

# Foulsham Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120807
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	358849
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Richard Blackmore

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steven Howell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jenny Dowden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	High Street Foulsham, Dereham NR20 5RT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01362 683389
<b>Fax number</b>	01362 683320
<b>Email address</b>	head@foulsham.norfolk.sch.uk

---

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	358849

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed seven lessons taught by four teachers. Meetings were held with members of the leadership team, curriculum leaders, governors and the school council. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's action plan, documents and policies detailing how pupils are kept safe, the school's tracking data to see how well pupils are doing and analyses of pupils' standards. Inspectors scrutinised 39 completed questionnaires from parents and carers together with three from staff and 47 from pupils.

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

- The impact leaders have had in raising attainment in mathematics.
- The impact of recent staffing difficulties on plans for school improvement and the monitoring of the school's work
- The impact of improvements to the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the last inspection.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. During the last academic year the school has experienced significant staff absence and no permanent headteacher in the autumn and spring term. The substantive headteacher has been at the school since the beginning of the summer term. Almost all pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language. While there is a higher than average proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, the overall number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Among the school's awards is the Activemark.

**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

Foulsham Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education. The high staff absence during the past year has caused concern among the parents and is highlighted by the questionnaire responses. Most are optimistic about the new headteacher who has swiftly and accurately identified the school's immediate and longer term needs, particularly improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school and in providing stability and continuity after a turbulent period for pupils, parents and staff. She has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has already made some important changes, such as increasing the time pupils spend learning.

Pupils' attainment is average and their progress is satisfactory overall given their average starting points. Pupils are articulate and confident speakers, often giving inspectors a comprehensive account of what they like about the school, one pupil saying 'I like it all.' This confidence in speaking is not always matched by a wide written vocabulary. Standards in mathematics are average but lower than standards in English, because there are too few practical tasks and limited opportunities to investigate and solve problems or to use mathematical skills in other subjects. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles, particularly the essential aspects of a healthy diet and how taking part in a variety of physical activities helps them to stay fit. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for because staff take time to get to know them as individuals and the pupils are very appreciative of this approach.

Although some lessons observed were good, overall teaching is satisfactory. Staff enthusiastically present new ideas to pupils using interesting resources but spend too long explaining these. They do not always capture what pupils have learned during the lesson effectively enough to plan sufficiently challenging follow-up activities, especially for higher-attaining pupils. Teachers question pupils well and marking and verbal feedback provide praise and encouragement. However, it does not yet give clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.

The school's safeguarding arrangements are good and there are thorough recruitment checks on staff and effective risk assessments in place. The school's monitoring of teaching and learning adequately identifies how well pupils are learning but it has not been consistent or frequent enough to identify fully where individual teachers need to improve their practice. The governing body is involved in school life and supports the school's work satisfactorily. It is increasingly challenging the school's performance, and is developing more opportunities to improve its members' expertise in measuring the school's performance. The school works adequately with parents and carers but during the last year there have been tensions because of staff absence and temporary arrangements for school leadership. The new leaders are keen to develop relationships and communication about school developments and teaching arrangements. The school has

**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

accurately prioritised areas for improvement, mirroring those observed during the inspection, enabling the school to have satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvements.

Up to 40% of the 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?

- Improve pupils' attainment and rate of progress, particularly in mathematics by:
  - ensuring there are more opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in other subjects
  - planning more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in regular investigational and practical 'real-life' tasks where possible.
- Ensure that more teaching is consistently good by:
  - making sure that pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, are challenged sufficiently in their learning
  - ensuring that explanations are short and sharp so pupils get down to work more quickly
  - improving the marking of pupils' work so that they know how to make progress.
- Improve aspects of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring there are more opportunities for senior leaders to monitor the work of others in all classes so that they can identify what individual teachers need to do to improve their teaching
  - ensuring that governors play a full part in challenging the school to improve further.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Children settle quickly into Reception and make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This progress continues in classes across the school and is accelerating in some classes. Work in pupils' exercise books shows they are working at levels expected for their age. Lessons observed during the inspection showed that, where pupils are challenged and understand what they are learning, good progress is made. This was seen for example, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson where pupils were studying the scale of quantities needed, and were calculating the amounts of ingredients, depending on the number of people each recipe was designed for. Pupils responded well to good questioning and enjoyed the challenges presented by the work they were given because it made them think ideas through for themselves. On the other hand, in an English lesson, the introduction was too long and did not cater for pupils' different abilities. As a consequence, pupils did not learn as fast as they are able. Pupils with special educational needs and/or abilities make satisfactory progress, supported by timely interventions from support staff to ensure they maintain focus on what is to be learnt from each lesson.

Pupils' generally play happily together and move about the school safely but the concentration levels in class varies from class to class because there is a lack of a

**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

consistent approach by teachers. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school community but their involvement in the wider community is limited. They take on a range of responsibilities in school, such as eco monitors and school council members, raising money for charities including Cancer Research. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and there are strengths in their spiritual reflection on their own lives and their attempts to use this to guide and shape the choices they make. Attendance is average and coupled with satisfactory achievement pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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 plan a range of tasks that enable pupils to practise basic skills. They present ideas enthusiastically and this helps to promote pupils' enjoyment of school. Despite this they do not make full use of the local area in subjects such as geography and religious education to promote a secure understanding of different cultures. The school has developed its procedures for tracking pupils' progress but not enough use is made of this information to plan sufficiently challenging tasks, with the result that the work they set is not always well matched to the needs of all pupils to accelerate their satisfactory progress. Targets help pupils to focus on the next steps in their learning, although not all teachers reinforce pupils' individual targets often enough during lessons.

**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

Lessons and work observed in English and mathematics show that the curriculum is broad and balanced and appropriate to pupils' needs and interests. The small number of extra curricular clubs are well attended by pupils. A good emphasis on developing pupils' awareness of living healthily is having a positive effect. Literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are satisfactorily developed. However, opportunities to improve basic skills across different subjects, especially in mathematics, are not planned in enough depth to ensure the development of essential skills is quick enough. Pupils say they enjoy the curriculum enrichment offered through visits, visitors and themed days or weeks. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language and participate in days such as 'India day' at a nearby school but this has not yet developed a wide knowledge of other cultures and faiths.

All the procedures to care for pupils' welfare are in place. Teaching assistants give satisfactory support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, helping them to achieve as well as their peers nationally. Transitions in and out of the school and between classes are well managed. Other schools in the local area provide valued support to extend the curriculum and to smooth pupils' transfer to the secondary school. Carefully designed and closely monitored programmes are enabling pupils with special educational needs to make satisfactory progress but there is not enough evaluation of the impact of these strategies. Links with a variety of professionals and outside agencies support vulnerable pupils and their families.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The new and effective headteacher provides a clear sense of direction but previous improvement strategies have not been monitored with a sharp enough focus on attainment and progress. Therefore, teaching and the progress of pupils has remained satisfactory because inconsistencies in the implementation of plans across the school have not been identified and addressed. The current headteacher's monitoring of planned changes is good thus ensuring that these have a positive impact on pupils' learning. For example, the strategy for teaching reading is more structured and organised to build systematically on pupils' current skills. Racist behaviour or harassment of any form is not tolerated and the ethos established in the school is one of promoting full equality for all. The school has established links with a range of other partners are already beginning to have a positive impact on some outcomes. The raised bed area has been developed well through a combination of links with external companies and careful use of its own resources. Community cohesion is satisfactory, with strengths in relation to school where pupils from a range of different backgrounds get on well together. Beyond the school

**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

there are links with a school in Boston and The Gambia. However, these links are new and opportunities for pupils to learn about the wider cultural diversity in other countries in depth is at the early stages of development. Governors and leaders are at the early stages of evaluating the impact of such links on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children come into Reception classes with skills that are in line with national expectations for their ages. The satisfactory provision enables them to make expected progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. Links with parents and carers and the pre-school settings mean that staff quickly establish starting points for children's learning journeys. The warm, safe and welcoming environment of Reception and well-organised induction arrangements ensure that children quickly adapt to routines and settle. Planning shows that there is an appropriate balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, although the classroom lacks enough meaningful opportunities for pupils to engage in writing activities. The classroom is well set out for children to explore independently. However, the outside area is not enabling children to gain their full potential in all areas of their learning, particularly their physical development. This is because there is insufficient space and too few opportunities for larger equipment, such as climbing frames or wheeled toys. Children were seen making good use of the 'house' by engaging in pretend tea parties and, hence, developing their speech and language skills well. Staff interact well with pupils, helping them to develop their ideas, but without taking over. Although improvements have been made to the outside area, this remains underdeveloped and the school does not use additional spaces creatively enough to ensure the six areas of learning are fully covered. Leadership is satisfactory with review and evaluation at early stages, but the school is steadily making improvements.



**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

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	3
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

There was a good response rate to the questionnaire. A very large majority of parents and carers who responded agree that their child enjoys school and is kept safe at school. However, parents understandably expressed their dissatisfaction with the previous year and this focuses on inconsistent leadership and having different teachers when staff were absent. There were suggestions or concerns of an individual nature, but there were also some common themes. A majority of parents and carers disagreed with the statement that teaching is good at the school. The inspection evidence indicates that, while it is not good overall, it is satisfactory with some good teaching. A minority of parents and carers also disagreed that their child makes good progress, the school deals effectively with poor behaviour and that the school takes account of their suggestions. The inspectors recognised that progress for pupils could be quicker and although behaviour occasionally dips it is satisfactory and does not disrupt learning. The school has the normal range of opportunities for parents and carers to express views and suggestions but the new headteacher and governors have planned more frequent opportunities to meet and listen to parents and carers. An example is the 'Wednesday Walk' in the playground after school by the Vice Chair of the Governing Body to hear the current views of parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Foulsham 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 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 93 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	7	18	26	67	4	10	2	5
The school keeps my child safe	5	13	31	79	3	8	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	1	3	21	54	15	38	2	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	3	8	18	46	12	31	4	10
The teaching is good at this school	1	3	14	36	17	44	4	10
The school helps me to support my child's learning	1	3	21	54	15	38	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	8	24	62	10	26	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)	1	3	17	44	13	33	2	5
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	5	20	51	14	36	2	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	5	17	44	12	31	6	15
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	0	0	16	41	16	41	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	0	0	17	44	9	23	5	13
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	1	3	15	38	14	36	5	13

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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](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.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Foulsham Primary School, Dereham, NR20 5RT**

You may remember that I visited your school recently with one other inspector. We enjoyed our time with you and I am writing to thank you for being so welcoming and helpful. I thought you would like to know what we found out.

You go to a satisfactory school. Under the leadership of the new headteacher there are improvements which you told me you like and help you to feel safe. You are well looked after and have confidence to approach the adults around you if you have any concerns. You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy.

Children get off to a steady start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and as you move through the rest of the school you make satisfactory progress. You are not doing quite as well in mathematics as you are in English. Some of you who find learning a bit easier are not always given work that is challenging enough to really make you think and some of you are not clear about how to improve your work.

Your headteacher is keen to make things better for you. We have asked her to do a few things to help. We have asked the headteacher to make sure teachers help you to learn more quickly, particularly in mathematics. We also want your teachers to help you by making sure that the work always challenges you enough to make you think, particularly those of you who find work easy. We have asked them to make sure that marking helps you to improve your work. We have also asked the people who lead the school to ensure that they check more thoroughly how successful the school is in carrying out plans for improvement. You can help by making sure that you do your best and keep concentrating in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore

Lead inspector

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**