



Office for Standards
in Education

Fosse Bank New School

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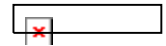
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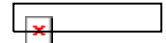
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Introduction and summary

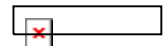


Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

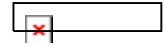
Information about the school



Fosse Bank School, founded in 1892 is a small independent co-educational primary school for pupils aged from 3 to 11 years. The school is a charitable, non-profit making trust run under the supervision of a Board of Governors. Children enter the Pre-Reception class in the term in which they become four. Currently, there are six classes and 75 pupils on roll.

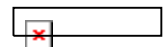
The school aims to "*ensure that every child is happy and achieves their potential*", and gives a high priority to the development of the pupils' self-esteem, an enthusiasm for learning and the consideration of others. On leaving the school the pupils transfer to a local independent, grammar, or state secondary school. All of the pupils in the current Year 6 class who took the 'eleven' plus examination passed.

Summary of main findings



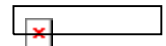
The school which is situated in a most attractive setting has many strengths. There are good relationships between the pupils, the parents and the teachers. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. The quality of the teaching is often good or very good. Pupils make good progress, and end of key stage test results are well above the national average. Very good attention is given to the pupils' welfare, health and safety as well as to their personal and social development. They are very well behaved and develop into articulate and confident young people.

What the school does well



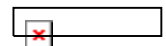
- it offers a broad curriculum in which there is a good balance between literacy, numeracy, the expressive and creative arts and other subjects;
- it provides an excellent programme of work in order to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, this also contributes to high standards of pupil behaviour;
- it gives a high priority to the welfare, health and safety of the pupils;
- it fosters very good relationships with parents and other adults involved with the school; and
- it offers a well-managed, ordered and attractive learning environment with good quality displays which supports pupils' learning and celebrates their achievement.

What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations



- include in the admission register all the necessary information detailed in section 3 of this report;
- provide further details of its arrangements on admissions in its information to parents; and
- ensure that if there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one of the members of this panel is independent of the management and running of the school.

Next Steps

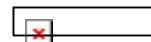


- improve consistency of teachers' marking and make better use of the learning targets which are set for individual pupils.

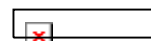
Compliance with the regulations for registration



1. The quality of education provided by the school



The quality of the curriculum



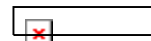
The school provides a suitably broad curriculum, which is based on the guidance for the Foundation Stage Curriculum, the National Curriculum (NC) and the frameworks for the national strategies in literacy and numeracy. All subjects of the NC are taught with the addition of religious education (RE), and French, which is taught in Years 1 -6. Careful attention has been given to timetabling to ensure that pupils receive a balanced curriculum.

The quality of the school's medium and long-term planning is very good and this helps to ensure progression and continuity in pupils' learning. Schemes of work and planning for units of work are very detailed. Links between different areas of learning or subjects have been established to help support the development of pupils' skills of speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. This is particularly effective in the planning and provision of personal, social and health education (PSHE). For example, health education topics are addressed in aspects of the science curriculum.

A variety of educational visits and a comprehensive range of extra curricular activities enrich the curriculum. This includes judo, jazz dance, cooking and gardening. The physical education (PE) curriculum for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 is extended by visits to activity centres where they receive instruction in, for example, abseiling, climbing and orienteering.

There is one pupil in the school with a statement of special educational needs. An individual educational plan has been drawn up to meet the pupil's needs, and procedures are in place to monitor progress.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The quality of the teaching is often good or very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Teachers plan carefully, identify clear learning objectives and, where necessary, differentiate the work. They demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught. The lessons are well structured with good starting points, main activities and plenaries. For example, in a very good Year 5 art lesson on printmaking, illustrations and materials, some of which were obtained from the internet, were used as a stimulus for work on William Morris.

Teachers encourage the pupils to make links between aspects of their learning. For example, in a PE lesson younger pupils practised counting skills whilst learning to throw and catch.

The teaching enables the pupils to make good progress. Teachers know the pupils well and enjoy good relationships with them. Pupils are responsive, behave well and contribute to lessons with their own ideas and suggestions. In a Year 6 lesson in literacy, pupils made valuable contributions to the consideration of how, in the writing of certain stories, the choice of appropriate language is

vital in creating tension and atmosphere. The teaching provides opportunities for the pupils to work independently, in pairs or in groups. The standard of collaborative work between pupils is often good.

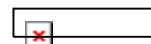
Teachers make good use of resources and their management of the classroom environment adds significantly to the quality of the teaching. However, some lessons could be improved by a more effective use of time, particularly when moving from one stage of the lesson to another.

Overall, there are satisfactory arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress. These begin with a detailed and thorough assessment of pupils' attainment in the six areas of learning of the early years curriculum. Further information is obtained from end of key stage NC tests. The school's comprehensive assessment policy also refers to the importance of observation by teachers and discussion with pupils to help establish a clear picture of their progress. Particularly good features of the school's policy and procedures include detailed advice to teachers on the marking of the pupils' work, and the identification of individual targets for pupils' learning in numeracy and literacy. However, these are not yet practised consistently: the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is very variable and there is no evidence of the tracking of pupils' learning targets in their books.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils



The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. There is a very clear and comprehensive PSHE programme. This includes studies in citizenship and reflects the school's ethos and values. The pupils conduct themselves very well in and around the school, they are polite and courteous and develop into confident and articulate young people.

School assemblies and the teaching of RE provide opportunities for the pupils to learn about characters and stories from the Bible, Christian values and the beliefs of others. For example, they are encouraged to reflect on topical events and the circumstances of others less fortunate than themselves. Older pupils consider questions surrounding human existence. Opportunities are planned within the curriculum, to enhance pupils' spiritual development. In a Year 6 literacy lesson for example, writing included the study of a Native American prayer. The prayer was used as a focus for discussion on the Spirit of the Earth and inspired the pupils to compose their own prayers on a similar theme.

Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong. They are encouraged to tell the truth, respect the rights and property of others, and to take personal responsibility for their own actions. These principles are underpinned further by the very clear anti-bullying and behaviour and discipline policies, which emphasise the unacceptability and consequences of behaving in an anti-social manner. Moral values are central to the ethos of the school, and are underpinned by what are known as the "Golden Rules" displayed in classrooms and around the school.

The development of pupils' self-esteem and confidence is constantly encouraged. Merits and awards for achievement, consistently good effort or helpful behaviour are given out at a weekly assembly. Pupils' work is celebrated in some very good quality displays around the school and in the classrooms. In the Foundation Stage pupils learn to share and to play together through role play. They are taught to listen carefully and, through discussion, to reflect on their achievements. All Year 6 pupils are allocated a particular responsibility; they can, for example, be nominated as a sports captain or as a "buddy" to one of the younger pupils. The pupils perform in assemblies for

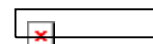
their peers and for parents. They help raise funds for charities such as UNICEF and Comic Relief and are involved with a local rehabilitation centre. They visit local shops as part of project work, or to study the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in business. The school also participates in the 'Eco-School' award scheme, and there are regular minuted meetings of a School Council.

Pupils' awareness of their own and others' culture is developed through aspects of art, history, music, English and RE. For example, extracts from three of Shakespeare's plays were performed at a Year 6 assembly for parents. Various educational and residential visits are also undertaken. Respect for the beliefs of others is taught through the PSHE programme of work and in RE, where the study of Judaism is included.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils



The school takes its responsibility for welfare, health and safety seriously and pupils are very well cared for. A safety committee has representatives from staff and governors, and regularly monitors and reviews practice. There is a good range of policies and procedures which provide teachers with practical guidance and support. There are policies to promote good behaviour and to safeguard pupils' welfare both in school and on educational visits.

Movement around the school is safe and orderly. Pupils are well-supervised at all times, including at play and lunchtimes, for which there are appropriate arrangements when there is inclement weather.

A fire risk assessment has been carried out this year, and action has been taken on issues raised. There are regular fire drills, details of which are recorded. Staff follow clear and appropriate procedures for dealing with minor accidents. The headteacher ensures that all members of staff are made aware of pupils' allergies and medical conditions, and there is a comfortable and well-equipped medical room.

The school is fulfilling its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002. It has considered important issues such as accessibility, and produced a comprehensive action plan to meet the requirements.

Pupils' attendance is recorded accurately by teachers in class registers. However, the school's admission register does not include all the necessary contact information about parents and the names and addresses of pupils' previous schools.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

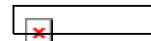
The school meets all but one of the requirements.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- *include in the admission register all the necessary information required by the*

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff



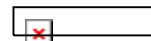
All the teachers are appropriately qualified and offer a wide range of experience. Apart from the headteacher, all are employed part-time, and there are several job-shares

All staff have been subject to a check by the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm their suitability to work with children. Appropriate procedures are in place for the appointment of staff, and there are agreed job descriptions for all those who take up posts at the school

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The premises and accommodation are suitable for their purpose. The school is housed in a Grade 2 listed building surrounded by 26 acres of fields and woodlands. It has capacity for eight good-sized classrooms. The six classrooms currently in use have appropriate furnishings, fittings and resources and provide good learning environments. There are computers in each classroom and the Information Resources Room comprises an ICT suite with twelve computers and a library.

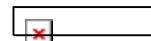
There is an excellent range of good quality additional facilities, including a small hall, three hard-surfaced outdoor tennis courts, (one of which is used as a playground), a heated indoor swimming pool and outdoor play facilities for the youngest pupils. A large sports hall provides a satisfactory venue for some PE lessons, but is a short walk away from the main building. Plans are in hand to upgrade its suitability for regular use.

An arrangement with a leisure club, run by the proprietors of the school, involves dual use of parts of the accommodation, but this occurs out of school time. The building is clean, tidy and in good decorative order. The quality of the displays of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school is extremely good.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



A high priority is given to parental involvement, and the school operates an 'Open Door' policy. The quality of information for all those concerned is, overall, very good. Documentation for staff concerning the curriculum and policies on the day-to-day running of the school is clear,

comprehensive and accessible. An attractively presented brochure, which outlines the school's history, general ethos and approaches to teaching and learning, is available for all parents and prospective parents. Admissions are mentioned in this document, but it needs to offer more detail concerning the whole of the admissions policy.

New parents are given a very informative handbook which covers a wide range of the school's procedures, policies, organisation and requirements. In addition, there is a welcome pack for school beginners containing information and help sheets for both the pupils and the parents. There is a monthly newsletter and a Parents' Association which organises regular social events throughout the year. Parent consultations take place every term and the school provides an annual written report on the pupils' progress over the year. There is an informative website, and the parents' notice board in the entrance lobby provides detailed information which covers a wide range of events, school projects and arrangements. Parents are invited to assemblies and other events which take place throughout the year. Each class has a parent representative who acts as a link between the class and the Parents' Association.

Parental response to the pre-inspection questionnaire was very good. Ninety five per cent of the parents replied and indicated a high degree of satisfaction with, and confidence in, the school. The vast majority of parents, for example, felt that they were kept well informed about their children's progress and were comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

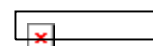
The school meets all but one of the regulations.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- *include in its information to parents further details of its arrangements for admissions to the school (paragraph 6(2)(e)).*

7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints



There is a very clearly written complaints procedure which meets almost all of the requirements. This is referred to in the Parents' Handbook, and is available on request from the school. It explains the procedures for formal and informal complaints and outlines the required stages and time-scales. It also provides for, if required, the establishment of a hearing before a panel of governors, but this does not include a member who is independent of the management and running of the school.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

The school meets all but one of the regulations.

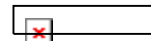
What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- *ensure that, if there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one of the members of this panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph*

7(g)).

School details



Name of school:	Fosse Bank New School		
DfES ref number:	886/6066		
Type of school:	Primary		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 28,	Girls 33,	Total 61
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys 5,	Girls 5,	Total 10
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 0,	Girls 1,	Total 1
Annual fees (day pupils):	£5,130 - £6,450		
Address of school:	Mountains Noble Tree Road Hildenborough		
	Kent		
	TN11 8ND		
E-mail address:	FBNS@hildenbor.freeseve.co.uk		
Telephone number:	01732 834212		
Fax number:	01732 834884		
Headteacher:	Ms Amanda Stables		
Proprietor:	Patramus Ltd		
Lead Inspector:	Mr Ken Morgan		
Dates of inspection:	28 June - 1 July 2004		

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