

St Helena’s Church of England Primary School, Willoughby

Main Road, Willoughby, Alford, Lincolnshire LN13 9NH

Inspection dates

18–19 September 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers’ subject knowledge is consistently not well developed. Teaching in mathematics does not always build sequentially on prior learning.
- Teachers do not make systematic checks on reading. Some pupils are reading books that are not appropriate for their ability.
- Not all teachers give pupils sufficient opportunities to think hard about the questions that teachers ask them.
- Not all staff use information about pupils’ prior attainment to set work that is at the right level for pupils. This means that teaching does not always provide the next steps of the pupils’ learning.
- Leaders have not evaluated the quality of teaching, learning and assessment carefully enough. They have not checked that teachers have made the required improvements.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years is not consistent. Children do not make as much progress in the Reception class as they do in the Nursery.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are considerate members of a caring community. They support each other and value the contribution that they all make to the school.
- Staff provide effective pastoral support for the pupils. The pupils feel well cared for and the school uses partnerships with outside agencies effectively.
- Pupils check their work. They are happy to improve it and use the school’s systems to support them in doing so.
- Children in the Nursery class make good progress. They become good learners and make a strong start to their school careers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and thereby pupils' outcomes, by making sure that:
 - all teachers use their knowledge of the prior attainment of pupils to plan learning effectively
 - staff use questioning effectively so that pupils are given opportunities to think deeply about their learning
 - teachers are equipped with sufficient subject knowledge so that they can match tasks to pupils' prior learning and prepare them for the next stage of their learning, particularly in mathematics and reading
 - staff check the texts that pupils read so that they are appropriate for their ability and prepare them well for the next stage in their development
 - pupils whose knowledge and skills are currently below those typically found in others of the same age are given effective support to catch up.
- Improve the early years by ensuring that:
 - the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good in both classes.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - all staff across the school are supported and challenged to improve their practice and that leaders check closely that their actions to improve teaching, learning and assessment are having the desired impact.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Until recently, leaders have not dealt with underperformance sufficiently well. Leaders know what the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, learning and assessment are and have put in place plans to improve teaching. However, they did not check that all staff were acting on these plans. Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers use information about pupils' prior attainment well enough to plan learning that is at the right level for pupils so that they make good progress.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach their subjects effectively. For example, not all staff teach phonics effectively, and not all staff understand the mathematics curriculum well enough to ensure that mathematics is consistently well taught.
- Leaders have identified which pupils are underperforming but the steps taken to improve these pupils' progress are not consistently effective. In some cases, interventions by staff have provided effective support for pupils. Provisional data shows that outcomes overall have risen at the end of key stages 1 and 2. However, not all pupils in school receive the support that they should.
- There has been a period of staffing instability throughout the school. Leaders have put in place a programme of support for staff but it is too soon to see sufficient impact. Staff value the opportunities for professional development that they have been given and are very supportive of leaders in the school.
- Leaders identify pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities with increasing accuracy. The special educational needs coordinator has introduced more effective individual learning plans. These contain some measurable targets and have begun to have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning for these pupils. She has built effective links with external agencies so that pupils can receive the support that they need.
- Middle leaders were newly appointed at the beginning of this year. They have a clear understanding of how the school needs to improve and of their roles and responsibilities. However, it is too soon to judge their impact on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders' use of the pupil premium funding is good overall. The funding pays for support that helps most disadvantaged pupils to catch up. Leaders know of the instances where it is not currently proving sufficiently effective and are adjusting their plans to address this.
- Leaders have made good use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium. They have evaluated the impact of previous years' expenditure and used this to inform their plans. Teachers' subject knowledge has grown and pupils now participate in a wider variety of sports, such as volleyball. The school's new multi-use games area provides an environment where pupils can be active at break, lunchtimes

and in PE lessons in all weather conditions. This has increased activity levels for all pupils.

Governance of the school

- The new chair of the governing body has a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of governors. She has acted with determination to ensure that all governors share this understanding and holds governors to account for their performance.
- Governors have begun to evaluate the effectiveness of leaders in the school. They have identified that more time is needed for leaders to monitor the standards of teaching and learning and have acted to release the headteacher from her teaching commitment. This has enabled her to begin to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to provide more effective monitoring and feedback to staff.
- The governing body now has a more thorough understanding of the progress of pupils in the school. Governors are proud of the impact of some of the interventions. However, they do not monitor outcomes for all pupils with sufficient rigour. As a result, they cannot fully hold leaders to account for the progress that all pupils make.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has rightly prioritised the training of all staff so that they know what to do in the event of a concern arising about a pupil. All staff understand how concerns about a pupil should be escalated.
- The school works effectively with other agencies. It is proactive in seeking support for vulnerable families and in being persistent when following through referrals. Staff recognise their responsibility to do all they can to protect pupils.
- Pupils feel safe within the school. They have a very clear knowledge of what they should do if they have any worries or concerns. Following a recent anti-bullying workshop, one of the youngest pupils explained to the inspector, 'I would find someone who I could trust and I would keep telling them.' The pupils explained how to keep themselves safe online and on mobile devices and explained that this was a part of what the school taught them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Not all teachers have sufficient subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics, to understand how to build sequentially on pupils' prior knowledge. They do not consistently plan learning that is at the right level. As a result, the most able pupils are sometimes not challenged and the needs of the less able pupils are not sufficiently met.
- Teachers in some year groups do not use questioning effectively. They give pupils the answers before pupils have had the time to reflect and think for themselves.

- Staff do not ensure that all pupils have reading books which accurately match the level at which they are able to read. This means that some pupils do not know when they make an error. Staff do not make sure that pupils use their knowledge of punctuation to help them read accurately.
- Teachers ensure that pupils learn the pure sounds which are the basis of early reading. Pupils then use this phonetic knowledge to help them to write sentences successfully.
- Staff throughout the school expect pupils to commit to improving their work and take pride in it. For example, they enjoy 'polishing' their work by improving their vocabulary and punctuation and extending their sentences.
- Teachers teach pupils how to consider an author's distinct style. Pupils can name the features of a genre, such as diary writing.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons. For example, during a project on South America, pupils enjoyed making papier mâché models of the Andes.
- Teachers use a range of teaching styles and include visitors from other faiths to engage pupils in deeper reflections in religious education (RE). Pupils recognise the importance of learning about a range of cultures and beliefs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils are keen to do well and become successful learners. They understand that they need to practise what they have learned at home and feel that the tasks that they are set are enjoyable and relevant. They know that this will help them as they move on to secondary school and the world of work.
- The school has a strong ethos of nurturing all pupils which is shared by staff, pupils, parents and governors. This is explicitly taught through the values which are a central part of the school's teaching. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote supportive advice for children starting the Reception class about how to help each other by following the school's values.
- Pupils explain that they feel well cared for. They feel that teachers and teaching assistants are very supportive of them. Staff have high expectations of pupils' personal conduct. As one child explained, 'Teachers bring us up to know that everyone is equal. They expect it of us.'
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are very rare, but that when it does happen staff ensure that the situation is fully resolved. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught regularly about how to report bullying in all its forms. The school's record-keeping is thorough in monitoring incidents of poor behaviour.
- Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional and physical well-being. The 'families champion' provides effective pastoral support and is assiduous in building links with organisations who can provide further help for families facing challenging situations.

- Staff help pupil to think about their future careers. The careers fair gives pupils the opportunity to hear about a variety of occupations and think about the choices that they have.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They show respect for each other by holding open doors, for example. They care for each other on the play equipment, making sure that everyone gets a turn and that pupils of all abilities can use it safely.
- Attitudes to learning are generally good and pupils say that they enjoy their learning. They recognise how teachers adapt lessons to interest them.
- Pupils care for others in the community. They talk with enthusiasm about caring for older people who attend the school's community lunches. They are proud of the difference that they make to others.
- Pupils enjoy helping others, for example through being a buddy to new arrivals. They describe the school as a highly welcoming community.
- Leaders have acted systematically to improve attendance. They have worked with external agencies so that parents understand their responsibilities to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. The 'families champion' provides tailored support to help families to do this, for example through providing access to breakfast club. Persistent absence has declined sharply so that it is now below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress across different year groups.
- Attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2 declined in 2017 and pupils made insufficient progress from their starting points. Provisional assessment information for 2018 indicates that outcomes have improved in 2018. However, the school's own assessment information for pupils currently in the school shows that this is not reflected in all year groups.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard by the end of key stage 2 is too low.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 rose in the last academic year. The proportion of pupils who attained at least the expected standards was broadly in line with the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in the early stages of reading. A very high proportion of pupils consistently attain the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is good overall. A large majority of these pupils are making good gains from their starting points.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. Teachers' targets in individual learning plans build on the knowledge of what these pupils can do and identify appropriate next steps.
- Pupils make good progress in art. They enjoy using a variety of media to investigate artistic traditions from around the world and through history. Pupils can discuss the work of different artists and describe what they have learned from their individual styles.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The effectiveness of leadership in the early years has varied over time. Leaders have successfully introduced a new Nursery class to the school, in which children make good progress.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across all areas of the provision. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with the national average. However, a small minority of children do not make sufficient progress in the Reception Year and are not well prepared to begin Year 1. Proportions of children attaining a good level of development by the end of the early years have declined.
- Current leaders in the early years are improving the provision. They are building on the successful practice in the Nursery class. They link learning to the children's interests and to accurate assessments of them. For example, children's discussion about hedgehogs and ladybirds was skilfully used by the teacher to provide opportunities to make models, count spines and spots.
- The well-organised classrooms support clear routines. Children are curious and keen to learn. They listen carefully to count the number of claps or counters dropped. They match this to read the shape of numbers. They are proud to be thinking carefully.
- The new Nursery class is led by staff who have high expectations of the children. The staff have created an exciting and stimulating environment for the children to explore. They use questioning to extend the children's thinking, such as asking why the ball was travelling up the pipe.
- The staff in the Nursery carefully track the children's learning. They know the children's stages of development well and systematically monitor their observations to ensure that they provide appropriate activities to build on prior learning. Staff spot when additional support is needed and work with external agencies to provide this. They plan challenges for the most able, such as building on their knowledge of number. As a result, all children are ready for their next stage of learning in the Reception class.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively with children who are entitled to the pupil premium. They identify areas which will help them to become better learners, for example by increasing their opportunities to talk with an adult. As a result, they make strong progress from their starting points. Differences in attainment between those children who are disadvantaged and others nationally is diminishing by the end of their Reception year.

- Staff plan thoroughly to support the admission of children who have SEN and/or disabilities. Because appropriate support is already in place, these children settle quickly into the setting and the school.
- Parents and carers describe how well the children have settled into school life. Transition sessions and regular communications ensure that parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.

School details

Unique reference number	120587
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10053104

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marion Burnby-Crouch
Headteacher	Susan Belton
Telephone number	01507 462367
Website	www.st-helenascofe.lincs.sch.uk
Email address	admin@st-helenascofe.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 February 2018

Information about this school

- Since the last full inspection, the school has become a 3 to 11 school. It now admits pupils to a Nursery class.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.

- The school has a designated religious character and received an inspection under section 48 on 7 July 2016.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all seven classes. These observations took place jointly with the headteacher. The inspector heard readers from key stages 1 and 2 and spoke with groups of children. She took account of views expressed on the pupil survey.
- The inspector spoke to leaders in the school and scrutinised the school's own assessment information.
- The inspectors spoke with parents taking their children to school and took account of the 42 responses expressed on Parent View.
- The inspector spoke with staff and took account of views expressed on the staff survey. She also visited the breakfast and after-school club.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents which the school provided, such as minutes of the governors' meetings and development plans. She spoke with governors and a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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