

Inspection of Spilsby Primary School

Woodlands Avenue, Spilsby, Lincolnshire PE23 5EP

Inspection dates:	3 and 4 December 2024
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Matthew Nicholson. This school is part of Infinity Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Gavin Booth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Lancashire.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring and inclusive school. Pupils like their teachers and know that they can turn to staff for help should they ever need it. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) play a key role in school life alongside their peers, for example, as members of the school council.

The school's high expectations of what pupils can achieve are not currently realised. While there has been significant improvement, pupils do not develop their knowledge as well as they should. Staff have not consistently been able to focus on improving the curriculum. This has now changed, particularly as pupils' behaviour has improved.

Pupils behave well. The school has ensured that staff and pupils have high expectations of behaviour. Pupils follow the 'Spilsby 7' expectations. They learn in focused classroom environments. Pupils make good use of the carefully designed indoor and outdoor calm spaces.

The school helps pupils to broaden their horizons. Pupils develop respect for beliefs and cultures different to their own. They visit mosques, churches and museums. The school provides a range of clubs. For example, pupils develop their talent for singing and performance in the school choir and by taking part in concerts.

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

Pupils' knowledge of the curriculum is inconsistent. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge relating to their previous learning. Teaching does not consistently focus on the most important knowledge that pupils should learn. Pupils can be overwhelmed by the tasks and information they receive. At times, the checks on pupils' understanding do not ensure that gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge are identified and addressed.

However, this has begun to change. The school knows what needs to improve and has already made some positive changes, including by refining the curriculum. In many subjects, pupils learn the school's new, ambitious curriculum well. In these subjects, teachers work hard and use ideas from the training they receive to develop their practice. They now know exactly what to teach and when. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They work well with teaching assistants to ensure that pupils receive the help they need to feel comfortable and ready to learn.

Pupils with SEND have their needs promptly identified. They form strong relationships with staff. They receive personalised support which enables them to learn the new curriculum alongside their peers. Staff help pupils with SEND to develop their independent learning skills. For those who need help managing their emotions, they can access 'the den'. Here, specially trained staff help pupils develop the tools they need to succeed in school and beyond.

Children in the early years benefit from a curriculum which is well designed. Staff interact skilfully with children. They identify when children need extra help and ensure that they

provide effective support. There are regular opportunities for children in the early years to learn independently. These opportunities have not routinely been designed in such a way that children successfully use them and build their knowledge. Overall, however, children develop the skills and knowledge they need to be prepared for Year 1. They achieve well.

Pupils enjoy reading. They read regularly in school and understand how to make informed choices about the books that they borrow from the library. The school has improved the teaching of early reading. Pupils who need extra help are identified. They receive targeted support which is beginning to help pupils catch up. The school puts effective support in place for children when they join the early years to ensure that they are ready to learn to read.

The school has improved pupils' attendance. Careful consideration has been given to the reasons why some pupils do not attend as well as they could. The school does everything in its power to remove the barriers to pupils regularly coming to school.

The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe and how to lead healthy lifestyles. They develop leadership skills and contribute to school life by becoming school councillors, librarians and door monitors. Pupils' mental health is prioritised. The school has a mental health lead and pupils can attend mindfulness and well-being clubs.

The school has recently brought about significant improvements to the curriculum, pupils' behaviour and attendance. The school collaborates with the trust to identify areas for improvement. Together, they take effective action to enhance the quality of the school's provision. Staff receive regular training to improve their practice. They appreciate the consideration given to their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teaching does not consistently ensure that there is a focus on the most important knowledge that pupils should learn. At times, pupils can be overwhelmed and unsure about the knowledge they need to learn. The school should ensure that teaching helps pupils to focus on the important knowledge that the curriculum identifies.
- In some subjects, the checks on pupils' understanding do not identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for their next steps. The school should ensure that pupils' knowledge is checked sufficiently to ensure that any gaps or misconceptions are identified and addressed.
- The activities and resources available to children in the early years to help them learn independently are not consistently closely matched to the learning that the children

need to engage with. As a result, children do not develop their ability to learn and play independently as well as they could. The school should ensure that children consistently benefit from meaningful opportunities to learn and play independently in the early years.

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	142764
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10347613
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve Lancashire
CEO of the trust	Gavin Booth
Headteacher	Matthew Nicholson
Website	www.spilsbyprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Infinity Academies Trust.
- The headteacher took up their post in January 2024.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders and staff as well as the CEO, members of the trust executive and a member of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and reviewed samples of pupils' work in connection with other aspects of the curriculum.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for pupils' behaviour and attendance, and pupils' personal development. They also met with leaders responsible for the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for the early years, visited the early years and spoke with children.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with groups of pupils.
- 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 responses received on Parent View, including free-text responses. They met with parents in person at the school gates. Inspectors also considered responses to the Ofsted surveys for school staff.

Inspection team

Matthew Fearn-Davies, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Phil Abbott

Ofsted Inspector

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