

New York Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120467
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
Inspection number	313628
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Brown

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jackie Elton
Headteacher	Miss Judith Holden
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2005
School address	Langrick Road New York Lincolnshire LN4 4XH
Telephone number	01205 280320
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is very small. All the pupils are taught in two mixed age classes. They come from the village of New York and the surrounding rural area. All the pupils are of White British heritage. The area around the school is socially disadvantaged. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is just below the national average, but the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is higher. It has been much higher, but the level has fallen this term. Most children start the school with a level of development that is below national expectations. Pupil turnover is high with some arriving mid-term, or leaving during the year. The school has a Basic Skills Award and has just gained a Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which is continuing to improve and develop. Despite the small numbers on roll and its relatively isolated geographical location, it is outward looking. Teachers work hard to secure pupils a wealth of good quality educational experiences in and beyond the locality. A number of very effective partnerships have been established with other schools that ensure the pupils gain a broad perspective of life and their role in society. Parents value the school and responses to the inspection questionnaire expressed strong support for its work. 'My child is happy and challenged by the work set,' was typical of the views expressed. Pupils expressed similar views. 'It's great, the teachers treat us as if we are part of their family,' said a Year 6 pupil.

Pupils' achievements and standards are satisfactory overall, although there are variations across different age groups. Standards are rising, and even though the small numbers make comparisons with other schools unreliable, a clear trend of improving achievement is emerging. This is most apparent at Key Stage 2 where results in the end of Year 6 assessments are now above average in all respects except in science where pupils do not develop their investigative skills rapidly enough. The trends at the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are not improving as clearly yet, but a number of staffing changes in the recent past accounts for this. The situation is now stable and the pupils are making better progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. Pupils' personal development is good. They receive very good support from the staff and from other pupils. The strongly inclusive, caring ethos that was noted at the last inspection is still very apparent.

Sound teaching has a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning, and also has some strong features. Teachers work hard to plan materials to meet the diverse needs of the wide range of ages and abilities in each of the classes. This is an improvement since the last inspection, but staff recognise that that they can develop this even further by focusing on individuals as well as groups. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very effectively to support and enhance pupils' learning. Pupils are confident and knowledgeable in their use of ICT, strengthening this by applying computer skills and techniques they have learnt in literacy and numeracy to good effect in other subjects. The curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers recognise that the pupils really enjoy their opportunities for cross-curricular working and have identified the need to reinforce this approach.

The headteacher sets clear direction for the work of the school, which is monitored well and evaluated accurately. She is ably supported in this by the governors who not only understand the school's strengths and weaknesses, but have now established a strategic view for the future development of the school. The overall impact of leadership and management on pupils' achievements has been satisfactory. The school has taken effective steps to improve its provision since the last inspection and, judged by the track record of the current team of staff and governors, has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving. Fewer than half of the children starting in Reception have any pre-school experience. This contributes to the low level of skills of many children when they start school. Nevertheless, with more stable staffing they are now

beginning to progress well. By the time they move into Year 1, most are achieving at or near to the expected levels for their age group. The curriculum is carefully planned, with a range of interesting and challenging tasks for the children in a well-structured learning environment. Staff's careful and detailed assessments help them to keep track of the children's progress and plan the next steps in their development. Their personal, social and health education is given strong emphasis, and this aspect of the children's education is good. They receive good support from older pupils who play an active role in guiding and helping them fit in with school life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop pupils' investigative skills to raise standards and achievement in science.
- Develop and build links between subject areas.
- Match work more effectively to the needs and interests of individual pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The children's skills, knowledge and understanding at the end of their Reception year are broadly in line with national expectations. They are starting to make good progress from a low starting point. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1; even though standards are now beginning to improve. The school recognises that the pupils are not used to being asked to think independently. As a result, they struggle with activities such as science investigations and problem-solving in mathematics. By the end of Year 2, teacher assessments show that overall standards are just below the national average. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 shows a trend of improvement and is now above average in English and mathematics, but not yet in science. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are now progressing well on a day-to-day basis, but their overall achievement and standards are just satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress as they benefit from very effective help and support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are happy at the school. Their enjoyment is reflected in the consistently above average levels of attendance. Pupils behave well in class and are enthusiastic about learning. They are thoughtful and considerate of others. The school has consciously developed a number of links and partnerships with other schools to widen and extend pupils' horizons. Most these have worked very effectively, but the headteacher recognises that some have to be re-evaluated, as the time spent travelling can diminish the benefits gained. Staff have given the pupils many opportunities to take part in a range of different sports, cultural activities and community events. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' good social skills and satisfactory academic abilities give them a sound foundation for their future lives. Pupils show a good awareness of how they can keep healthy and safe. The school council plays an important and high-profile role in this.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There is good evidence from the school's tracking systems to show that there is improving impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Teachers are very self-critical and have started to video their lessons to evaluate them together. They use the information to plan the next developments and assess their professional development needs. High quality relationships across the school are key to the improvements taking place. There is a strong sense of teamwork among teachers and teaching assistants. Teachers make very effective use of technology to provide stimulating materials for the pupils and this clearly motivates them and captures their interest. Teachers have become skilful at targeting work for groups of pupils. They recognise that this needs to be extended to an individual level to help sustain the interests of the diverse range of ages and abilities in both classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The thoughtful use of literacy, numeracy and ICT to develop and support work in other subjects strengthens pupils' learning, helping to motivate and engage them. However, this cross-curricular approach does not fully exploit pupils' skills development because it is informal and unstructured. The school's commitment to broadening pupils' horizons is an aspect that children talk about with great enthusiasm. The annual residential visit and the new Samba drumming classes are two of their favourite activities. After school activities are limited; this is partly as a result of the low numbers and partly because the school has been unable to find partners with the necessary skills, expertise and capacity to travel to the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a very inclusive school. Everybody fits in and contributes well, whatever their social, emotional, physical or academic needs. Procedures for keeping pupils safe and secure are all in place. The school manages the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities very effectively. Academic guidance for pupils is developing well. Pupils understand their targets and what they need to do to improve. The school has correctly identified the need to improve transition between each key stage as one of its development areas for the present academic year.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has developed a systematic and effective process for monitoring the work of the school. This is promoting a steady improvement in pupils' achievements. The impact of some improvements has been limited by staff changes, but with a stable staff now in place the school is clearly moving forward. The governors are well informed, and have established a strategic view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This has enabled them to begin to plan for the long-term. They recognise that the low numbers on roll mean that they have

to build partnerships with other schools and organisations. They are doing this thoughtfully and learning from the problems and challenges that have arisen.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

12 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of New York Primary School, Lincolnshire LN4 4XH

Thank you for being so friendly when I visited your school. I enjoyed my visit and would like to share with you what I found.

You go to a school which is developing in many ways. I was impressed by the way that you all get on well together and take very good care of each other. I like the way you are putting forward your ideas for improving the school through the school council.

You told me there is a lot for you all to do in school and I could see that. Year 6 were really enthusiastic about the residential visits they have been on. They sound exciting, no wonder other schools want to join you. I'm sorry I missed the Samba drumming. That sounds like another great idea that has been introduced.

I was very pleased to see that the standard of your work is improving. It was clear to me that you try hard. I could see how confident you were using ICT. You know what you are doing and you have a lot of skills to help you with learning new things. However, although your work is getting better, I would like your teachers to find more ways to help you to ask questions and become more inquisitive about your science work.

While talking to your teachers, I could tell they have many good ideas. There are two that I would really like them to spend more time developing. One is for them to give you more opportunities to work on a range of skills at the same time, just as in the science and ICT lesson I saw. You told me, and I could see for myself, that it was a more exciting and interesting way of working. The second idea I would like them to develop is to give each one of you more chances to follow ideas and work that you are really interested in.

Thank you once again for your warm welcome.

All the best for the future.

Roger Brown