

Whaplode Church of England Primary School

Mill Lane, Whaplode, Spalding, PE12 6TS

Inspection dates 15–16 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The new headteacher has established a clear vision for the school. Her determination that all staff use assessment information accurately has been crucial in driving improvements.
- Pupils start school with skills and abilities expected for their age. They now make good progress in all years and more reach the higher levels than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Pupils who receive the pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. They receive good-quality support.
- Leaders have tackled underperformance and raised the quality of teaching, so that it is now good. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and are actively involved in checking and reviewing their work to help themselves to improve.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and respect for each other are outstanding. They are enormously proud of their school, and parents and pupils agree that the school keeps them very safe.
- Governors understand the school well. They provide a good balance of support and challenge, and are ambitious for continued improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers thoroughly check that all pupils understand what is being taught. Nor do they adapt their teaching accordingly. This means that, occasionally, pupils who need extra help or more challenging work, do not make progress as quickly as they might.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' writing vary and some provide more stimulating opportunities to write than others.
- School leaders' are not yet making thorough checks on the impact of the extra sessions arranged to support pupils identified as needing to make faster progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons, two jointly with school leaders. Inspectors also observed support sessions for pupils who need extra help with their learning, and they attended a school assembly.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils known as 'digital leaders' and spoke to many more informally throughout the inspection, gathering their views and experiences of life in the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked closely at how the school encourages and promotes a love of reading.
- Meetings were held with a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body and a school adviser.
- Inspectors met with subject leaders and talked to and met with staff responsible for checking attendance and behaviour, and coordinating special educational needs.
- Inspectors noted the 35 responses to the online Parent View survey, spoke to parents and carers bringing their children to school and attending the 'teddy bears' picnic with Reception children, and also looked at the school's own parent questionnaires.
- Inspectors analysed the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire completed during the inspection and paid a visit to the breakfast club.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, planning documents, checks carried out by leaders on the school's effectiveness, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jennifer Winder

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Whaplode is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school, with one class in each year group.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2013 and there have been some changes to the teaching staff since this time.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for pupils who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is average.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by making sure that:
 - all teachers regularly check that pupils understand what is being taught and quickly adapt their teaching during lessons to provide extra support and challenge for those who need it.
 - teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' writing are equally high in all classes and that teachers consistently provide activities which stimulate pupils' desire to write.
 - school leaders monitor additional support classes to see that they are driving up standards.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills and abilities that are generally in line with those expected for their age. They make a good start, settle quickly and are soon engaged in learning. Children make good progress and improve their skills, achieving a good level of development, with higher proportions than previously exceeding this, by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Good progress is now consistent through each class and key stage, and this has resulted in rising standards through the school. In the past, teachers have not had an accurate view of how well pupils were doing and there had been a much more uneven picture of progress. This is no longer the case. School monitoring and the quality of pupils' work show that standards in Key Stage 1 are edging above average and that this pattern of secure improvement continues through Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, more pupils than previously are reaching the higher levels, particularly in mathematics.
- In 2013, the attainment of the small number of pupils in Year 6 supported by the pupil premium was behind that of their classmates, by a year in English and mathematics. Gaps are closing for the even smaller number in the current Year 6 and they are now two terms behind and making rapid progress, with the greatest improvement in reading. Progress of eligible pupils across the school is good and in line with that of their classmates. This is because the extra funding is used effectively to provide highly skilled staff who lead one-to-one tuition sessions and a range of extra support activities.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught particularly well in the Reception class, and pupils in Year 1 have each year achieved above-average results in the annual screening check in phonics.
- The promotion of reading across the school is strong. Pupils have positive attitudes and read regularly, carefully logging their activities in reading journals. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have a well-developed understanding of the work of several authors and freely offer views on their personal favourites.
- Writing standards are improving. Pupils enjoy writing and write with increasing confidence and competence. They write with enthusiasm, and in a Year 3 class, preparing to write a letter to the illustrator Quentin Blake, pupils excitedly use tablet computers to review their previous work and sharpen their grammar, ready to create a high-quality letter.
- Many pupils speak excitedly about mathematics, and the regular Friday slot, known as 'operation Friday' challenges them to solve new mathematical problems. Pupils' confidence and understanding of the subject have improved significantly since the previous inspection. This has had a positive impact, with pupils, for the first time, reaching the very high Level 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make the same good progress as their classmates because they have good support with their learning. Adults understand their individual learning needs and teachers ensure that most of the work set is at a suitable level. The most-able pupils also make good progress because teachers are more regularly setting challenge activities to help them achieve their very best. Their progress slows, however, on those occasions when adults fail to identify that these pupils are capable of tackling harder work.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants foster very good relationships with pupils and this has helped to create a purposeful and enjoyable atmosphere in lessons.
- Teaching assistants have improved their skills and many confidently deliver good-quality, one-to-one and small-group sessions so that gaps in pupils' learning are being addressed. Additional sessions for the most-able mathematicians are currently led by a teaching assistant with a mathematics expertise. Improved teaching is confirmed by the rise in pupils' progress across the school.
- Teachers typically explain clearly what pupils will be learning and set specific targets which pupils measure themselves against when the work is complete. Pupils routinely check their work to see that they are reaching their English and mathematics targets. This helps them to make good progress and have a good sense of how to improve further.
- Teachers question more skilfully to check and deepen pupils' understanding. More now use pupils' responses to reshape tasks so that any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are filled in the lesson. Although evident more frequently, this is not yet fully engrained in all lessons. This means that those pupils who require additional help or more challenging tasks occasionally lose momentum and their progress slows.
- The pace of learning in lessons is typically swift and pupils routinely use the resources to help themselves before asking an adult. In the Reception class, children were happily directing themselves to activities and teaching each other, reading from laminated word cards, or practising counting and writing down numbers on their own clipboards.
- In most lessons, adults show their high expectations of what pupils can do. However, school monitoring shows variation in the quality of pupils' writing across the school and some unevenness in the standard and presentation of work in books. Some of the best pieces seen were stimulated by pupils' genuine excitement and interest in the subject.
- Teachers mark work regularly and follow the school's marking policy, which is understood by pupils. Pupils have regular 'read and respond' time and are becoming more adept in adding their own developmental comments, showing that they know how to help themselves improve. This system is now well established across the school and teachers routinely check that pupils have read and responded to their comments.
- Homework is set weekly and is appropriately linked to what pupils are learning in class. Pupils use online learning packages to learn at home and make use of the additional support of the school's lunchtime homework clubs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school's core values of 'Inspire, Believe, Achieve' are at the heart of every aspect of school life. Pupils genuinely care for each other and there is a climate of mutual respect and regard shown by all within the school community. Pupils manage their own behaviour very well and play a very active part in maintaining the positive atmosphere in their school.
- The parents, carers, and staff agree that pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent. Pupils' attendance has improved, and is now above average. The breakfast club is

extremely popular and has also had a positive impact on attendance and punctuality.

- Pupils willingly apply to take on a number of different roles and responsibilities as school councillors, play leaders, trained mentors, road safety officers and junior 'community police officers'. Most recently, some pupils have taken on the role of digital leaders to help pupils and staff deepen their understanding and skills in using information and communication technology. Pupils act as positive role models for others in the school and fulfil daily duties with enthusiasm and a sense of maturity.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school and on the roads outside. They understand how important it is to use the internet with care and that they must never give out personal information to strangers.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare. They say that there is always somebody they can talk to and disputes are quickly settled. School records show the very small number of incidents of any poor behaviour. Pupils understand risk, and play leaders planning lunchtime activities carry out their own thorough risk assessments beforehand.
- There are few racist incidents, and discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Pupils get along with each other very well and say that the school is a happy and friendly place.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and all speak positively about how much they enjoy and value being a part of it. They wear their uniforms with pride and appreciate the weekly 'top table' award for those showing the very best manners.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has successfully established her clear vision for improving the school and gained the full support of the leadership team. They have identified and tackled weaknesses and eradicated poor teaching. Teaching is now good and, as a result, attainment and progress are improving for all groups. The drive to improve is reflected throughout the school, and leaders at all levels are caring, positive role models for others.
- Leadership roles have developed and strengthened, and staff work together in teams to plan and share expertise. Leaders in literacy and numeracy use a range of different evidence to check the quality of teaching and how it impacts on learning.
- The systems to check on pupils' progress and the use of assessment information have improved considerably since the last inspection. Staff now have a much more accurate understanding of progress information and are more skilled at assigning levels to pupils' work than they were previously. However, systems to check how effectively booster sessions and small-group work are driving up standards are in their infancy and leaders are not always clear which sessions are having the most impact.
- The school reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts quickly to address any weaknesses. Self-evaluation is thorough and sharply focused action plans with key priorities are regularly checked to make sure that improvements are being sustained. Good-quality training and the recruitment of talented staff in recent years have led to marked improvements across the school.
- Pupils enjoy the subjects and topics they study, and they speak with enthusiasm about the many other trips and activities organised for them. They had recently visited Burghley House and spoke about how much it added to what they knew about the Tudors. The school makes good

use of specialists in music, sport and dance, and encourages involvement in outdoor education through camping and overnight stays on the school journey, encouraging pupils' appreciation of different environments and cultures.

- Additional sports funding is used well. Every teacher is qualified to teach swimming and every pupil learns to swim. Working alongside specialists has further developed teachers' skills and raised levels of confidence. The range of sports clubs and activities across the school has grown and more pupils than previously are active and involved in sports.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness particularly well. Its values permeate through all of its work, having a positive effect on pupils' own personal qualities. Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything the school has to offer.
- The school improvement adviser and representative of the diocesan board have supported the school well in evaluating and raising the quality of teaching and checking that teachers' assessments and skills in using data are more thorough and secure than previously.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has strengthened since the previous inspection. Governors bring a wide range of skills to their roles and work closely with the local authority and diocese to ensure that they benefit from suitable support and training to deepen their understanding of assessment information, child protection and safeguarding.
 - Governors link with each class and with subject leaders. They provide good levels of support and challenge, and regularly question how proposed changes will have an impact on raising achievement. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and how well the school is performing compared with other schools nationally. Governors check that achievement and the quality of teaching remain at the forefront of improvements.
 - Governors oversee the management of school finances and ask how pupil premium and sports funding are having an impact on achievement. They see that targets to improve staff performance are carefully reviewed and that the pay of teachers and support staff is linked to pupils' results. Governors are regularly in the school and check that the breakfast club is running smoothly and that safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory 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

Unique reference number	120555
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	431703

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joe Roulstone
Headteacher	Alison Flack
Date of previous school inspection	03 October 2012
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