

Frithville Primary School

West Fen Drainside, Frithville, Boston, PE22 7EX

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds achieve well. They make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from starting points below the levels expected for their age.
- Pupils do particularly well in mathematics, and this is reflected in rising results in the national tests at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good. Staff provide high levels of care and have good relationships with pupils. Teaching assistants provide skilled support for pupils to which they are assigned.
- Pupils say they feel safe and well looked after. They behave well and are considerate towards each other and adults. They are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons.
- Pupils enjoy an exciting range of themed activities to engage their interest and help them learn. They have many opportunities to develop good personal skills and individual talents.
- The federation brings significant benefits to pupils and staff through shared expertise and joint leadership and management.
- The executive headteacher's well-chosen initiatives have galvanised teaching and achievement and set the school on a secure path to further improvement.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school. They have helped to drive improvement through ensuring that the reports they receive inform them fully about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, so they can ask challenging questions.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Where teaching occasionally requires improvement, teachers do not always explain clearly what pupils should learn from the activities planned, and these are not always hard enough for the more-able pupils.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to extend their skills by writing for a range of purposes.
- In some lessons, teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical calculation skills by getting them to solve real-life problems.
- Not all staff have received sufficient training to fully develop in their roles.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 13 lessons or part lessons across all age groups. Most were seen together with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils, and the governor responsible for safeguarding. A discussion was held with a representative from the local authority, and notes from a meeting between the lead inspector for the federated school and the Chair of the Governing Body were taken into account.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including: the school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses; the school development plan; information from checks on pupils' progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books; and safeguarding documentation.
- The inspector listened to pupils read.
- Not enough responses were received to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) for an analysis to be made, but recent parental surveys carried out by the school, and the three questionnaires that were completed by the school's staff, were taken into account.

Inspection team

Ruth McFarlane, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average primary school. It 'federated' with New York Primary School, six miles away, in 2010. A new joint governing body was formed and an executive headteacher appointed, after a period of instability. The school is also in a 'collaboration' of several other primary schools in the area.
- Most year groups have fewer than seven pupils. Pupils are taught in two classes: Class 1 for children in Reception and pupils in Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), and Class 2 for pupils in Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6).
- About a third of the pupils travel from outside the local area to attend the school.
- A much higher proportion of pupils than is typical join or leave partway through their primary school education. Pupils often arrive in Year 5 or Year 6.
- A higher proportion of pupils than average speak English as an additional language. About a quarter of the pupils, an average figure, are from minority ethnic groups, mostly of Eastern European heritage. Most of these pupils arrive speaking little or no English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average. This is additional funding to help certain groups of pupils, and in this school only applies to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action or school action plus is below average. Currently, none of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- There are too few pupils in Year 6 to make a valid comparison against the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement, and make all teaching at least good and more outstanding, by ensuring that:
 - lesson activities are achievable for all groups of pupils but also consistently challenging, especially for the most able pupils
 - learning objectives are not simply a list of tasks, but explain clearly to pupils what is intended to be learned from the tasks
 - tasks in mathematics focus more on solving real-life problems
 - pupils have regular opportunities to write for a range of purposes across different subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by providing suitable training for all staff, particularly those who have leadership roles.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good in reading, writing and mathematics, and occasionally outstanding in mathematics. The very small size of each year group means that it is not helpful to compare standards against national averages, but the work seen in lessons and pupils' books shows that progress has been good and standards have risen in each of the past three years throughout the school.
- An intensive focus on mathematics has had a strong impact on standards. Many Year 6 pupils work at the level normally expected of pupils two years older in mathematics. Although some mathematical tasks are rather mundane, those set for the more-able pupils are often exciting. A typical session for Year 3 pupils involved working together to interpret and chart a series of compass directions. Their complete commitment and cooperation with each other led to rapid progress.
- Most pupils reach or exceed the standards expected for their age in reading and writing by the end of Year 6. Pupils who join the school late generally start with skills below the levels expected. These pupils are often those from minority ethnic groups, whose parents come to the area for work, and at an early stage of speaking English. Individual support enables this group of pupils to make good progress.
- Early reading skills are taught systematically. Throughout the school, pupils say they love reading and enjoy talking about their favourite books. There is a current focus on improving writing, and pupils are responding well. However, they have too few opportunities to practise and develop the skills learnt in literacy by writing in a range of other subjects. Dividing the classes into groups according to ability ensures that the weaker learners are well supported, but in literacy the more-able pupils sometimes coast along with work that is too easy.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are identified quickly. They receive good support, which is managed well across the federated schools to make best use of expertise. They make good progress through regularly reviewed individual education plans shared with their parents. Pupils who travel in from outside the local area also make good progress because they are fully included in all the school has to offer.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide additional teaching and support, which ensures that eligible pupils make the same good progress in English and mathematics as other pupils in the school. There were too few such pupils in 2012 to comment on the gap in performance without identifying individuals.

The quality of teaching is good

- Improvements in teaching since the previous inspection have led directly to pupils' good achievement. Good relationships and high levels of care are conducive to learning, and are strong features of most lessons.
- Teachers ask questions skilfully to check pupils' understanding and make them think harder. This was illustrated in a Class 1 session on capacity, where pupils were asked to think why a larger container of water made a larger puddle.
- Teachers make clear to pupils exactly what they want them to do, but do not always explain

what is to be learned from the activity. Consequently, pupils are not always sure if they have succeeded. In mathematics, planning does not provide enough tasks that relate to real life. As a result pupils are sometimes given sheets of sums with no relation to how the calculations might be used, say, to find out how much it would cost to take a whole class to the theatre.

- Teaching assistants generally support learning well. An assistant-led phonics session in Class 1 for Reception children enabled them to make rapid progress in learning to say and spell words using 'ck' and 'tr'.
- Where teaching is at its best, lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils are engaged at an early stage in independent activities. Teachers plan very carefully for pupils of all abilities, especially in mathematics and English lessons that are taught in ability groups. Teachers help pupils write for different purposes, although the lack of opportunities to write in different subjects restricts the scope for imaginative creative writing.
- Teachers know pupils well and take full account, for instance, of the long journeys some pupils make to reach school, allowing them to settle in during the registration period. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils supported by the pupil premium, and those who speak English as an additional language, as well as those who enter the school late, all have their needs diagnosed early and benefit from carefully reviewed education plans and individual attention. This ensures that they are placed in the group that best fits their learning needs, whatever their age.
- Sometimes the more-able pupils are not given demanding enough tasks, especially in literacy. Overall, however, all groups make good progress and this demonstrates the school's successful commitment to ensuring equal opportunities and overcoming discrimination.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are welcoming, friendly and polite and enjoy taking responsibility. They feel valued and respected and, in turn, respect others and appreciate their talents.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They say that the school is a 'fun place to learn', and know that the teachers will help them if they are upset or are finding things difficult. Most behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, but pupils become restless and there is some minor misbehaviour in the small number of lessons that do not move quickly enough or when work is too easy.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school. They say that there are very few incidents of bullying or racism, and these are always dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and how to stay safe in situations beyond the school, including when using the internet. Parents agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils develop good social skills and understand the need for rules. They enjoy coming to school. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and most pupils attend very regularly and promptly, including those who travel long distances to come to the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher provides strong leadership and shares his vision clearly with governors and staff. As a consequence, all aspects of the school have improved since the previous inspection.
- Partnerships are very strong. The federation brings many benefits for staff and pupils alike. Staff at Frithville have gained expertise from shared managers, such as those responsible for coordinating provision for special educational needs. However, the school is aware that where roles are not shared, some staff at Frithville, while fully committed to pupils' learning, have received too little training to fully develop their skills and make a full contribution. This includes staff who lead the school when the executive headteacher is at the federated school.
- Pupils gain much from joint activities, which enable larger teams to be fielded for sport, for instance. The school also works beneficially with a collaboration of several other schools in the local area, bringing further social and cultural benefits for pupils.
- Leaders and staff are accurate in their shared judgements about the school. They know what still needs to be done. Despite limited training for some aspects of their roles, all staff with leadership responsibilities regularly watch lessons and look at pupils' work to check on the quality of teaching. The executive headteacher gives teachers very clear guidance to help them improve their skills.
- Subjects are taught through exciting 'themes' and learning is extended through a good range of visits and other memorable experiences. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to reflect deeply on their own lives and those of others, including people of other faiths and cultures. This promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well.
- The school's parental surveys suggest that they are highly supportive. The school is keen to involve them as part of the school and wider community.
- The local authority is providing effective support for the school, which is helping to drive and sustain improvements.
- The governance of the school:
 - Governors maintain an insightful overview of the school. They have received a wide range of training to be able to check that the executive headteacher is securing rapid improvement. They understand performance data and how the school compares with other schools nationally. They are in school regularly, holding the executive headteacher to account. They have been highly effective in enabling the sharing of expertise among staff across the two schools in the federation to the benefit of staff and pupils. They have ensured that the headteacher's reports tell them precisely what they need to know. Records of their meetings show that they ask probing and relevant questions to challenge the school, for example in relation to pupils' achievement. The governing body ensures that the pupil premium is spent wisely to help overcome barriers to learning. They ensure that the performance management of staff is carried out appropriately, and pay rises and promotion are linked to pupils' progress. They also ensure that national requirements are met, including those relating to safeguarding.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	120446
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	405926

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	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Quinnell
Headteacher	Paul Bargh (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2011
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