

Fosse Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120089
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	363916
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Jeremy Spencer HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Liz McAllister
Headteacher	Richard Stone
Date of previous school inspection	26 May 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 14 lessons, taught by 14 teachers, and two assemblies. The inspection team also held meetings with staff, pupils, a representative from the local authority and members of the Interim Executive Board (IEB). They observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of school documents including safeguarding arrangements, policies, minutes from meetings, data about pupils' progress, pupils' exercise books and the school's improvement plans. The inspection team also analysed responses on 85 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with 29 questionnaires from staff and 105 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is teaching improving quickly enough to secure improving pupil progress across the school, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics?
- Do teachers use assessment systems sufficiently well to shape learning to meet the needs of each pupil in lessons?
- Have leaders and managers been successful in developing an effective strategy to promote cultural diversity and community cohesion?
- How successful have the school's strategies been to improve attendance by reducing the rate of unauthorised absences?

Information about the school

This school is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. Just over half of the pupils are of White British background. The remainder are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. About a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language. A breakfast club runs on the school site and is managed by the IEB.

The school was last inspected in May 2010 and received a notice to improve. Significant improvement was required in relation to the quality of teaching. Prior to this, the school had been in special measures between April 2008 and May 2010, because it was failing to give the pupils an acceptable standard of education. The governing body was replaced by an IEB in December 2008. A new headteacher joined the school in 2009.

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

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The school has made many improvements during the last year and now provides a satisfactory standard of education. The leadership team, IEB and staff have made considerable steps towards improving the quality of teaching and demonstrate satisfactory capacity to sustain improvements. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is slightly below national expectations but is beginning to rise and there is enough good teaching to sustain the rise in attainment. The staff provide strong pastoral support for pupils, which has resulted in improved good behaviour. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe there, which, when combined with the school's effective strategies to promote improved attendance, is reflected in attendance rates that are broadly average but rising quickly.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are examples of good teaching, which meet the needs of different groups of pupils well, and the progress they make is accelerating as a result. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, particularly the teaching of pupils' writing and mathematical skills. Pupils are not able to engage in extended writing activities frequently enough in many classes, meaning that they are not able to practise and refine their skills. Opportunities to write at length in other subjects and topics are also missed. In some classes, the topics and themes used to stimulate pupils' extended writing activities do not appeal to all pupils, particularly boys. As a result, boys make slower progress than girls in their writing development. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are not always given frequent enough opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills. This means that their range of vocabulary and ability to sequence thoughts and ideas are often underdeveloped. Similarly, pupils are not able to practise applying their calculation and other mathematical skills in different areas of the curriculum. When combined together, these factors cause inconsistencies in the progress made by pupils in writing and mathematics.

The school has been successful in improving systems to assess pupils' progress. Senior leaders are now able to track the progress of different groups of pupils in detail, in order to identify areas of weakness in provision. Many teachers are more effective in their frequent assessments of pupils' learning and are using this information to plan the next steps of learning carefully, in order to meet the needs of individual pupils. However, some teachers still do not do this well enough and as a result the activities planned in lessons, particularly for more able pupils and boys, are sometimes not sufficiently challenging or stimulating.

Strong partnerships with others, including the local authority, support the school's leaders and managers in their satisfactory improvement of the school. Staff morale is high and they are committed to continuing to improve. Senior leaders work productively together to

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identify priorities for development in Key Stages 1 and 2 and bring about improvements. However, their input into the strategic leadership and improvement of the Early Years Foundation Stage is not as strong. As a result, there are some inconsistencies in practice between the Nursery and Reception classes. In order to raise the school's capacity to improve further, the headteacher and deputy headteacher acknowledge that the school's middle leaders must now undertake a more comprehensive role in the development of teaching and learning. Middle leaders do not currently observe and support the improvement of colleagues' teaching frequently enough.

Leaders and managers have been successful in developing an effective strategy to promote the concepts of cultural diversity and community cohesion. Pupils are now well prepared to engage with others from backgrounds different from their own and show a good understanding of different cultures and values.

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?

- Raise pupils' attainment and continue to accelerate their progress across the school by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so that at least 90% is good or better
 - focusing more closely upon the improved development of pupils' speaking and listening skills
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and calculation skills in subjects and topics across the curriculum and allowing more frequent opportunities for pupils to write independently and more extensively
 - continuing to embed recently-implemented strategies to track the progress of all groups of pupils more closely and to make better use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning, redressing inconsistencies between classes
 - ensuring that activities in lessons consistently provide an appropriate level of challenge and stimulation for all pupils, particularly those who are more able and boys.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - strengthening the leadership and oversight of the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the Nursery and Reception classes
 - ensuring that middle leaders have increased opportunities to observe and improve colleagues' teaching and contribute more fully to the school's systems to monitor the quality of provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children begin in the school's Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below, and sometimes well below, those normally expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress as they move through the school's Nursery and Reception classes. Their progress

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accelerates as they move through Years 1 and 2 but their attainment at the end of Year 2 is still below expected levels, particularly in reading and writing. Their progress slows as they move through Years 3 and 4 but accelerates again in Years 5 and 6. They leave the school at the end of Year 6 attaining standards slightly below the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Although pupils' progress is inconsistent as they move through the school, it is satisfactory overall, including the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Work in pupils' exercise books indicates that pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate further, as the quality of teaching continues to improve.

Pupils' behaviour is good and, as a result of the effective support provided by teachers and teaching assistants, this is also the case for pupils whose behaviour can be more challenging. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their average but rapidly improving levels of attendance. They respect each other's views and they are attentive, responsive and keen to ask questions. Pupils feel safe and many have stated that they trust that adults will deal effectively with any rare incidents of bullying. All groups of pupils say that these incidents are now far less common than they used to be. Pupils know that their views are respected and their efforts valued and they make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school. One pupil, while talking about the special jobs pupils do, said, 'We feel trusted, grown-up, important and proud.' Members of the school council have played significant roles in the improvement of the school's garden and growing areas and playground leaders support their peers well in engaging in playground activities and games. Large numbers of pupils participate in the very good range of sports and activities after school, which benefit their health and well-being. All pupils who were spoken to during the inspection showed a good understanding of the importance of regular exercise and a healthy diet. Children attending the school's well-managed breakfast club spoke with pride about how healthy their breakfasts of cereals, toast and honey and fruit juice were. Pupils learn about and benefit from their direct experience and understanding of the diversity of ethnic and cultural traditions in the local and wider area. Pupils' good moral understanding is reflected in their good behaviour. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to engage in quiet reflection during assemblies but opportunities to reflect upon learning in lessons are sometimes a little rushed.

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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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory but is improving quickly. Teachers set clear objectives for each lesson, although some lessons do not incorporate enough work tailored specifically to meet the abilities of all pupils, particularly the more able. Teachers mark pupils' work diligently and the comments provided often outline clearly the next steps pupils need to take to improve. Pupils across the school enter into thoughtful learning dialogues with their teachers, by responding to teachers' marking and written comments in green ink. This system supports the improved engagement of pupils in their learning well and, during the inspection, pupils spoke about how much they valued opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback.

The school's satisfactory curriculum has been extended to include well-attended 'Family Learning' sessions. During the inspection, parents and carers spoke positively about a session they were engaged in, working in the classroom alongside their children, covering strategies to promote children's improved independence. A wide range of visits, visitors and well-attended extra-curricular activities also support the curriculum effectively. However, the school acknowledges that the curriculum can be improved further by focusing more on the development of pupils' writing and mathematical skills in all subjects and topics.

The school makes good provision for pupils' care, guidance and support. Skilled and committed adults provide clearly-targeted support for pupils whose circumstances may

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make them vulnerable. Strong links with external agencies ensure that pupils receive prompt access to specialist advice at times of need. The school's breakfast club provides good provision for pupils in a clean and safe environment.

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 enthusiasm, drive and determination of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, with good support from the IEB and the local authority, have inspired staff to make improvements. Other senior and middle leaders are new to their roles. They show great enthusiasm, knowledge and insight, but their full impact upon school improvement is yet to be seen because they do not spend enough time supporting the monitoring and development of colleagues' teaching. Leaders and managers at all levels are starting to contribute to self-evaluation and improvement planning but more work is needed in this area in order to raise the school's capacity to improve.

The IEB is astute and knowledgeable, providing effective support and rigorous challenge in equal measure. Their participation in monitoring the school's priorities is exemplary. The IEB ensures that the school provides satisfactory value for money and is progressing well with plans to transfer governance back to a shadow governing body, as school improvements become more secure.

This is an inclusive school, committed to promoting equality and tackling discrimination. The staff are increasingly measuring the performance and progress of pupils from different backgrounds and of different abilities. However, the progress of higher ability pupils is not tracked closely enough and there are still some inconsistencies in the achievement of different groups of pupils, including boys in some classes. Information from meetings about pupils is used well to set challenging targets in order to accelerate progress and raise standards.

Partnerships with others are good and have contributed well to improved well-being for pupils and to improvements in their learning experiences. The 'Right to Read' programme involved volunteers from the local community coming into the school to support pupils' reading development. Pupils' progress in, and enthusiasm for, reading has improved as a result. Partnerships with ceramic artists, the police, other emergency services, local secondary schools, colleges and universities have further improved learning opportunities for pupils at the school. The school promotes community cohesion well. A thorough audit of the school's context has taken place since the last inspection and an appropriate action plan was subsequently devised to support the broadening of pupils' understanding of their place in the local and national communities and the wider world. Pupils have been given

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opportunities to work with learners in other schools, situated in different locations and with pupils from differing socio-economic groups. A trip to the theatre in London enabled some pupils to experience the excitement and rich cultural content of a West End Show. 'International Weeks' have also engaged families in the school well in contributing and sharing food and singing songs from a broad range of different countries and cultures together. The school engages parents and carers in the life of the school effectively. School events are well attended and parents who were spoken to during the inspection said how much they appreciate the school's text-message service to keep them informed and up-to-date with school news.

At the time of the inspection all safeguarding requirements were being met. Stringent arrangements and checking systems are in place to ensure that only suitable adults come into contact with pupils. Well-qualified staff have clear responsibilities for child protection and there are robust risk assessments in place for a broad range of school activities and resources.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The majority of children join the Nursery and Reception classes with skills and aptitudes that are below and sometimes well below those expected for their age, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and in their communication, language and literacy skills. They make good progress in these areas of learning from their starting points. However, they make satisfactory progress overall, because their learning in other areas, particularly in the calculation of number is not as strong, and their rates of progress vary between different classes.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and both indoor and outdoor learning environments are resourced appropriately. The atmosphere in classrooms and outdoor play areas is calm

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and purposeful because there are warm and trusting relationships between children and with adults. Most children settle to activities well and join in willingly. Some children, boys in particular, tend to flit between areas when they are expected to choose activities for themselves because they are not sufficiently stimulated or challenged by the activities.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Although the Nursery and Reception classes run smoothly on a day-to-day basis, information about children's progress is not always analysed in sufficient depth to enable clear priorities for future development to be identified. The school's senior leadership team do not always support the strategic development of the Early Years Foundation Stage well enough, or oversee the robust monitoring of its progress against identified priorities.

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

Almost all parents and carers who returned questionnaires, or who were spoken to during the inspection, have a positive view of the school and are happy with their children's experience. One parent commented, 'I believe the school has become much better in the last couple of years. The staff are fantastic and my child is blossoming there.' Other parents and carers made similar comments. A small number of parents and carers brought up individual concerns. All of these were considered during the inspection and, while preserving anonymity, discussed with the headteacher.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fosse 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 inspection team received 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 345 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	56	35	41	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	54	37	44	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	30	35	43	51	7	8	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	38	48	56	3	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	32	38	53	62	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	33	45	53	7	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	22	63	74	1	1	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)	20	24	54	64	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	33	49	58	6	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	24	58	68	3	4	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	28	53	62	4	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	30	35	49	58	3	4	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	40	49	58	2	2	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fosse Primary School, Leicester, LE3 5EA

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. We would like to thank your parents and carers for filling in the questionnaires that gave us their views about your school.

You go to a satisfactory school. This is an important achievement because the last time your school was inspected in May 2010 the inspectors gave your teachers what we call, a 'notice to improve.' Since then your school has improved and you are now learning better. We were pleased to see you behave well and have improved your attendance. The teaching has also improved and is now satisfactory, which is helping many more of you to meet the standards that you are expected to reach in reading, writing and mathematics. The headteacher, staff and Interim Executive Board have made many improvements since the last time your school was inspected, but there is still more to be done to make your school even better. We have asked the school to:

- make sure that teaching always helps you to make good progress and that the work you do in lessons is never too easy or too hard for you
- give you more chances to practise your speaking, listening, writing and mathematics skills in topic work and other lessons, to help you get even better at them
- make sure that teachers get chances to help each other to improve by watching each other teach a bit more often
- improve the way the Nursery and Reception classes are managed to make sure that all the children do as well as they can.

You can all help your school improve further by continuing to try your best in all you do and coming to school as often as possible. Thank you once again for your help and remember to always enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Spencer

Her Majesty's Inspector

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