

Inspection of a good school: Folksworth Church of England Primary School

Apreece Road, Folksworth, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE7 3TY

Inspection dates:

10 December 2019

Outcome

Folksworth Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

The headteacher has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work ethic. However, she acknowledges that not enough pupils have received the best quality of teaching. Pupils have not been achieving as well as they should by the end of key stage 2, especially in writing. Leaders, governors and pupils are very enthusiastic about the school's new curriculum, which started at the beginning of this academic year.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend well. They want to learn. Pupils listen carefully to all adults during lessons and most behave well around the school. They play well together and enjoy their breaktimes.

Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They state, 'Everyone is helpful – you don't have to worry about being alone. Nobody is ever left out.' They say that they would talk to a friend or an adult if they are worried or upset. Pupils have confidence that they would be listened to. When new pupils join the school, they settle quickly.

Pupils enjoy trips that are linked to the books they are reading. Pupils speak excitedly about recent visits to places such as the Roald Dahl Museum and the Space Centre. Most parents and carers value the work of the school. Parents appreciate the extra-curricular activities, including the before- and after-school clubs.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant staff changes. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2018. By this time, pupils were not achieving well enough by the end of key stage 2.

The teaching of writing is not of a consistently good quality. The progress pupils make across key stage 2 has been low over the past three years. Leaders' expectations for the

quality of teaching are not yet delivered consistently well. When teachers carefully follow the new approaches for teaching writing, pupils learn well and make rapid gains. When this is not the case, it is not clear how pupils' prior writing knowledge and skills are built on. Adults are not using information about pupils' achievement as well as they could do to plan and adapt their teaching. Work is not matched well enough to all pupils' different needs and abilities. Leaders are now putting in place a wide range of additional training and support for adults to improve the quality of the teaching of writing.

Since taking up her post, the headteacher has strengthened many aspects of the school. She ensures that leaders check how well pupils are achieving. This information is shared with governors, who hold leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff are held accountable for their roles and responsibilities. Expectations of behaviour and progress are higher for all pupils. Leaders are taking action to improve provision for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' work is of an improving quality.

Governors are supportive of the improvements that leaders are making. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to continue to improve. Throughout the many changes in staffing, leaders always consider adults' workload. Ofsted's online survey used during the inspection indicates that teaching staff and additional adults feel valued. They are proud to work at the school.

The school's renewed focus on reading is starting to reap rewards. Staff are now developing pupils' love of reading. There is a new approach to teaching reading in early years and key stage 1. Leaders have provided high-quality training for all staff so that they teach younger pupils to read effectively. Pupils are using their phonic knowledge to support both reading and spelling. Key stage 2 pupils show their understanding of texts by completing questions about the books they have read. Pupils want to achieve well and read more books to ensure this is the case.

Leaders and teachers have recently introduced a new curriculum. Pupils are given interesting experiences to help them enjoy and remember more of their learning. Pupils are positive about these new learning experiences. However, in science, pupils are not developing their knowledge and skills in the most appropriate and logical order.

Senior leaders are improving the quality of learning in early years, both inside and outside the classroom. Children are taught phonics effectively. Children use their knowledge of sounds to read words or sentences independently. They also show their understanding of reading by drawing relevant pictures. Children have many opportunities to write. They are encouraged to form their letters correctly. Children play and share equipment well together. For example, in the home corner, children carefully and skilfully decorated the Christmas tree, coloured in snowflakes and wrapped up presents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are appropriately trained to spot concerns that may be of a safeguarding nature.

They use the school's system for recording concerns well. Staff are confident that leaders effectively follow up concerns for any pupil. Leaders carry out the necessary checks on newly appointed staff to ensure they can work with pupils. Records are well kept and checked by governors effectively. Pupils learn how to keep safe when using online equipment. As digital leaders, pupils support their friends to be safe online. Pupils state that the security fencing that has been recently installed makes them feel safer.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of writing is better planned, but the implementation of these plans is inconsistent. Pupils are not achieving as well as they should. Leaders are supporting teachers where the teaching of writing is weak. Leaders now need to ensure that all teachers follow the new writing strategies consistently, so that teaching builds on pupils' prior writing skills. They also need to ensure that teachers use assessment information more effectively so that pupils are given work that is matched to their abilities and that enables them to learn more and make good progress.
- Leaders have reorganised the curriculum. It is in the early stages of implementation. They need to ensure that in science and some other subjects, the learning of knowledge and skills is sequenced coherently and logically so that pupils learn more and achieve well.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	110812
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10110310
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Clare Kirk
Headteacher	Michelle Norbury
Website	www.folksworthprimaryschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	15–16 March 2016

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than most primary schools nationally. It has four classes, three of which are mixed-age classes.
- The school has a Church of England designation. The last section 48 inspection of religious education was on 24 November 2016. It was judged to be good.
- Most pupils are White British.
- There have been many changes in leaders and teachers since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in September 2018.

Information about this inspection

- As part of this inspection, we held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the leader of special educational needs and subject leaders. We also met with groups of teachers and pupils. I met a group of governors and met with a representative from the local authority.
- We looked closely at reading, writing and science. We spoke with subject leaders, visited lessons, evaluated work in pupils' books and met with teachers and pupils to determine the quality of education.

- We scrutinised a wide range of documents, including curriculum planning and development, records of behaviour and exclusions, the school's evaluation of its own performance, its development plan and documents provided by the local authority.
- We took account of the seven responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- We took account of the 35 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 22 free-texts sent by parents.
- We spoke to pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning. We also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktime and lunchtime. There were 17 responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- We reviewed the school's safeguarding policy, procedures and records, including recruitment checks of adults working at the school. We spoke with pupils and staff. I met with the designated safeguarding leader.

Inspection team

Julie Harrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Wendy Varney

Her Majesty's Inspector

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