

Inspection of The Lincoln St Peter at Gowts Church of England Primary School

Pennell Street, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN5 7TA

Inspection dates: 31 January and 1 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The dedication of all staff in promoting pupils' well-being and successful achievement is transforming the lives of pupils at this highly inclusive school. An exceptional ethos of care, commitment and unwavering high expectation permeates every aspect of the school's work. As one parent, typical of many, said: 'This is an incredible school where the vision and values are lived out on a daily basis by the whole school community.' Pupils know they are well cared for. They say they 'love' coming to school, often welcomed by 'Sparks', the school's therapy dog.

The quality of education is exceptionally strong. The school's curriculum connects high-quality academic learning alongside a prodigious programme for pupils' personal development. Pupils are inspired to learn because of the deliberately planned opportunities for enrichment, including talks by guest speakers, residential visits and trips. Staff make sure that pupils' learning is brought to life. Opportunities for pupils to take part in wider clubs and activities are plentiful.

Pupils' attitudes towards learning are exemplary. They live up to the values the school teaches them. As one pupil said, and many echoed, 'We don't need rules here. It's the values we live by, and they will last all our lives.'

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

At the heart of the school's vision is a relentless desire by all staff to ensure that pupils get the best possible deal, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language.

Leadership is consistently strong at all levels. Staff morale is high.

The school's curriculum, and its delivery, are informed by research. Staff access wide-ranging opportunities in support of their professional learning. They waste no time in applying this learning to realise the school's ambitious curriculum for all.

The oversight of pupils with SEND or of those who speak English as an additional language is strong. Staff have a shared understanding of pupils' needs. They provide consistently effective support. Staff are highly effective in enabling pupils with SEND to learn from the same curriculum and enrichment opportunities as their peers. Staff sensitively support the specific needs of some pupils, using sensory and relaxation techniques for example.

Pupils study a well-crafted curriculum that builds their knowledge and skills from nursery to the end of Year 6. Staff have absolute clarity on what pupils learn and when. Furthermore, staff are unwavering in their ambition to ensure that all pupils develop correct physical posture, reading and mathematical fluency, and accuracy in their handwriting, spelling and use of grammar.

Staff have strong subject knowledge. Teachers expertly question pupils to check their understanding. They use flashback activities to aid pupils' memory. Misconceptions are quickly identified and remedied. Pupils display a palpable joy of discovering new ideas. They relish showing off what they can do. Teachers invite pupils to think for themselves. Pupils respond well to this, applying their knowledge well to new situations. Children in the early years discover new concepts quickly because of the high-quality, focused interactions they have with adults. Pupils achieve well by the end of each key stage. They produce remarkably high quality work.

The school's strong culture of daily reading is the heartbeat of the curriculum. Pupils say that they love to read. They talk with enthusiasm about authors and about the books that they have read. In the early years, story time is an animated experience. The school's programme for phonics is especially effective. Starting in nursery, children are taught to read well. Frequent checks mean that staff have a precise understanding of how pupils' reading skills are developing. Those pupils who need extra help receive this quickly. Deliberate strategies such as the '6Ps' help pupils to strengthen their fluency in reading and comprehension.

The programme for pupils' personal development is exceptionally strong. The school encourages pupils to 'declare who they are' and, as such, they whole-heartedly embrace the British values and the school's own values. Pupils develop a strong sense of community, locally and globally. They have a strong moral understanding of treating everyone equally and with respect. Many take on leadership roles such as online safety officers, peer mediators and well-being ambassadors. Year 6 pupils act as interpreters for younger children who are at an early stage of learning English.

Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths. They are highly effective in holding leaders to account. Staff build strong relationships with families, without compromising on the school's expectations. In essence, this popular school fulfils what it promotes to its community: 'unlocking the potential in all, empowering a community of hope.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	120563
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10254785
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roger Hewins
Headteacher	Emily Mayer
Website	www.st-peter-gowts.lincs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2023, having previously been with the school for six years.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Lincoln. The most recent section 48 inspection of this Church of England school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in July 2016.
- The school uses one registered, off-site alternative education provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders, including the curriculum leaders, the school's coordinators of the provision for pupils with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language, and leaders of the early years provision.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the school's governing body, including the chair. He also spoke by telephone with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector also considered curriculum documentation for several other subjects including art, mathematics, science and physical education. He also reviewed the school's curriculum plans for the early years.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from key stage 1 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with staff and visited a sample of lessons and Collective Worship to evaluate the school's provision for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site during social time. They spoke with several groups of pupils, both formally and informally, including some with leadership roles.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils. They also considered the responses to the school's own survey of parent views.

Inspection team

Chris Stevens, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Phil Abbott	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca Jackson	Ofsted Inspector

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