

Fulbourn Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110759
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	378161
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Toby Cave
Headteacher	Fiona Thorpe and Claire Pickard
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2007
School address	School Lane Fulbourn Cambridge CB21 5BH
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons as well as small teaching groups withdrawn from class. Inspectors observed a total of nine teachers. They met parents and carers informally during the inspection and held meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised samples of pupils' work, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, management and curriculum documentation, teachers' planning and safeguarding documents. In addition, inspectors took account of responses to questionnaire from 89 parents and carers, 23 staff and 90 pupils.

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

- How successful has the school been in raising attainment, especially for boys in writing?
- How rigorously is assessment information used by teachers to ensure that all groups of pupils are appropriately challenged?
- How effective is the restructured senior leadership team in monitoring the work of the school and raising attainment?

Information about the school

Fulbourn is a smaller-than-average school and the majority of pupils are from White British background. A few pupils are from minority ethnic heritages and a few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than that found nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than found nationally. There are two classes for Reception children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and one of these is shared with Year 1 pupils. All other classes in the school are also for mixed age groups. The school has achieved national Healthy School status.

The two joint headteachers, who work in a close partnership, share responsibilities for the post equally. The Fulbourn Pre-School and Lime Trees Club share the school site, but are not managed by the governing body and are subject to a separate inspection.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Fulbourn provides a good quality of education. A significant feature of the school is the outstanding care, guidance and support provided for all pupils so they grow in confidence. Pupils show very good attitudes to their learning and enjoy school, as shown by their above average attendance. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because their needs are quickly and accurately assessed and they receive well targeted learning support. Pupils' know how to keep safe, they have a good understanding of what is involved in leading a healthy life and join in sports activities eagerly. Links with parents and carers are good and they are pleased with all that the school provides. One parent, typical of many, said of the school, 'It is excellent. The staff are all kind and caring and each child is respected as an individual. The focus on each child's achievement and happiness is fantastic.'

Children enter Reception with a range of skills but are weaker in language, communication and their understanding of numbers. They make good progress in developing these skills in the Reception year and move to Year 1 with skills and abilities that are similar to those expected nationally. Pupils make good progress through the school and, by the time they reach Year 6, their attainment is above average. In 2011, the school's performance at the end of Year 6 was influenced by pupils who joined during that year and who, despite making good progress, did not reach the same above average levels of attainment as their peers. As a result of a careful focus on making writing tasks more interesting the progress made by boys has improved and is now good. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully and this information is used with growing skill by teachers to plan lessons that challenge pupils of all abilities well. Clear targets are set to help guide them and pupils say they find these very helpful. The curriculum has been reviewed and now links subjects very creatively to provide interesting lessons.

The joint headteachers work efficiently in a complementary partnership. They have united all staff in their ambitious drive to secure continuing improvement in the school. Priorities for improvement are accurately identified and new developments are closely monitored to ensure their effectiveness. The careful monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteachers is now beginning to be shared with middle and subject leaders, to ensure that the small element of satisfactory teaching is improved. Members of the governing body know the school well through their regular visits, and offer good challenge and support in equal balance. Development points from the previous inspection have been robustly addressed. Safeguarding arrangements are good. Pupils are involved well in their local community and are

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beginning to extend their awareness of the diversity of the multicultural society of the United Kingdom. The school recognises that pupils' understanding of the richness of other cultures around the world is not as strong. Pupils' sustained good achievement, well-focused leadership and management, continued development based on secure self-evaluation and the meeting of clear and ambitious targets mean that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of all teaching across the school is consistently good or better by sharing existing good practice among teachers.
- Improve the effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion by extending pupils' awareness of the diversity of communities in other parts of the world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils meet the high expectations set for them and behave well in lessons and around the school. They show enjoyment in their learning and contribute with enthusiasm, especially to class discussions. Pupils have good opportunities to extend their writing skills in interesting ways through themed lessons that link subjects. For example, in a Year 4 lesson pupils worked with enjoyment on improving sentence structures and finding interesting adjectives for their own writing based on the imaginary world of Narnia. Boys especially took delight in suggesting very graphic and exciting adjectives to use.

Teachers use information on pupils' progress consistently well in all classes to plan tasks that stretch all pupils, whether in ability groups or mixed-age classes. In a Year 6 mathematics class, for example, work was structured using ability groups and flexible pathways to more challenging exercises. Pupils in different ability groups were encouraged to identify and select fresh tasks for themselves as they felt more confidence in their work on angles and perimeters. In a few lessons, work for groups of pupils, although well matched to their needs, did not always excite and engage them well. As a result, the attention of some pupils wandered and the progress they made was limited. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. They are encouraged to contribute well, share their ideas and develop independence and confidence.

An ethos of respect permeates the school. Pupils are polite and helpful and incidents of unacceptable behaviour are rare. Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is fostered well. Opportunities to develop their cultural awareness are developing soundly and are supported by their work in religious education, assemblies and contributions from visitors to extend their awareness of other faiths and cultures, especially within the United Kingdom. Pupils show pride in the important

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responsibilities they carry out in school as members of the school council, buddies to younger pupils, and helping in the school office. They contribute well to village and local events and are keen competitors in local sports matches. Pupils understand clearly about being safe, including through safe use of the internet. Pupils have a good awareness of what is important for a healthy lifestyle. Pupils’ above average literacy and numeracy skills, their positive attitudes to learning and their good personal development ensure they are well placed for the next stage of their education and later life.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons that have good pace and interest to involve pupils. Pupils are closely involved in identifying their own progress. Making use of targets based on their National Curriculum levels, pupils are encouraged to assess how well they are doing and to identify areas in which they feel confident, still need to do more work, or seek help from their teacher. Pupils’ work is marked well, identifying strengths and what they can do to improve their work. This contributes well to pupils’ good progress. Teaching support staff are deployed well in classes and in small groups taken out of class. This ensures all pupils, especially those who find learning difficult and those with English as an additional language, receive good support both in lessons and in small groups.

The curriculum uses a themed approach to learning by linking curriculum subjects and is effective, especially in engaging boys’ interest and enjoyment in literacy.

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

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Pupils’ learning is enriched well by a good range of well attended clubs, visits and visitors and trips which help to bring learning alive. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their trip to Kentwell Hall and a visit by an acting group that made their work on Tudor history much more exciting.

Pupils show great confidence in the staff who care for them, and so they confide their worries and seek help when they need it. The excellent quality of care in school is augmented very prudently by an extensive range of well used and highly effective links with support services and other agencies. All staff know pupils very well and attach a very high priority to their pastoral care and academic guidance. These are at the heart of pupils’ good academic and personal development. Teachers work with each pupil to assess their progress. They help pupils develop the confidence to assess for themselves how well they are doing in a mature way and identify what next steps they need to take to improve their progress. One pupil explained the enjoyment of learning and the strong support pupils receive saying, ‘All the teachers are really helpful and have time for us. I like the topics we do and our teachers really care and help us.’

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The shared leadership of the school by two headteachers is now in its second year, and together with the revised senior leadership team, they are leading the school well. They share their passion to improve the school effectively with staff and careful assessment of the school’s strengths and areas of development has led to the successful integration of a range of important improvements. All areas of the work of the school are closely monitored by senior leaders and members of the governing body. The skills of senior leaders and managers have been carefully directed into supporting management teams. Through membership of a team all teachers have involvement in aspects of school monitoring as well as curriculum development. The governing body has a good committee structure. Its members are well informed and have a good understanding of the school’s strengths and areas that remain to be improved.

The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. There has been an accurate evaluation of the school’s local context and pupils are well involved in their village and local community. Their cultural development is being extended and they have a growing understanding of many aspects of the wider national community. Less well

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developed is pupils’ awareness of the richness and diversity of communities internationally. A wide and extremely valuable range of partnerships established by the school is used with excellent effect to enhance the learning and well-being of pupils. Links with local schools, local authority advisers, and a range of valuable support services underpin both pupils’ good achievement and the excellent care and guidance they receive. This is a two-way process and the school also extends support, for example, to trainee teachers. Equal opportunities are promoted well, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve as well as their peers. Pupils are known and valued as individuals, and the school is free from discrimination. The learning environment is attractive and well resourced. The safeguarding of pupils is good, with clear policies that are efficiently integrated throughout the school. All staff receive regular update training to ensure they are alert to all safeguarding and child protection matters.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Reception year children develop confidence and independence because they are well taught and all staff provide good care for them. They share and play together well, and enjoy exploring and finding out about new things. Activities across all areas of learning are well planned and provide stimulating activities which engage children’s imaginations. For example, a space aliens theme in one classroom centred on a large rocket and children heard the secret recorded voice of a reluctant alien inside. Asked to write a letter to the alien to encourage him to leave the rocket one child said he would tell the alien, ‘He should not be sad because if he comes out we will be very nice to him’. Activities planned in the outdoor area are not as stimulating, but this area is currently being developed.

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Well focused teaching sessions ensure all children make a good start to their learning, especially in those areas which are weaker when they join the Reception year. By the time children enter Year 1 their literacy and number skills and abilities are similar to those found nationally. Staff are well led and managed so they work as an efficient and energetic team. Learning flows well between the indoor and outdoor classrooms and all staff exploit opportunities to motivate children well. Staff monitor children’s development carefully, both informally whilst they are playing and in learning sessions. Good links with the pre-school and village nursery ensure transition arrangements are positive and efficient. Similarly good links between school and home, beginning with home visits, mean parents and carers are kept fully involved in their child’s development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A larger than average proportion of parents and carers replied to the questionnaire and of these a very large majority were pleased with what the school provides. They were pleased with their child’s experience of school and valued the way they were kept safe. Parents and carers were similarly positive about the quality of the school’s leadership and management and their child’s enjoyment of school. A few parents and carers felt that their child did not make enough progress and their suggestions and concerns were not taken into account. This view was not supported by inspection evidence. The inspectors judged progress for all pupils to be good and that the school established a good partnership with parents and carers which included responding to their concerns. One parent told inspectors, ‘I really couldn’t be more pleased. Fulbourn really cares for my children.’

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fulbourn 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	62	34	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	60	35	39	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	39	44	45	51	5	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	46	39	44	5	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	52	41	46	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	44	49	45	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	47	42	47	5	6	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)	38	43	46	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	40	45	43	48	5	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	35	57	64	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	33	51	57	6	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	55	62	31	35	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	50	56	36	40	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



11 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fulbourn Primary School, Cambridge, CB21 5BH

Thank you for being so helpful and polite to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed seeing you at work and play. We particularly liked the lovely displays of your work and the butterfly wall where your achievements are celebrated.

We were impressed to see how much you enjoy your lessons. We were pleased to hear that you find learning fun because teachers make your lessons interesting. You are extremely well cared for by all adults. Your personal development is good and you get on well together, are kind to each other and behave well. You know a lot about being safe and healthy. We found that you make good progress in your time at Fulbourn. You make a good contribution to your community and are learning a lot about the world in which you live. Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body work well together to make your school a happy place in which to learn.

You told us yours is a good school and we agree with you. We have asked the school to do two things to make sure you make better progress than you do now and help make your school even better.

- We have asked your teachers to share all their skills with each other so that teaching in all classes gets better and better.
- We have also asked that you have more opportunities to learn about the richness and wide range of other the cultures and societies around the world.

You can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best at school. It was a great pleasure to visit your school and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball
Lead inspector

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