

Foxton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110608
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	310359
Inspection date	11 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Helen Ranger

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	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Griffiths
Headteacher	Mrs Jennifer Jones
Date of previous school inspection	1 – 4 December 2003
School address	11 Hardman Road Foxton Cambridge CB22 6RN
Telephone number	01223 712447
Fax number	01223 712078

Age group	4 – 11
Inspection date	11 September 2007
Inspection number	310359

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Foxton Primary is a smaller than average school which draws its pupils from Foxton village and the surrounding area. Almost all pupils come from White British families. Most pupils come from favourable social and economic circumstances. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has risen sharply over the past two years and is above the national average. When pupils start school, their attainment varies widely but is usually a little above the levels expected nationally.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated how the school is improving pupils' writing, the features that make pupils' personal development and well-being outstanding and how the assessment arrangements evaluate and guide pupils' learning. Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, senior staff, governors and pupils, and from the parent questionnaires. Lessons were observed, school self-evaluation documents seen and samples of pupils' current and previous work were examined, including year books of 'best work'. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Foxton Primary is a good school that is highly valued by its pupils and their parents. It has some important outstanding features and few areas for further improvement. Since its last inspection in 2003, the staff and governors have continued to help pupils achieve well in their work and to reach high standards in their personal development. The key to the school's success is its very able and experienced headteacher. She continues to provide expertise, stability, vision and support for teachers and learners so that, in spite of staffing changes, standards are maintained.

Pupils achieve well academically. By Year 2, they reach standards that are often significantly above average, with particular strengths in reading and mathematics. Their reading is supported by carefully planned activities, including those that help them link sounds to letters from an early age. Writing standards, while good, are not quite as high and continue to be a priority for further improvement. Pupils continue to do well through Key Stage 2. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, they are articulate and independent learners. Their standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Some recent year groups, most notably in 2006, have reached exceptionally high standards. Again in this key stage, writing standards are not as high as other aspects of English and the school is striving to raise them. This has resulted in an encouraging improvement in boys' achievement, which had often previously lagged behind that of the girls. A push for better handwriting is well under way. The teachers are now rightly working on plans to improve spelling. They are extending the use of purposeful activities aimed at motivating pupils to write independently, and to write at length. There is good provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those who show particular gifts or talents. This is implemented well by the teachers and the team of teaching assistants, enabling these groups of learners to make good progress.

Pupils' outstanding personal development is a testament to the priority that staff place on providing an all-round education. The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely effectively. Pastoral care is of high quality. Pupils feel safe and say they have adults and friends to turn to if needed. They enjoy school enormously and all age groups mix well. The older ones care for the younger pupils. This was very evident during the inspection when Class 4 pupils served food to their younger 'family group' at lunchtime and encouraged good manners and healthy attitudes to eating. Such activities typify pupils' excellent appreciation of healthy lifestyles. Behaviour is often exemplary, both in lessons and other activities. Pupils of all ages, including the youngest, were seen listening carefully to the adults and children leading an assembly, creating an atmosphere of participation and reflection. Pupils feel their views are valued. All take part in 'buddy forums' and regularly contribute their ideas for how the school can develop further. Attendance rates are mostly high, although the school is working to eliminate a small amount of unnecessary absence. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future lives by their very good academic skills and experience of activities such as business enterprise projects.

Teaching is good and is based on a broad and interesting curriculum. In recent years, while maintaining its attention to pupils' basic skills, the school has extended its work well in areas such as foreign language teaching, music and physical education. The outdoor areas have been developed to a high standard to enhance learning. Pupils learn efficiently because the staff work closely together and implement agreed approaches when delivering lessons. Very good relationships between staff and pupils underpin activities. Since the last inspection, the ways teachers use assessment information have developed significantly. Class teachers are more involved in the close checking and tracking of individual progress. They use this information to set and share targets for all individuals, groups and whole classes. Academic support and guidance are of high quality. Pupils know their targets well and value the feedback they get from adults. The next stage for pupils' development is for them to be even more independent in acting on the guidance they are given by teachers, for example as provided for them when books are marked or targets reviewed.

The headteacher's leadership is supported well by the senior staff and governors. All evaluate the school rigorously and accurately, monitoring standards and provision well. They ensure it continues to succeed and gives good value for money. Great efforts are made to involve staff, governors, parents and pupils in the plans for continuing development. Governors are active and questioning. They are knowledgeable about the school and help to forge valuable links with the local community, including parents and other local schools. Careful attention to the budget has enabled the school to enhance its resources and to decorate the building to a high standard. The current team of staff and governors, combined with the track record of recent years, show a good capacity for the school to continue to thrive.

Effectiveness of the foundation stage

Grade: 2

The Reception class gives pupils a good start. There is good teamwork among the adults who work with this age group. Parents speak highly of the arrangements to introduce them and their children to the school. Observations during the inspection showed that children settle well very quickly. Most had been in school just a few days but were picking up routines rapidly because adults set clear expectations for them. The school's records show that previous Reception groups have done well, reaching standards above those expected nationally by the end of the year. They reach particularly good standards in creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. This age group has benefited greatly from the improvements to the site which have extended their classroom activities outdoors.

What the school should do to improve further

- Successfully implement the continuing plans for further improvements to writing, including through spelling and by providing exciting opportunities for extended, independent writing.
- Enable pupils to improve their own learning even more efficiently in the ways they respond to teachers' feedback on their achievements.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	2
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

Annex B

12 September 2007



Dear Children

Inspection of Foxton Primary School, Foxton, Cambridge, CB22 6RN

I am writing to thank you for your welcome and help during my recent visit to your school. I spent a very enjoyable day seeing all your classes and your splendid outdoor area. The adults have worked hard to make your school a very attractive and interesting place to learn. You told me how much you appreciate that and I can see why.

Many of your parents wrote to tell me that they think you go to a really good school and I agree with them. You do well in your work, so that by the time you are ready for secondary school, you have reached very good standards. This is especially so in reading, mathematics and science. You are pretty good writers too but I agree with your teachers that you could be even better at writing. I hope you will all try hard with your writing. Your teachers want you to improve your spelling and to make sure the older children can write well without too much adult help. One of the ways you can help yourselves in all subjects is to pay careful attention when an adult tells you how you are getting on with your work and what you should try to improve. Try hard to do what they suggest, for example, when they write comments on your work or talk to you about your targets.

I was very impressed with how you behave in school and how well you get on together. Well done Class 4 for the help you give to the younger ones! You are all learning really well about how to lead safe and healthy lives. It was a pleasure to talk to such sensible young people. You told me how much you value activities such as your buddy forums to share ideas and take responsibilities.

Your school is successful because Mrs Jones makes sure that all the adults work as a big team. You have good teachers and many interesting activities. The governors give Mrs Jones lots of help in running the school. The school also works closely with your parents so that you are cared for extremely well.

Keep enjoying all your school offers you.

Best wishes

Mrs Helen Ranger
Inspector