

# Fortuna School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	134229
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	381642
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Charlie Henry HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	55
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Emile Van der Zee
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bridget Robson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 September 2008
<b>School address</b>	Kingsdown Road Lincoln LN6 0FB
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<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	13–14 March 2012
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Charlie Henry

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ann Taylor

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed seven teachers teaching 13 lessons; seven of these were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors observed a small group reading support session and heard a few pupils read. They visited a school council meeting; and spoke with a number of pupils both formally and informally during the inspection. Meetings were held with senior and middle school leaders and with the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of a wide range of school documents, including information about pupils' progress and behaviour, the school's self-evaluation and its improvement plan, and about safeguarding and equalities practices. A number of parents spoke with inspectors, including those attending a parenting support group meeting. Inspectors took account of 17 parental questionnaires returned to the school, as well as questionnaires completed by pupils and by school staff. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to take into account.

## Information about the school

This is a small school for pupils who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Many pupils have additional needs, over a half have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and over a third have autistic spectrum disorders. All except one pupil have a statement of special educational needs; one pupil is on an assessment placement and is undergoing statutory assessment of his needs. There are only a small number of girls. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds; the proportions from minority ethnic groups and of those who speak English as an additional language are very low. There is a far higher than the national average number of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. While the school is designated for pupils aged from four years old, the youngest pupils attending the school during the inspection were in Year 2. Pupils start at the school at different times during the school year. Most pupils have had a previously disrupted education and a significant number have been excluded from their previous schools. On leaving, most transfer to secondary schools for pupils who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, a few go to mainstream schools and a few go to special schools for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- This is an outstanding school where pupils' learning flourishes. Pupils do exceptionally well as self-esteem grows and their behaviour improves. Gaps between pupils' standards and those expected of their age narrow rapidly and consistently because of their excellent progress. Standards reached by most pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 are low; some attain expected levels and a few are above. Pupils make outstanding improvements in their personal development.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants work together extremely well and set consistently high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Every opportunity is taken to praise even the smallest gains. Any inappropriate behaviour is tackled extremely effectively so pupils return quickly to their learning. All staff are very good at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Occasionally opportunities to develop reading are missed.
- Pupils make impressive and often very rapid improvements in their behaviour. In lessons and around school they are polite and helpful. Occasional examples of difficult behaviour are managed very effectively. Parents and carers have an accurate view of behaviour and understand that while there might be occasions when there is poor behaviour these are due to the pupils' special educational needs. Pupils feel safe and know who to speak with if they are worried.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. All staff and the governing body share the commitment to nurture the pupils' emotional and personal development. Challenging targets for pupils are set and their achievement is monitored closely, however the use of information about pupils' learning and behaviour is not maximised. Actions to monitor and improve teaching have been very effective. The governing body is very supportive although does not have some information to allow it to fulfil all aspects of its role as effectively as possible. Safeguarding requirements are met.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Create even more opportunities for developing reading by:
  - identifying these opportunities in planning for literacy and for other subjects
  - ensuring that all pupils have one-to-one reading sessions on at least most days of the week.
- Fine-tune the use of data about pupils' progress in learning and behaviour by:
  - looking closely at the progress they make in different aspects of their work together with information about their behaviour, and using this understanding to improve further teaching and learning strategies
  - enabling the governing body to fulfil its role as a critical friend.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are rightly pleased with the progress their children make. As one explained, 'Since moving to Fortuna he's come on leaps and bounds.'

Pupils learn exceptionally well in lessons and make outstanding progress relative to their age and starting points when they enter the school. On joining the school, most pupils' levels of attainment are significantly below those expected for their age. However, they make rapid and sustained progress across the different subjects of the curriculum and throughout the time they attend the school. They develop skills and knowledge that prepare them very well for their next stage of education. These substantial gains narrow the gap between their standards and those reached by others of the same age. While at the end of Key Stage 2 overall standards for many are lower than national expectations, some reach these levels and a few exceed them. There are no noticeable differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils, for example girls compared with boys, or by pupils who have different disabilities and special educational needs.

Levels of attainment in reading and in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are low, however pupils make excellent gains during the time they are in the school. Many pupils get frustrated with the difficulty they have in learning these skills and are resistant to tackling them. However, the school's outstanding success at building self-esteem provides pupils with the confidence to persevere and succeed. Pupils make greater progress than expected given their age and starting point, and where their standards are below those of others of their age, the gap closes significantly.

In addition to the gains pupils make in subjects such as English, mathematics and

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science they also make outstanding progress in their personal development. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lessons pupils explored how many different two-dimensional sets they could make from three-dimensional shapes. They showed high levels of concentration, perseverance and thoroughness as they checked that a new set was different from the ones they had previously found.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers and pupils acknowledge that they have every reason to be pleased with the quality of teaching, since it is outstanding. Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and set very high expectations both for their behaviour and learning. The contribution of the teaching assistants is exceptional. Together, teachers and assistants ensure that there is a calm, consistent environment for learning. Staff are outstanding in nurturing their pupils' emotional development so that their self-esteem grows and their capacity to learn flourishes. They recognise even the smallest aspects of success and this enables praise to be frequent and appropriate. Similarly, the slightest slip in behaviour or learning is spotted immediately and addressed in a very positive and supportive way. More severe incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with calmly, using well-understood procedures for which all staff are regularly trained.

Activities are interesting and lessons have good pace so that pupils' enthusiasm for learning is encouraged. Teachers and their assistants constantly monitor how well pupils are learning, for example through challenging questions that are based on the teacher's knowledge of the individual pupil. In an excellent science lesson the teacher set a wide range of questions to test pupils' understanding of rusting, drawing on their knowledge of a previous lesson and encouraging them to set scientific hypotheses for further experiments. Pupils increase in confidence and in their ability to work either independently or cooperatively. Teachers and teaching assistants provide many successful opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example in consistently reinforcing what is right or wrong, and in the importance of working cooperatively. Occasionally opportunities to develop reading skills are missed.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils make impressive and often dramatic improvements in their behaviour. They behave very well in lessons and around the school. Pupils are courteous, polite and show consideration for one another. They listen when others are answering and are keen to add their contribution. During a school council meeting the classes' representatives discussed what they might do with any money raised from selling their school garden produce. One pupil immediately suggested that it should go to their link school in Ethiopia, and all of the other pupils agreed enthusiastically.

Pupils respond exceptionally well to the nurturing and positive approach of all of the staff team. They respond very well to the extremely consistent expectations and the use of the clear and very well-considered approach to improving behaviour. For

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example, teaching assistants are remarkably good at ensuring that the efforts of all pupils are recognised and praised even when they are not able to give their answers to class questions. An example of their improvement in behaviour is shown in how successfully pupils manage changes during lessons, such as from contributing to an enthusiastic whole-class discussion to the concentration required for their individual work. During one lesson during the inspection a cat came in through a class window and caused much amusement, however as soon as the situation had been resolved the pupils immediately got on with their work. While there are occasional occurrences of more challenging behaviour, the likelihood of these decreases the longer pupils are at the school. Staff manage such instances very effectively and ensure any lost learning time is minimised.

This picture of typical school behaviour supports the views of parents and carers, including the few who said that while there might be occasions when there is poor behaviour they understood that these are due to the pupils' special educational needs.

Pupils feel safe. Bullying of any sort, including by the use of racist comments, is uncommon and is quickly and effectively addressed if it occurs. Pupils told inspectors that they knew who they could speak with if they were worried. They had confidence that any concerns would be resolved. Pupils have a good awareness of safe and unsafe situations, including about e-safety.

Attendance is above average, and for many pupils this represents a very substantial improvement from before they attended Fortuna School. Pupils' eagerness to be at school is also shown in their punctuality to lessons and in how they immediately settle down to their work.

## **Leadership and management**

The outstanding leadership and commitment shown by the headteacher and the senior leadership team are shared by the entire staff team and the governing body. All members of staff and governors promote the school's excellent ethos that nurtures the development of pupils' learning. Challenging targets are set for each pupil and the careful tracking of progress towards their achievement ensures they are met. Leaders are aware that the use of these data at whole-school level is not developed to its maximum. Leadership of the improvement in pupils' behaviour is exceptional.

The quality of teaching is carefully and routinely monitored. Where areas for further development are identified, these are addressed in staff professional development. Subsequent lesson observations check that the required improvements have been made. As a result of this rigour the consistency of the highest quality of teaching has improved. The curriculum meets pupils' needs very effectively. There is an appropriate emphasis on improving especially reading, writing and mathematics skills, given most pupils' low attainments in these areas on entry to the school. The topic-based approach provides an interesting way for pupils to learn, and for many to

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regain enthusiasm for school work and the self-confidence that they can learn. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well through the curriculum and through the school's approach to improving their behaviour and self-esteem.

Links with parents and carers are very strong. They speak very positively about the school and how it contributes to their children's development and well-being. The school's support, including through its use of specialist therapists, for example through parenting workshops, is valued highly. One parent told inspectors that the school supported her son's educational and emotional needs 'in abundance'. This parent went on to say, 'They support and advise me about home life and for the first time in his life he feels safe in the school environment.'

The governing body is very active in supporting the work of the school. Governors regularly and routinely spend time in school during the school day to understand more about how it works. Governors are aware that they require more information about the progress that pupils make in their learning and behaviour so that they can provide fulfil the role of critical friend even more effectively. They ensure that the school has appropriate arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

The school has made excellent improvement since its last inspection and shows outstanding capacity for further development. It promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination very well.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



15 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Fortuna School, Lincoln, LN6 0FB**

Thank you for being so helpful when Mrs Taylor and I visited your school. We really enjoyed our visit. We think your school is outstanding and we were very impressed with how hard you work and how well you behave. I'd like to say a special 'thank you' those of you who spoke to us, those who read to Mrs Taylor, and to the school council for when I joined their meeting. Thank you as well for the questionnaires that you completed.

You make really good progress when you are at Fortuna School and catch up on a lot of work you have missed. You try really hard to improve how you behave and we thought you were really polite and work well with one another. Your teachers and teaching assistants are excellent. They help you a great deal and tell you what you have done well and how to do even better. You told us that you like school and that you know who to speak to if you have any worries. Your parents really like the school as well. We think Ms Robson and the other teachers are excellent at running your school. Everything they do is aimed at helping you make the best improvement possible.

We have asked Ms Robson and your teachers to look at a couple of things to make Fortuna School even better. We have asked them to look for even more times when you can practise your reading and to look carefully at how well you are doing in different parts of your work to see if there are times when you could make even more progress.

Thank you again for showing us how well you can work. We hope you will continue to help your teachers and teaching assistants by working as hard as you can.

Yours sincerely

Charlie Henry  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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