pat Cox

Inspector