

Farcet CofE (C) Primary School

St Mary's Street, Farcet, Peterborough, PE7 3AR

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Not enough pupils make good progress in writing in Key Stage 1, mathematics in Key Stage 2 and in reading in both key stages.
- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should because teaching is not consistently good and varies from class to class.
- Most teachers do not make it clear what they expect pupils working at different levels to achieve by the end of the lesson.
- Some teaching assistants are not deployed effectively during the lesson.
- Key stage leaders and the English and mathematics co-ordinators have only recently assumed their responsibilities and have yet to make a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.

The school has the following strengths

- Strong leadership by the headteacher has resulted in greater emphasis being placed on raising expectations and accelerating pupils' progress.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and good progress in writing in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have a good understanding of personal safety.
- There is some good teaching on which the school can build.
- Teachers set pupils' clear target for improvement and are marking pupils' work well.
- The governing body checks on the work of the school and is working effectively with the headteacher to improve outcomes for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, of which six were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of shorter visits to lessons and attended an assembly. He heard some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan.
- The inspector took account of the 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). He spoke with some parents and carers during the inspection.

Inspection team

David Wynford-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The remaining pupils come from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average. None are currently at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion identified for additional support through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is broadly average. This is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those who are looked after by the local authority and other eligible groups.
- In 2012, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher was appointed for the start of the spring term 2012.
- In September 2013, the deputy headteacher joined the staff and assumed the responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Other existing members of staff took on the responsibilities of co-ordinating literacy, numeracy and Key Stage 2.
- Provision and outcomes for religious education is subject to a separate inspection undertaken by the diocese.
- The school shares the site with a local authority run pre-school. This did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good by:
 - ensuring that all teachers plan work that is tailored to the needs of pupils working at different levels and make it clear what they should achieve by the end of the lesson
 - developing teachers' skills in checking on pupils' progress during the lesson and adapting the lesson to respond to their changing needs
 - making effective use of teaching assistants throughout each lesson.
- Ensure that pupils make faster progress and reach higher standards in writing in Key Stage 1, mathematics in Key Stage 2 and in reading in both key stages by:
 - consolidating the recent improvements in the teaching of phonics in Key Stage 1 and ensuring that all pupils in Key Stage 2 understand and use phonics, when necessary, to help them in their reading
 - promoting basic writing skills in Key Stage 1 and ensuring that the pupils develop a broader vocabulary
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to undertake investigative work and solve mathematical problems in Key Stage 2.
- Develop the skills of the newly appointed key stage leaders and the English and maths co-ordinators in analysing and interpreting performance data, and in checking and helping their colleagues to improve the consistency in the quality of their teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because not all pupils make rapid enough progress in writing in Key Stage 1, mathematics in Key Stage 2 and in reading in both Key Stages.
- Most children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge below to those expected for their age. They make good progress and by the end of the year acquire the expected skills, knowledge and understanding of a typical five-year-old child. Good use is made of the classroom and outdoor areas to stimulate their learning. They settle quickly and grow in confidence in the safe and secure environment. Outcomes have risen steadily over the last few years.
- School records show that pupils' progress in reading is variable in Key Stage 1 and 2. However, it is starting to accelerate and be more consistent. Pupils' skills in reading are hampered by their lack of knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make). As a result, some have difficulty in tackling unfamiliar words.
- Current data suggest improvements. The proportion reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics test has increased markedly and the Year 2 reading assessments also indicate higher, but still below average standards. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. School data show that pupils in Year 6 made good progress by catching up lost ground from earlier in their school careers.
- Standards in writing are also beginning to rise but pupils' progress is hindered by their limited vocabulary and too few opportunities to write independently in order to master the basic skills of writing. The improved outcomes in 2013 and current standards in Key Stage 1 suggest that pupils in Year 2 are better placed to reach the expected levels by the end of the year. It would appear that the three-year downward trend to exceptionally low outcomes in 2011 and 2012 has been successfully reversed.
- In Key Stage 2 pupils are making good progress in developing their writing skills. By the end of Year 6 standards are average. The school's data show that outcomes in 2013 are higher than those in 2012. This reflects good progress from the end of Year 2. Pupils in Year 6 use adjectives, metaphors and similes to bring their writing to life and to stimulate interest.
- Outcomes in mathematics at the end of Year 6 are consistently lower than those in English. The large majority of pupils do not make more than the expected rate of progress. This is partly because they do not have sufficient opportunity to undertake problem-solving and investigative work in mathematics. In contrast, in Key Stage 1, outcomes in mathematics are consistently higher than those in reading and writing. Pupils are developing a secure understanding of number and a reasonable understanding of mathematical terminology.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make broadly similar progress to their classmates. In 2012, the standards reached by pupils known to be entitled to the pupil premium in Year 6 was about a year behind their peers in reading and writing and about six months in mathematics. School data for 2013 show that pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate and the gap in attainment is starting to close. The school is monitoring their performance closely to ensure the impact of the different initiatives, such as additional staffing, support for mathematics and for individual pupils, funded by the additional pupil premium money are effective.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make broadly similar progress to their peers nationally. The school's recent

focus on checking their progress and additional support being provided is helping to ensure that their progress quickens.

- Pupils enjoy taking part in sporting activities and have a good understanding of how sport contributes to a healthy life-style. The primary school sports funding has been allocated appropriately, including supporting the development of sporting links with other schools and swimming opportunities for pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is reflected in their achievement.
- Not all teachers use what they know about how well each pupil is doing to set work that is at the right level of challenge or to adapt lessons to meet the changing needs. As a result, some pupils find their work too easy while others find it too difficult.
- Teachers routinely provide pupils with guidance to undertake tasks but do not always make it clear to what they expect from pupils working at different levels to achieve by the end of the lesson.
- At times, particularly at the start and end of lessons, teaching assistants are not deployed effectively to help pupils learn.
- Teachers have attended courses and regularly talk with the headteacher about their teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. They have responded positively to the suggestions to improve outcomes for pupils. There is good teaching on which the school can build.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers have high expectations and are clear what they expect pupils of different abilities to achieve. Questioning is used well to ensure the pupils are clear about what they are expected to do and to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Teachers check during the lesson how well pupils are doing and, if necessary, quickly adapt their planning to suit the pupils' needs. This helps take the pupils' learning forward at a good pace.
- Teachers use a good range of strategies to manage and promote pupils' good behaviour. Relationships are good. Teachers and pupils treat each other with respect. This contributes much to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers try to ensure that all pupils, including potentially vulnerable pupils, pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are fully included and have equal access to the same learning opportunities as other pupils.
- There are many examples of good marking of pupils' work. Pupils' good work is celebrated and they are usually offered clear guidance about how to improve their work and reach their targets in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The approach to the teaching of phonics has been reviewed and is proving effective in making certain that the pupils are now making better progress and acquiring basic skills. This has still to be consolidated in Key Stage 2.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well. Increasingly pupils are demonstrating a more positive attitude to learning and are enjoying school. Their attendance has improved steadily and is now average for primary schools. This is helping them to make better progress.
- Pupils are polite and are well mannered as they move around the school and at break times. They treat their teachers with respect. Most generally respond quickly to instructions. Lessons are rarely interrupted by incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils say that all they all get on well together. There have been no bullying incidents, such as name-calling, fighting, racial, religious or cyber-bullying. They are confident that if an incident occurred, it would be dealt with quickly and fairly.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and have a good understanding of potential dangers, for example when using computers to access the internet, around the school or when approached by strangers.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- As part of the programme to ensure continuity of leadership through staff development, established members of staff have recently taken on additional responsibilities as the English, mathematics and Key Stage 2 co-ordinators. They know what has to be done to secure further improvement but have yet to work closely with their colleagues to help them analyse assessment information, to consistently teach well and to ensure that all pupils make good progress. The deputy headteacher has settled in well and is beginning to support the headteacher in taking the school forward and in co-ordinating the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and is working effectively with the governing body to bring about improvements. Assessment data are now being recorded and analysed systematically, and teachers are being asked to explain if pupils do not make at least the expected progress. Lessons are regularly observed and teachers are provided with clear feedback which identifies the strengths and areas for development. Where appropriate, additional support has been provided so that there is no inadequate teaching. This information is used by the governing body when reviewing staff salaries.
- In all classes, there is a focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and, where possible, brought together through a whole-school theme. The themes bring about a sense of unity and provide opportunities for pupils to share their learning across the year groups. Pupils are responsive to this approach. For example, during book week nearly all pupils made a book character's hat, wore it for the school assembly and raised funds for Friends of Farcet School.
- The wide range of activities promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are given many opportunities to enrich their education, for example by undertaking various responsibilities such as being members of the school council, taking part in educational visits and cultivating small raised gardens.
- Very few parents and carers entered their opinions of the school on Parent View. The vast majority are responded positively to the questions. The parents and carers the inspectors spoke to were complementary about the school and recent improvements. The Friends of Farcet School

provide much support and raise considerable sums of money to enhance opportunities for pupils.

- The local authority has provided reasonable support. Officers have helped the governing body set the headteacher's performance targets and supported the headteacher in checking on the quality of teaching and in analysing data.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors support the promotion of good relationships within the school and the local community. Governors monitor the progress of the actions identified in the school development plan which are based on an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have a secure understanding of how targets are set for teachers to improve, and the process for rewarding good teaching. Minutes of the governing body meetings show searching questions about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are being asked. The governing body monitors the school's budget appropriately and makes sure that the pupil premium funding is spent as it was intended. There are suitable processes in place to monitor the expenditure of the primary school sports funding. Governors are aware of the importance of on-going training and have identified two training sessions for all members of the governing body this term. The governing body ensures that pupils are kept safe and that the school meets the latest requirements for 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	110811
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	429514

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	131
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Atwere
Headteacher	Nathanael Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2009
Telephone number	01733 240337
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