

The St Sebastian's Church of England Primary School, Great Gonerby

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120601
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339727
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2010
Reporting inspector	John Paddick

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nicholas Sauer
Headteacher	Mrs Marina Faulkner
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited seven lessons and held meetings with governors, members of staff, and a group of pupils. All teachers in the school at the time of the inspection were observed, in total for almost four hours. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at many examples of pupils' books, analysed 23 questionnaires from parents and carers and 58 from pupils in Years 3 to 6. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's records on pupils' progress, the school development plan and minutes from governors' meetings.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress being made by pupils in all year groups, especially with writing and speaking skills
- the effectiveness of the school's tracking system in helping to raise standards
- the progress being made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the school's gifted and talented pupils

Information about the school

St Sebastian's Church of England Primary School is much smaller than average. It serves the village of Great Gonerby and also attracts pupils from outside the immediate area. The large majority of pupils are White British and there are very few from minority ethnic groups. Around two fifths of the school's pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, a well above average proportion. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is around three times the national average. A Reception class provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school provides child care provision through its breakfast club for an hour each morning for pupils aged four to eleven.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Sebastian's Church of England Primary School provides its pupils with a good standard of education. There are some outstanding features, notably the exemplary quality of care provided for all pupils. The effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, is central to the school's success and good standing in the community. Areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been tackled well. Consequently, effective attention to writing and speaking skills has improved these aspects of pupils' development.

All groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are gifted or talented, make good progress in their academic work and in their personal development. This is because the school treats the education and support of the individual child as its greatest priority. Teachers always ensure that work in lessons is matched to the wide range of attainment in their classes so effective extension activities and extra help and support are always available. Parents fully recognise the good quality of education that the school provides and particularly the excellent range of care, guidance and support that their children receive.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to participate in all activities. They say that they find their lessons interesting and they like their teachers. An atmosphere of calm and industry pervades the school because pupils behave and co-operate well. In lessons, a minority of pupils sometimes tend to fidget and lose concentration when the teacher is talking. This requires attention to ensure that all pupils get the best out of every lesson. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 all have National Curriculum targets but they are often unsure how the work that they are doing in class relates to them. Opportunities to take responsibility are taken up enthusiastically, for example membership of the school council, helping younger children and raising money for charity. Older pupils have a good grasp of the multicultural nature of Britain but the direct links they have to people from other cultures are limited.

The school has good procedures for self-evaluation and is moving forward quickly in response to the effective leadership of the headteacher so capacity for further improvement is good. Much has been achieved in a relatively short time since she arrived in 2008. All members of staff fully support the direction in which the school is moving and there is no evidence of complacency. They are keen to improve standards and help to move the school on to the next level.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' listening skills by:

- providing a greater range and variety of compelling presentations
- setting listening targets for pupils where appropriate and monitoring their progress towards them.
- Give the older pupils a better understanding of how the work they are doing relates to their national test targets by:
 - sharing with them the National Curriculum levels of their work
 - providing exemplars so that they understand what they need to do to move to the next level
- Increase the amount of direct access that pupils have to people from other cultures by:
 - using video and internet links
 - linking with schools with more ethnic minority pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All groups of pupils make good progress in their learning as they move through the school. Year groups are quite small so comparisons between them and national averages are statistically unreliable. On entry to Reception, children's stages of development are often well below those expected for children their age yet by the time they leave Year 6 each cohort has usually reached broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good achievement, especially given the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

National test results in English, mathematics and science over the last three years have varied from below to above average and reflect these broadly average standards. The school recognises that the 2008 results were lower than they should have been but there was a substantial improvement in 2009. Current standards in Years 5 and 6 are average. Pupils take a pride in their work and present it well. This also applies to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who also make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The school's gifted and talented pupils also progress well through extensions to the usual curriculum. Inspectors were impressed by the way pupils of all ages were making consistently good gains in their learning in response to good teaching.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and enjoy productive relationships with all of the adults who work with them. They co-operate and behave well so the atmosphere for learning is universally good in all classrooms. Listening skills are very variable. While many pupils can sustain concentration for long periods a minority tend to fidget in class and allow their attention to wander. All other aspects of personal development are very strong because of the attention that the school puts on them. The success of this work is evident through observing Years 5 and 6 in class. They display a maturity in their approach to work and have developed the skills to enable them to thrive in the next stage of their education.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Consistently good teaching is instrumental in promoting the good progress that all groups of pupils make. Planning is good because it routinely matches the pupils' work to the different levels of attainment in the class. Teachers use a wide variety of techniques and really bring their lessons to life. The use of visual stimuli is particularly successful, especially when teachers use a compelling style that fully captures and keeps the pupils' attention. Explanations are always clear so pupils generally understand what they are expected to do.

The good planning deploys the strong team of classroom assistants well and enables them to give effective support where it is most needed. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their oral skills through answering in class and discussing aspects of their work with their peers. Occasionally the whole class question and answer sessions are too long and result in pupils tending to lose concentration. Teachers mark pupils' work well and give them a clear indication of how well they have done and what they need to do to improve it. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are sometimes unclear about how the work being done in class relates to their targets for

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

the national tests. The school's excellent tracking system accurately records where pupils are in terms of standards and triggers extra help in cases where pupils are not doing as well as they should be.

The curriculum provides secure pathways for pupils of all levels of attainment to make good progress. Pupils benefit from good attention to the development of basic skills in English, mathematics and work with computers. Science is popular with the pupils and they also enjoy often quite detailed work in French, geography and history. Some very good displays around school bear testimony to the success of topics like the Vikings. Health education, extra-curricular sport, music and residential visits all help to underpin pupils' personal development.

Outstanding quality care, guidance and support are at the heart of the school's work. They thoroughly underpin the good progress that pupils make, often against a background of extremely challenging personal circumstances. Every pupil is treated as an individual and those who need high levels of personal support and guidance receive them. Effective links with external agencies are instrumental in this work. Parents fully recognise the quality of this aspect of the school's programme and value it greatly.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Good leadership and management at all levels focus effectively on pupils' academic and personal development. They constantly seek to provide the best possible care, guidance and support. There is a full recognition that these hold the keys to the promotion of good progress for all pupils and especially those who have challenging personal circumstances. Governors have a good grasp of the school's strong features and know what still needs to be done. They challenge where appropriate and monitor the school's work well.

The promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding because every pupil is extremely well known to the staff, treated as an individual and valued. There is no discrimination of any description. The school's provision for the safeguarding of its pupils is excellent. All required checks are firmly in place and records are exemplary. Arrangements for the promotion of community cohesion are good. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility within the school community and beyond. Pupils have a good understanding of the multicultural nature of Britain but there are limited links with pupils and adults from other cultures. Pupils enjoy the well organised breakfast club where

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

they have the opportunity to develop social and communication skills, and prepare themselves for the school day. Staff morale is excellent and the school is well-placed to improve further.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception class make good progress in their learning and personal development because provision is good. The inside and outdoor areas are arranged well to provide an inviting environment for young children so they are eager to come to school and participate in activities. On entry to Reception, many pupils display levels of maturity, concentration, communication and social skills that are well below those expected for children their age. Activities are planned well so that they meet all children's needs. Those who can work independently or in pairs are encouraged to do so when possible whilst children who need constant modelling in communication and social development receive it through working in small groups with adults. All children receive an outstanding level of personal attention and support so they feel valued and enjoy coming to school. Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage mean that the programme is constantly developing and continues to cater for the individual child.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The parental questionnaire returns represented around a third of the school's pupils. Parents, who responded, justifiably have an extremely positive view of the school and what it provides for their children. The inspection team received many written comments on the questionnaire returns praising the school for the extremely high levels of care and support that the children receive, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Several parents mention the great difference that the school has made for their children since moving them from unhappy experiences elsewhere.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The St Sebastian's Church of England Primary School, Great Gonerby to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 102 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	91	1	4	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	83	4	17	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	90	1	4	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	61	9	40	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	14	61	8	35	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	74	6	26	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	87	2	9	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	91	2	9	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

2-3 March 2010

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



Thursday 4 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The St Sebastian's Church of England Primary School, Great Gonerby,
NG31 8LB

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. A particular thank you goes to those of you who spoke to us in class or at lunchtime. Thank you also to the Year 3 to 6 pupils who filled in our questionnaire.

You will be pleased to know that St Sebastian's Primary is a good school because it is well led and managed. We know that you are happy there and enjoy your lessons and all the other activities that the teachers and their assistants put on for you. You respond very well to the adults who work with you by co-operating and behaving well. However, some of you do tend to fidget and lose concentration when you should be listening.

We were pleased to note that you make good progress in your learning as you move from Reception to Year 6 because you are taught well. You take a pride in your written work and we were impressed with this. You and your parents are right to speak highly of the good teaching and the excellent care you all receive.

We have asked your headteacher, the staff and governors to improve just three aspects of your school to make it even better. These are to:

- ensure that pupils who have difficulty concentrating improve their listening skills
- provide the older pupils with a better idea on how the work that they are doing relates to their national test targets
- increase the number of direct links you have with people from other cultures.

With very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

John Paddick

Lead inspector

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