

# Inspection of a good school: Fen Ditton Primary School

Horningsea Road, Fen Ditton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB5 8SZ

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Inspection dates:

26 and 27 April 2022

## Outcome

Fen Ditton Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their learning at Fen Ditton Primary School. They take great delight in learning new things and sharing their ideas. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read and the different authors that interest them. They particularly like the wide range of opportunities to learn musical instruments. Younger pupils enjoy learning outdoors during forest school sessions.

Pupils know the school rules and follow them. At playtime, everyone enjoys the array of equipment and sports organised by leaders and older pupils. Older pupils are eager to help the younger pupils and are proud to be 'key stage 2 angels' at breaktime and lunchtime.

Pupils at this school feel safe and well cared for. Pupils are confident that if they have any worries, they can tell their teachers who will help them. Pupils appreciate the different mindfulness and breathing exercises that they are taught, to help them feel calm. Bullying is rare and pupils know that adults will act to stop it straight away if it does happen.

Pupils enjoy the variety of trips, visits and clubs that the school has previously had on offer. Parents and pupils would welcome the return of more of these opportunities to the school's curriculum.

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

Leaders have developed a broad curriculum with detailed curriculum plans that lay out what they want children to learn. Leaders, alongside the multi-academy trust, continue to provide good-quality training and support for staff to deliver the different subjects within the curriculum. Over time, pupils learn and deepen their understanding of most subjects.

The strengths in the school's curriculum start in the early years. Adults form positive relationships quickly with children and know them well. Adults use a varied range of

activities, including play, to ensure that children develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in key stage 1.

Reading is well taught across the school. Leaders have carefully introduced a new programme of phonics teaching. Staff's training ensures that teachers are delivering this programme consistently and this supports the development of pupils' early reading skills. Resources and books are well matched to the sounds that pupils are learning. Any pupils who need extra support receive it from well-trained adults. Older pupils also experience a well-thought-out reading curriculum, including stories from a range of authors, classic texts and regular reading lessons.

In most subjects, leaders have planned precisely the knowledge to be taught, sometimes in small steps to support pupils to apply their learning in more complex ways over time. In mathematics, for example, teachers introduce new ideas and vocabulary carefully and provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise their learning. Teachers confidently use an array of different strategies to check pupils' understanding and support those few pupils who need extra help. Activities are interesting and purposeful. In a few subjects, this work to develop and deliver the curriculum with the same level of precision is in its earlier stages.

Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities thrive at the school. Teachers use a range of strategies to help pupils to access the curriculum effectively. Pupils with the most complex needs are given bespoke support with individualised plans. Leaders have ensured that pupils receive the right help, at the right time, closely matched to their needs.

Pupils behave well. They are familiar with the consistent expectations of teachers and the school routines for behaviour. In lessons, pupils are attentive and keen. Pupils are supported effectively to help manage their emotions and regulate their behaviour. Pupils say that staff implement the behaviour systems fairly and consistently.

Leaders plan and deliver a wide range of opportunities to broaden the experiences of pupils. This includes instrumental tuition, inter-school sports, trips, visits and visitors. They also arrange for pupils to attend a careers fair to encourage aspiration and see where their learning could lead. Pupils understand well how these experiences have developed their confidence and ability to work in teams.

Most parents are positive about the school, many commenting on the high-quality support their children received during national lockdowns.

Leaders and governors work collegiately to provide effective running of the school. They are mindful of staff's well-being. Almost all staff appreciate the care and support they receive from leaders and governors. However, although leaders and governors have an array of information available to them, they do not always use it precisely to identify and challenge one another about where and when they could be more effective or timely in some of their work.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that the effectiveness of the wider curriculum and the development of leadership and governance may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Pupils learn how to stay safe, including online. They feel safe in school. They are confident that their teachers will help them with any concerns. Staff are vigilant and record their concerns in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

School leaders know pupils and their families well. They are tenacious in seeking out the support needed to ensure that everyone is helped to stay safe. School leaders engage the support of external professionals when needed and work with them proactively.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few subjects, curriculum planning and delivery are in the earlier stages of development. Where this exists, plans do not detail exactly what pupils need to learn. Staff's training and leaders' monitoring are in earlier stages of development. Leaders should ensure that the planning and delivery of these subjects are as well thought out as most other subject areas.
- Leaders have many systems to store information. This makes it hard for them to easily quality assure the work that the school is doing and to identify specific areas where they could be more effective. Leaders and governors need to ensure that systems and processes allow them to quickly identify and act on issues and trends over time.

## **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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145423
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227578
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	162
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Claire Lawton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Askew
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.fenditton.cambs.sch.uk">www.fenditton.cambs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 December 2016

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The school uses two alternative provisions which are approved by the local authority.
- The school joined Anglian Learning in March 2018.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and teachers, including subject leaders. Information was also gathered from providers of alternative provision used by the school.
- The inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors. A meeting was also held with the director of primary education from the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in three subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum

plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and, where relevant, looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans and safeguarding and behaviour records.
- The inspector considered 32 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text comments. She also considered 22 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. The inspector also observed the behaviour of pupils across the school site.

### **Inspection team**

Lynne Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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