

Folksworth CofE Primary School

Apreece Road, Folksworth, Peterborough, PE7 3TY

Inspection dates 17–18 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although the results from teachers' assessments at the end of Year 6 were better in 2013, many pupils still lag behind the standards they should be reaching.
- Too few pupils make good progress in mathematics and writing.
- Despite improvements this year, teaching has not been good enough since the last inspection, and this has restricted the progress pupils have made over this period.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to use their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning in English and mathematics.
- Teachers do not make sure that pupils act on the advice they are given through marking.

The school has the following strengths

- Through much-improved systems to check on pupils' progress, good leadership and management are leading to improvements in teaching and learning.
- Pupils' achievement has increased as teaching has improved, and pupils are rapidly making up much of the ground that was lost in the past.
- Achievement in reading is good and standards in the school are above average.
- Children make a good start to their education, and achieve well in the Reception class.
- Pupils enjoy school, are keen to learn, and they behave well in class and around the school.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school and have positive relationships with each other and with staff.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, three of these as joint observations with the headteacher. Pupils were also observed around the building, in assembly and at break-times.
- A variety of documentation was examined, including data about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's self-evaluation, safeguarding documentation and paperwork about how the school manages teachers' performance.
- The views of the 52 parents who replied to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered, as were the views of 14 members of staff who returned questionnaires.
- The inspector spoke formally to groups of pupils from Years 3, 5 and 6, and informally to others. Several pupils in Years 1 and 6 were heard to read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other staff, with several members of the governing body and, by telephone, with a representative of the local authority.
- Samples of work in pupils' books were examined.

Inspection team

Steven Hill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. A very small minority come from a variety of other ethnic heritages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is average. The proportion of such pupils who are supported at school action plus, or who have statements of special educational needs, is well-below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding that is provided for the education of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are in the care of the local authority.
- The school meets the government's floor targets, which are minimum expectations set for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- There have been major changes to staffing, particularly over the last four terms, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher in September 2012. Few of the current teaching staff were in post at the time of the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consolidate the recent improvements in teaching, and make more teaching outstanding so that achievement improves, by:
 - making sure that the work set for pupils in lessons is always at the right level of difficulty for them, and that it is not too easy or too hard
 - ensuring that a good pace of learning is maintained throughout lessons
 - always checking up on the progress of different groups in the classroom, so that any who struggle are quickly given extra help
 - improving the impact of marking of pupils' written work by ensuring that teachers consistently ensure that pupils act on the advice they are given and correct errors.
- Plan more regular opportunities for pupils to use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to enhance their learning in English and mathematics lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils have not made consistently good progress in the last two years, so that, for too many, their attainment is not as high as it should be in the light of their starting points. Progress in mathematics and writing has been below average.
- Until recently, progress varied too much between different classes and subjects. Although progress has accelerated in response to better teaching, there has not been enough time for pupils to make up all the ground they lost in previous years.
- Although pupils have secure skills in information and communication technology (ICT), they do not make enough use of these to enhance their progress in English and mathematics lessons.
- Children start in the Reception class with skills and understanding that are better than those typically found at this age. Because provision in this class has been consistently strong since the previous inspection, children make good progress and the standards they reach by the time they go into Year 1 are above average.
- Progress across the school improved over the course of last year, particularly in reading, which was a major focus of attention by staff. Results in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in the subject were good in 2013, and rose considerably from the previous year.
- Progress has been particularly rapid this term, as the impact of the better teaching and improved assessment systems have their full effect. In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils' progress has been about double that typically expected in each year group. Boys and girls are now making similarly rapid gains in their learning, and making significant inroads into the shortfall in standards in mathematics and writing that had been generated in previous years.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for support from pupil premium funding are making the same good current progress as their classmates and, like them, catching up on previous gaps in their learning. Last year, there were too few such pupils in each age group to make statistically valid comparisons between their standards and those attained by others at the end of Year 6.
- The school's much improved assessment systems have been used very effectively to meet the individual needs of different pupils, both within ordinary lessons and when they have extra help on a one-to-one or group basis out of the class. This is ensuring that disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the more able are all now making good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has not been consistently good since the last inspection, and has varied too much between subjects and year-groups. During the first half of last year, almost a half of lessons observed by senior staff and the local authority required improvement and this has restricted the progress pupils have been able to make.
- Very little teaching is outstanding. All teaching seen during the inspection was good but only one lesson was judged to be outstanding. The school's own observations for the last two terms confirm that while almost all teaching has been good, it has seldom been outstanding.

- Records show that too many lessons in the past had too pedestrian a pace, and were not sufficiently adapted to cater for pupils' different abilities. Both these shortcomings have been eliminated as major issues, but are still sometimes weaknesses for parts of lessons.
- Although pupils' work is marked regularly and accurately, and pupils are told clearly what they have done well, and what has gone wrong, teachers do not check that they respond to the advice they are given and apply it in the subsequent lessons. Very seldom are they given extra examples to practise or corrections to do when they have struggled, or given a more challenging task when they are successful.
- Teachers now routinely use their improved knowledge of pupils' attainment to plan tasks that are challenging but manageable. This usually results in good progress for different groups, although, occasionally, some pupils find work too hard and their progress slows until adults identify their problems and address them.
- In many lessons, an emerging major strength is now the way that adults monitor pupils' ongoing progress, intervening regularly to help them if they are struggling, and challenging them all to think through and explain their ideas, and to improve their work. This is a particular strength in the Reception class, where staff skilfully intervene in children's play, and build on their individual interests to extend their learning. Occasionally, some pupils do not get this support just when it is needed, so their progress can slow until adults identify and resolve their problems.
- In most lessons, teachers use the school's wide-ranging curriculum to provide pupils with interesting work and practical experiences that engage their interest and imagination and ensure they are keen to listen and do their best at all times. This was confirmed by pupils, who said that teachers make lessons fun and that work is never boring.
- Pupils are increasingly given good opportunities to discuss their work together and to work in pairs. This ensures high levels of involvement, enables them to clarify their thinking, and develops their speaking and listening skills very effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school in both its academic and social aspects. Attendance is improving and is above average.
- Pupils enjoy learning, concentrate well in lessons and listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They work very well together, collaborating and sharing ideas enthusiastically, and reaching agreement in a mature fashion. When asked to work independently, they do so conscientiously. Pupils tackle tasks enthusiastically, persist in the face of difficulties and take a pride in what they accomplish.
- Behaviour is good, both in class and around the school. Pupils and their parents support this view, and pupils are very confident that the adults will help them resolve any squabbles between friends, although older pupils said they were often able to sort out arguments amicably themselves.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as physical or cyber-bullying, and understand the difference between this and other unacceptable behaviour. They say incidents of bullying are rare and express confidence that adults would make sure any issues are dealt with well, involving the parents of children concerned. They expressed an abhorrence of racism, saying that everyone was welcomed into this school as friends.

- Pupils feel safe in school and cite the way that the teachers and other adults look after them as the prime cause of this. Older pupils also said that they themselves help make the school a safe environment by the way they all get along well together and help look after each other.
- Pupils respond thoughtfully to questions in lessons, showing respect for other's views and a confidence in expressing their own thoughts. They value the friendships they make and greatly enjoy the enhancements to the curriculum, such as Christmas celebrations, swimming lessons and residential visits.
- Behaviour is managed well. A very small minority of pupils who initially find it difficult to conform are firmly but sensitively helped to improve their behaviour, with subsequent improvements in their readiness to learn and their achievement.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership from the headteacher and the new deputy headteacher over the last year, backed by the support of governors, has led to major improvements in teaching and pupils' consequent achievement. Partly as a result of significant changes in staffing and partly because of the efforts made by school leaders, the quality of teaching has been steadily improved and all teaching observed by inspectors was at least good. Better achievement in reading last year has been followed by a sharp rise in progress in other subjects this term, reflecting the full impact of the improvements made.
- The key to much of the success has been a tight focus on pupils' individual attainment and progress, based on much improved systems for assessment and training for staff to help them make assessments more accurately. This means that any pupils who start to fall behind can quickly be given help to catch up, and those pupils who are doing well can be challenged to build on their success.
- In parallel with the emphasis on tracking progress, leaders have concentrated on helping teachers to improve their practice. Regular and frequent observations of lessons have been complemented by precise checking of the quality of pupils' work in their books, and regular scrutiny of planning. Results of this monitoring have been used well to give teachers clear advice about how to improve their practice, and to provide extra training on specific elements when needed.
- The management of teachers' performance been enhanced by the clear setting of individual targets for each member of staff to reflect their own practice, their particular leadership responsibilities, and the progress made by pupils. Suitable links between success against these criteria and progression in pay are in place.
- The pupil premium funding has been spent judiciously on a mixture of academic support for individuals, in groups or on a one-to-one basis, and in enabling eligible pupils to take a full part in all aspect of school life, such as instrumental tuition, or participation in residential visits. The impact can be seen in the fact that eligible pupils' progress is as good as their classmates and is increasing at the same rate.
- Much of the new funding for primary school sports and physical education has been spent on using outside expertise to give pupils wider experiences, and also to provide training for teachers to carry on this extended provision in future. Other money has been spent on increasing pupils' participation in competitive sports. An audit is planned next year to analyse the impact of these

initiatives, with some money having been kept back to make any refinements which are needed.

- All teachers now play a full part in leading and managing the school. They have taken on a variety of responsibilities, in leading subjects or particular age groups, for example, and provide good support for colleagues as they develop improved ways of monitoring pupils' success across the curriculum.
- The introduction since the last inspection of an internationally based curriculum has been effective in making lessons more lively and imaginative, boosting pupils' engagement and interest and supporting improved progress. It has also addressed the lack of understanding of different cultures which was an issue at the previous inspection. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now good. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in English and mathematics lessons.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school in making improvements over the last year, both directly through extra support and training, by supporting links between local schools to share expertise and to validate teachers' assessment judgements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has worked successfully to improve its effectiveness since the previous inspection. Governors now have a clearer understanding of how well pupils are progressing, based on their much better understanding of data. They also use information about the performance of teachers to understand strengths and weaknesses. They are able to use their better knowledge to provide the right balance of challenge and support to staff. They monitor spending and check its effectiveness well, including the use of pupil premium funding. The strategic decision to employ a deputy headteacher has enabled the leadership and management of the school to have a much firmer footing, rather than overloading the headteacher. Governors have worked successfully with staff to ensure that safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

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	110812
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	425210

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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Kirk
Headteacher	Caroline Adams
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2011
Telephone number	01733 240 562
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