

Fulstow Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120447
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358763
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Angela Kirk

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 of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vanessa Aldridge
Headteacher	Jonathan Grant
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Five lessons were observed, taught by three teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' books, monitoring and assessment information, the minutes of meetings, policies, safeguarding documents, behaviour records and teachers' planning. The inspector analysed questionnaires from pupils as well as 21 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the school is addressing the fall in attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 2 in the past two years.
- How good progress is in Key Stage 1, given the low results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2010.
- How well the school has developed the curriculum since its previous inspection, and how effectively it matches pupils' interests.
- Whether teaching in Key Stage 1, in mathematics at Key Stage 2 and specifically for current Year 3 pupils is good enough to accelerate pupils' progress.
- To what extent teachers other than the headteacher play a leadership and management role in initiatives to improve pupil outcomes.

Information about the school

Fulstow is a much smaller than average village community primary school. All of the pupils are White British and no pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are taught in two classes; both class teachers were new to the school in September 2010. The school holds the Active Mark and has recently achieved Financial Management in Schools status.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Fulstow Community Primary School provides a satisfactory education. Pupils make satisfactory progress in response to satisfactory teaching, and leave Year 6 with average attainment overall. Achievement in English has been better than in mathematics in recent years because basic skills have not been taught systematically and pupils find problem solving a particular challenge. The school has gone through a period of change in the last 12 months due to staffing turbulence. However, under the determined and decisive leadership of the headteacher and with effective support from the governing body, it has overcome a number of challenges and is now tackling the right priorities.

Teaching is currently satisfactory. There are a number of common strengths, including good planning to ensure that work is set at different levels for different age groups and abilities within each class. However, the pace in some parts of lessons is not brisk enough to engage pupils fully in their learning and so teachers cannot always assess how well pupils are learning in order to adapt the activities. Also, when pupils are working independently, the guidance provided for them is too general to have a good impact on progress.

Pupils show a good understanding of how to stay safe because the curriculum supports this aspect well, especially with regard to e-safety. They behave well and enjoy school. Their attendance is outstanding. The school's 'values' curriculum encourages the children to develop a sense of self-worth and respect for others.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle well into school and make satisfactory progress. Adult-led learning is effective, but children do not have enough opportunities to develop their independent learning skills by exploring, experimenting and challenging their understanding, especially outside. The care provided for pupils is a particular strength of the school. Good advice from health and education professionals and carefully targeted support has resulted in good progress made by particular pupils in their confidence, behaviour and attitudes. Good morale and good relationships between pupils and adults help create a lively community ethos. In questionnaires, parents and carers were happy overall with their children's experiences.

The governing body is beginning to play a more active and appropriately challenging role in the management of the school. Teaching and learning are monitored mainly by the headteacher, but other teachers are becoming increasingly involved in monitoring and evaluating various aspects of the school's work, for example in the leadership and management of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and in English and science. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and the school knows its areas of strength and those for development. The school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics by ensuring that pupils have regular, progressive opportunities to practise and consolidate their basic mathematical skills across the curriculum, and particularly to apply these skills in problem-solving.
- Improve the quality of teaching and teachers' use of assessment by:
 - ensuring consistently brisk pace and challenge throughout lessons, so that pupils are highly involved in their learning at all times
 - taking opportunities to assess pupils' learning accurately in lessons and providing more tightly structured information for pupils to support their independent work.
- Develop children's independent learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by providing more opportunities and more challenging activities linked to themed work, especially in the outside area, in all the areas of learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Overall attainment is broadly average throughout the school, reflecting satisfactory achievement, although standards in mathematics remain lower than in English. In order to help pupils make better progress, the school sets them into three or four groups in English and mathematics. This ensures that pupils' work is matched well to their abilities and their needs are better met, especially for those in Year 3 who share some lessons with pupils in Key Stage 1. Recent school assessment information indicates that there has been a recent improvement in progress. As a result of work being well matched to pupils' abilities, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers.

Progress in lessons varies with the quality of teaching. Pupils in a good Year 1 to 3 lesson investigated halving numbers by sharing objects. The younger and least able pupils were helped to ensure their counting and sharing were accurate, and the most able were well challenged by using arrays to divide by numbers 2, 3 and 4. Pupils in a good Year 3 to 6 religious education lesson explored birth rites, with a particular focus on the first whispered call to prayer for a Muslim baby. Pupils applied their knowledge of recently discussed 'values' to write their own birth rite, resulting in a good understanding of the concept. Presentation, including handwriting in pupils' English and mathematics books, is good as a result of effective actions since the previous inspection. Teaching is more often satisfactory, however, particularly when guidance for pupils' independent work is insufficiently focused on what they need to achieve. Pupils are encouraged to use criteria for success in their writing, but some aspects are too general. For example, use correct punctuation does not enable pupils to focus enough on improving specific aspects of their writing.

Lessons are calm and enjoyable. Pupils say that there is no bullying and the positive ethos of the school encourages pupils to feel safe. They say they know who to turn to, should they have any difficulties. Pupils appreciate that with good behaviour comes opportunities to take responsibilities within school and wider community. Members from the school council reinforce this by awarding 'golden tickets' for jobs that have been undertaken well.

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Pupils feel proud of their achievements and are enjoying saving these up to purchase stationery or book tokens. The school has led many successful community activities such as the 'hot potato lunch' and pupils have played a role in local initiatives and campaigns.

Pupils understand the impact of a good diet and an active lifestyle on their health. They enjoy activate sessions and there is a good uptake of sports, including those organised at playtimes by play leaders. Pupils develop social skills such as cooperation and independence well, but they have few opportunities to mix with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Although pupils' skills in English are good, their lower basic mathematical skills mean that the preparation for their future is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and planning usually takes good account of previous learning and the broad range of ages and abilities. Pupils are well managed and motivated to do their best. Teaching assistants are well deployed and offer effective support and guidance to pupils. They often successfully lead sessions with small groups of pupils. Where these features are applied and directed well, teaching is good. However, lessons are typically less effective because teachers do not challenge and guide pupils enough to maximise their learning. The school is now starting to develop a more effective

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system that tracks attainment and progress termly instead of annually. It has also started to analyse outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Much work has been undertaken to improve the curriculum since the previous inspection, and the school has based many of its newly-introduced topics on themes that clearly interest the pupils. For example, in their topic on superheroes pupils in Reception and in Key Stage 1 clearly enjoyed dressing up and role-playing in 'Dr Who's tardis' while Key Stage 2 pupils wrote animated descriptions about people they admired in the media such as sports personalities and pop stars. Enrichment is a strength and activities such as World War 2 Day, which also involved the local community, many in period costume, have made the curriculum more exciting and relevant for pupils. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to consolidate their writing and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum, but mathematical work such as the use of graphs and problem-solving is only well developed in science.

Clearly targeted support for specific pupils has resulted in significant improvements in their attitudes, confidence and behaviour. Case studies indicate striking examples of the school's success. Good guidance is provided at times of transition, for example when children first arrive and when pupils move on to secondary school, and the school has done much to improve the welcoming environment, not only through the recent building improvements but also in better access to staff for parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and governing body have the necessary skills and ambition to drive the school forward. Teachers new to their roles have received good support from the headteacher and the local authority to enable them to develop leadership and management skills. All staff and governors are highly committed. Action plans to address the current weaknesses in the school are beginning to have an impact on the quality of teaching, on pupils' achievement in mathematics and in some aspects of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The governing body is satisfactory in its effectiveness. It has the expertise and skills that are enabling it to be more effective in its monitoring and evaluation role. Accurate information from governor visits have started to effectively hold the school to account for its performance. Safeguarding procedures are suitably robust, and parents and carers are happy with the way their children are kept safe at school. Good care and sound provision for all groups of pupils across the school ensure satisfactory equality of opportunity and mean that there is no discrimination.

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Parents' and carers' questionnaires, together with their comments in pupils' home/school books, show that relationships between school and home are positive. The governing body has canvassed parents' and carers' opinions and changes have been made as a result, for example in invitations to parents and carers to class assemblies. Partnerships, although limited, are satisfactory. For example, the school has shared moderation of assessments and training of staff with two local primary schools and a science teacher from a local secondary school has delivered science lessons in Key Stage 2 as part of the school's ongoing improving science project. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Although work with the local community is strong, the school has only just started to implement its action plan to develop links in the United Kingdom and in other countries.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start at the school with a very wide range of skills and abilities, but overall they are broadly at the levels expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress from these varied starting points. Consistent classroom routines and a safe environment enable children to settle quickly into school life and promote good behaviour, which is supported well through the school's 'values' curriculum. Information gathered from ongoing assessment provides clear indications of children's current levels, but only limited information about their attainment on entry abilities is collected. Until last year, the school had not compared the attainment or progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage with what is expected for their age. Monitoring is in the early stages and so leadership and management are no better than satisfactory, despite the good features.

Planning for adult-led groups is appropriate, with learning objectives clearly identified. For example, children made good progress in adding numbers to 10 because a clear and systematic counting method was taught. Dominoes with spots supported their accurate

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counting and clear recording. Outcomes are not so effective for children's independent learning because opportunities are too few. The outside area is underdeveloped and does not provide a sufficient range of focused activities across all six areas of learning. As a result, opportunities for independent writing and number skills are also underdeveloped.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was above average for a primary school. A large majority showed strong support for the school and what it does for their children. There were few concerns, but most of these related to the slower progress children made in mathematics and the lower attainment of the school in mathematics. The inspector also judged raising achievement in mathematics to be a key point for improvement for the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fulstow Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspector received 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 48 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	76	5	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	3	14	17	81	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	4	19	15	71	1	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	6	29	14	67	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	5	24	16	76	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	43	11	52	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	5	24	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	29	14	67	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	52	9	43	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	33	12	57	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	29	14	67	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	57	9	43	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



7 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fulstow Community Primary School, Louth, LN11 0XL

Thank you for making me so welcome and answering my questions when I visited you recently. You told me that you feel safe and that all the staff take good care of you. Your attendance is excellent and I thought that your behaviour was good. I was impressed by the sports that the play leaders organised in the playground, which help you to stay healthy.

Fulstow is a satisfactory school where you reach average levels of attainment and make satisfactory progress. The youngest children make a satisfactory start in Reception, but often do not have enough opportunities to explore learning about things for themselves, as so many of their activities are led by an adult. You all do particularly well with your reading and writing, but many of you need to practise your basic mathematics skills more. All the staff work hard, and they want to make your school even better. These are the things I have asked them to do to help bring about further improvements:

- raise standards in mathematics by building up your basic skills and giving you lots of opportunities to use them to solve problems
- make more lessons good by ensuring that you are highly involved in your learning at all times and giving you clear instructions on how to improve your work, for example by using 'steps to success' that are very specific
- help children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to be more independent by providing more challenging topic activities, especially in the outside area.

You can help as well by trying extra hard to learn your number bonds, times tables and other skills in mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Angela Kirk

Lead inspector

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