

# St Helena's Church of England Primary School, Willoughby

Main Road, Willoughby, Alford, LN13 9NH

**Inspection dates** 12–13 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher, supported by leaders at all levels, provides a happy, friendly atmosphere where pupils say they feel safe and secure.
- By the end of Year 6 standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress in all subjects throughout the school.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils well and plan interesting and enjoyable lessons.
- Provision in the Reception studio is good and children quickly become inquisitive and confident learners.
- Reading is a particular strength because the linking of letters to the sounds they make is taught systematically on a daily basis.
- Teaching assistants and other adults make a good contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors contribute well to the good leadership and management of the school. They support leaders well in their determined vision to improve the school further.
- Positive relationships between adults and pupils foster a harmonious community where behaviour is good and often exemplary.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A wide variety of exciting opportunities, visits and visitors supports this learning.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking does not routinely inform pupils what they have achieved and what they need to do to further improve their work.
- Pupils' writing is not always well presented.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills for different purposes in longer pieces of work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons including five with the headteacher.
- The inspector listened to some Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils read. The inspector also visited a school assembly and talked informally with pupils on the playground at lunch and at break time. The inspector looked at the work in pupils' books.
- Discussions were held with a group of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector met informally with parents at the start of the school day and considered the views of parents contained in the 15 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire.
- A range of documentation was examined including information on safeguarding, the progress and attainment of pupils, the school's view of its own performance and plans for improvement, minutes of the governing body's meetings and records of monitoring of pupils' behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Valerie Palmer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Helena's Church of England Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught within a Reception studio, a mixed Y1/ Y2 studio, separate Y3 and Y4 studios and a mixed Y5/6 studio (a class is called a studio in this school).
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average
- The number of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. This is extra funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those who have a parent in the armed forces.
- In 2013 there were too few pupils in Year 6 to compare their attainment with government floor standards.
- A higher than normal proportion of pupils join or leave the school part way through their primary education.
- The governing body provides a daily breakfast and after school club.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by ensuring marking informs pupils what they have achieved correctly and what they need to do next to further improve their work.
- Further improve the standards in writing by making sure that pupils have wider opportunities for writing at length in a variety of forms and for different purposes.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' written work by establishing and sustaining a whole school policy for handwriting.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Reception with varying levels of ability but, overall, their skills and experiences are in line with those expected for their age. The caring environment gives children the confidence to explore a wide range of engaging activities from which they can choose and motivating adult-led activities. They make good progress in all areas of learning and leave Reception as confident learners with skills and standards just above what is expected for their age.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average. Reading is particularly strong.
- The well-planned, systematic teaching of the sounds letters make (phonics) enables all pupils to develop good reading skills from an early age. Pupils read widely and frequently, both at home and in school. In 2013, all pupils attained the required standard in the national screening check for reading in Year 1. This proportion is well above the national average.
- Progress in the older year groups is equally good. In 2013, pupils in Year 6 left with above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Mathematics is a particular strength with a small number of pupils attaining a Level 6 which is a standard much higher than expected for primary school pupils. The school's excellent detailed calculation policy supports this work. It clearly demonstrates to parents, pupils and staff the appropriate methods to be used in school and is available as a detailed set of tutorials on the internet.
- The pupils supported by the pupil premium make similar progress to their peers and the gap between them is closing in all subjects. Spending is well-matched to pupils needs and has a positive effect on well-being and achievement. Because the numbers are small, it is not possible to comment on the relative attainment of eligible pupils in Year 6 in 2013 without risk of identifying individual pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Pupil needs are identified early and supportive plans are put in place. Skilled teaching assistants provide sensitive support both in the studio and in small groups. More-able pupils also make good progress because teachers have high expectations and plan work which encourages them to work to their full capabilities.
- Although improving, the school has recognised that standards in writing are not as strong as in other subjects. Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to write at length for different purposes. However, leaders are beginning to address this with a number of exciting initiatives like the '100 word challenge'. Year 3, in conjunction with other schools, has the opportunity to write a short piece and place it on their Year 3 blog. They are excited to receive comments from around the world and enjoy writing critiques on other children's work.
- Pupils who join the school part way through their primary education also make good progress because of the arrangements made to identify the help they need and by ensuring they are given work that is neither too hard nor too easy.

**The quality of teaching****is good**

- Teaching is good. Teachers deliver lessons in a supportive, imaginative and engaging manner. They use information from previous lessons to ensure that planned activities and tasks meet pupils' needs and abilities. Their subject knowledge is secure and they ask questions which promotes pupils' thinking skills.
- Children in Reception are well settled, concentrate on tasks for long periods of time, work co-operatively and are confident in explaining their work to adults and friends. The emphasis is on practical 'hands on' activities and groups of children enthusiastically described the underground houses they were digging for the three little pigs. Others constructed brick walls having checked a real wall to see how to lay the bricks correctly and some wrote letters unaided to be delivered to the different houses.
- Teachers identify tasks which encourage pupils to apply the skills they have learnt in Literacy and Numeracy in other subjects. For example, while studying South America, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 produced accurate 3D relief maps having used the internet to undertake research on mountain heights. Their knowledge of working to scale was used to produce papier-mâché models.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well. They make a good contribution to pupils' learning throughout the school. They are knowledgeable, caring and work seamlessly with the teachers to ensure work is adapted to suit pupils' abilities, provide guidance when required, pose appropriate challenging questions and give emotional support if needed.
- The presentation of pupils' work within books is variable. The absence of a whole school handwriting policy appears to contribute to a lack of pride in the presentation of pupils' written work. This is in marked contrast to the wide variety of media used to produce delicate, skilful art work which is displayed around the school.
- Teachers skilfully use opportunities to give positive praise within lessons, rectify misconceptions and ensure pupils are motivated. However, not all marking confirms to pupils what they have completed correctly and what they need to do to further improve their work.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils****are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is often exemplary in lessons, around school and on the playground. Pupils clearly understand the behaviour policy and appreciate receiving merit awards in recognition for working hard and behaving well.
- Pupils concentrate well in lessons and are proud of their school. They are polite, courteous, respectful and welcoming to adults and each other. They say they enjoy being at school, work hard and like 'being with their friends'.
- Pupils play well together. Older pupils look after younger ones, they read stories together and encourage them to join in a wide variety of games at play and lunch times. Pupils collaborate well while playing hockey, football and tennis on the playground, have fun climbing on the pirate ship, use the willow tunnel for making up their own games and undertake running and chase games on the large grassed 'Orchard' area.

- The friendly, caring philosophy is promoted effectively through the strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils say they 'want to come to school' because 'teachers are kind' and this is reflected in the improving attendance which is now above average. The breakfast club and after school clubs are popular and well-managed to provide extended support for pupils.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe at school. Older pupils are aware of cyber bullying and how to keep safe when using the internet. Younger pupils talk about road safety and describe how the community police officer visits and helps them to know how to keep safe.
- Pupils say on rare occasions there is some 'name calling' but no 'real bullying'. It is more friends 'falling out'. If pupils are worried or any unpleasantness happens they are confident that they can always tell an adult and it will be sorted out quickly.
- Almost all parents and carers who spoke informally to the inspector and who responded to the online questionnaire feel welcome at school and receive valuable information about their child's progress. They also feel their child is happy, well looked after and feels safe at school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The ambitious leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by a dedicated team, is effective in driving the school forward to ensure pupils achieve their full potential by providing an exciting wide range of opportunities, experiences and activities. Their impact on teaching and pupils' achievement demonstrates the capacity for further improvement.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Governors and senior staff know the school very well. They are crystal clear about the strengths and areas for development. They leave no stone unturned in their pursuit to provide the very best for the pupils in their care. They have recently funded a school kitchen which provides hot meals for pupils and monthly community lunches.
- The school development plan is manageable and thorough. This working document is reviewed regularly at governors' meetings and updated as and when appropriate.
- Pupil's progress and the standards they achieve are checked regularly. Termly pupil progress meetings identify those pupils who may need additional support. Small group sessions or one-to-one activities are put in place to enable them to keep up with their peers.
- Leaders are successfully ensuring that there is no discrimination within the school and that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed as well as joining in activities.
- The headteacher regularly and thoroughly monitors the quality of teaching. Teachers are aware of the link between salary progression and pupil performance. Staff are set targets to reach and these are reviewed annually. Training, to support targets, is part of the ongoing development of all staff including newly qualified teachers.
- The school provides an engaging raft of themes which stimulates pupils' positive attitudes to learning and visits, visitors and residential opportunities enhance the appealing subject matter. Enrichment workshops for more-able writers and mathematicians are sourced, year groups demonstrate their musical skills in drumming at the Lincolnshire Musical Festival and whole school weeks, focused on artistic skills, provide a broad spectrum of opportunities for all. These strongly support pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

- The new funding for primary sport and physical education has been allocated to join a collaboration of local schools to provide a sustainable and exciting sports curriculum for staff and pupils. Archery, fencing, tag rugby, athletics and gymnastics are being taught by expert coaches throughout the year and competitive opportunities are being seized to enable pupils to take part and compete with other schools.
- The local authority provides support for leaders through paired lesson observations, learning walks and analysis of school performance statistics.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are an articulate driving force and are ambitious for the school. They look ahead and plan carefully to ensure all agreed ideas come to fruition. They work closely with the headteacher giving support but also asking questions. They manage the finances well and monitor the budget on a regular basis with the help of the school's finance officer. They are aware of the impact of the pupil premium funding on pupils' standards, attainment and progress for all pupils and the actions taken to improve the outcomes through the head's comprehensive reports. They undertake the formal monitoring and review of the headteacher's performance. They are aware of the quality of teaching and learning within the school and reward good performance accordingly. They ensure that safeguarding meets requirements.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120587
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	440571

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	115
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barbara Pearson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Belton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01507 462367
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