

Fox Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100482
Local Authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	285810
Inspection date	30 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Sheila Nolan

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Charles Bromley
Headteacher	Mr Paul Cotter
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2002
School address	Kensington Place London W8 7PP
Telephone number	020 7727 7637
Fax number	020 7229 4628

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	30 March 2007
Inspection number	285810

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Fox Primary School is heavily oversubscribed. It is popular with families from a very wide range of ethnic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, many of whom live nearby. There is higher than average mobility in older year groups as pupils move into other sectors of education or families change location. Half of the pupils are from minority ethnic heritages. An increasing number of pupils are from Central and Eastern Europe. Around a third, much higher than is typical nationally, has a home language other than English. Eligibility for free school meals is double that expected nationally. The proportion of the pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is similar to the national average. A new leadership team has been in post for less than a year as has around a third of the staff.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Fox Primary School provides a good quality of education, a judgement recognised by the school and parents. 'Fox is a very remarkable school' noted one. Another commented 'I have been proud to send my children there'. The overwhelming majority of parents echo this view and are strongly supportive of the school. However, around a third of parents who returned questionnaires feel that their views are not always listened too sufficiently by governors or the school leadership. Nevertheless, governance is good as is the leadership and management of the school.

Since the last inspection, the school has experienced change in its senior leadership as well as a significant turnover of staff. Despite this, standards have remained high and pupils have continued to achieve well by the end of Year 6. Strong parental support has helped to sustain academic standards. Within a short period of time, the headteacher has very ably identified important areas for improvement. 'The school has made huge strides forward since the headteacher's arrival' wrote a parent. The downward trend in standards in Years 1 and 2 has been halted. Provision for the Reception classes has been much improved so that children get a good start. Pupils have better access to information and communication technology (ICT) resources than at the last inspection and attendance and punctuality are now good. Teaching has been revitalised as has the learning environment, and the restructuring of the staff team is underway. Systems and procedures to check on pupils' progress throughout the year have been established. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. Training activities are planned to support the management skills, not yet fully developed, of middle leaders. The impact of actions so far is clear evidence of the school's good capacity to improve further.

Standards are well above average and by the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress. Although most groups of pupils achieve equally successfully, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, the school has rightly identified that standards in mathematics, and writing for both younger pupils and older boys should be better. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make rapid gains in fluency and achieve exceptionally well, despite limited resources to support this provision. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils well and build on warm working relationships. Nevertheless, the school recognises that checks on learning in lessons can be better used to plan future work. The curriculum is good and very well enriched by a wide range of out-of-hours learning.

The school is committed to providing outstanding care, guidance and support for all. Pupils' personal development is exceptional and enhanced by the many opportunities for performance and responsibility. They clearly enjoy coming to school, behave very well and are confident and secure in classrooms and around the school. Pupils get on well with each other and are very clear that help is at hand when it is needed. 'If you hurt yourself, people come fast to help you' said a Year 3 pupil. A Year 5 noted that new arrivals 'make friends very quickly'. Most are keen to stay healthy, engage willingly in sport and appreciate the improved catering arrangements. They are much involved in local community events and are well prepared for future stages of education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics to match those in English and science
- Ensure that teachers' planning takes enough account of previous learning
- Extend the capacity of middle leaders to manage their areas of responsibility.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are much higher than those expected nationally. Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6 from an above average starting point. Their progress accelerates as they proceed through the school because they gain in confidence, particularly those with a home language other than English. Current checks on achievement demonstrate that progress this year is faster than in recent times. Most children in the Reception classes are progressing well and working beyond the expected early learning goals. They make particularly fast progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal and social development. Year 2 and Year 6 are expected to attain well above average standards and exceed their already challenging targets.

In 2006, and in the previous two years, pupils achieved well in the national tests, particularly in science, with English a close second. Pupils' rate of progress in mathematics was less fast but was satisfactory. Most groups of pupils achieved equally successfully, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Standards at the end of Year 2 have also been above average in all but writing which has been average. Pupils' progress from reception to the end of Year 2 has been satisfactory overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. Pupils enjoy school with its rich variety of experiences beyond the mainstream curriculum. This is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to learning and confident relationships with each other. They behave well and attend regularly. Through the school council, pupils voice their views on a wide range of issues, including the environment and the curriculum. They are rightly proud of their part in improving physical education and in increasing the number of visits to interesting places. The bookshop visit for World Book Day is a clear favourite. A Year 4 class used the idea exceptionally well to prepare and share books with the Reception classes. 'Fox merits', star-pupil awards and the attendance trophy all add to pupils' genuine excitement about school.

Pupils feel safe in school and understand their personal responsibilities to promote the school's anti-bullying and racial harmony policies. They trust staff and are clear about what to do if they need help. 'We can talk to teachers in confidence' said Year 6. Pupils know the importance of healthy life styles, enjoy their daily fruit, and are eager to participate in physical activities. Younger pupils are very keen on the regular swimming lessons. Others participate well in the 'walk on Wednesday' scheme.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is exceptional. They share generously other's beliefs and traditions, are active in reflective assemblies and participate well in a range of projects including a link with a Ghanaian school and village. Not only do pupils support their own school community through a number of duties and services, but they also contribute much to the wider community through their music-making, environmental projects such as 'mosaics for Notting Hill Gate' and not least through support for charities at home and abroad. Involvement in real money activities such as the winter and summer fairs as well as good progress in basic skills enables pupils to prepare well for their futures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Because teachers plan a range of interesting activities, most pupils are eager to learn. Pupils respond well to teachers' consistent expectations of behaviour and hard work and enjoy the regular use of digital resources in lessons. In a very successful English session, the involvement of pupils in assessing a piece of writing and then measuring their own writing against carefully managed personal targets allowed for a Year 6 class to make very rapid progress. Praise is well used across the school and this increases pupils' motivation. Despite the many good features, however, the school recognises that to develop learning further, lesson planning must be even more thoroughly based on pupils' understanding of previous work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and enriched by a broad range of sporting, musical and drama activities as well as by interesting visits throughout London. The school integrates local amenities and opportunities particularly well into the mainstream curriculum. High priority is given to personal, social and health education with a special emphasis on safety because of the school's busy location. There have been good recent improvements in the range of activities available to the Reception classes although outdoor facilities do not yet permit the full integration of classroom and play-area learning. Provision for ICT is now very good. This curriculum is meticulously structured to ensure pupils' progression from year to year.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. The school provides a very secure environment with particular care for safety at the beginning and end of the school day. Carefully co-ordinated links with external agencies ensure vulnerable children are well supported. Breakfast club, the school nurse and family projects contribute very positively to pupils' perception of 'being cared for'. Experienced teaching assistants and mentors provide well for newcomers to the school and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Arrangements for pupils' academic guidance, new this year, are well used to identify progress and check on performance. Secure starting points have been established and procedures to support individuals are now in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The exceptionally able leadership of the present headteacher, very effectively supported by the deputy headteacher, is reflected in the school's determination to be even better. The impact of actions so far is seen in the drive to raise standards, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and in improvements to the Reception provision. From the school's current information, standards in mathematics and writing are set to rise. Not only have resources improved but they are better managed. Attendance this term has improved

significantly and so far is above average. Much-needed improvements to the learning environment are underway. Professional development is taken seriously so that teachers and support staff have a renewed sense of their accountability for the success of their areas. This is clear evidence of the school's good capacity to improve further.

Governance is good. Most governors now understand their roles clearly and are well informed about the school's successes and areas for development. Despite the unease of some parents, governors work very hard at seeking consensus and consulting where possible. Not all middle leaders are yet in post and others have still to acquire the necessary skills to manage their accountabilities robustly. However, there is a clearly shared vision for school improvement across the whole staff team.

The school's evaluation of its provision is accurate. It rightly acknowledges that despite improved whole-school assessment systems, more remains to be done to ensure classroom checks on learning are used effectively to plan future work. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The views of parents, pupils and the local community are sought regularly, are much valued and used to inform changes.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fox Primary School, Kensington Place, London, W8 7PP

Thank you for welcoming me to FOX and for sharing your ideas and opinions with me. I very much enjoyed our conversations, particularly those with the school council representatives. I am sure you will want to know my findings.

You and your parents are rightly proud of FOX. You think it is a good school and I agree with you. Your very able headteacher and staff want the best for you and are determined that you make as much progress as possible in lessons. Because you enjoy school, attend well and work hard, you reach high standards, particularly in science and English. You have lots of other exciting opportunities through visits, projects such as World Book Day, and through music-making, to name a few. Your parents, too, play a big part in your success as they are exceptionally supportive of you and of the school.

You are all very well cared for. Teachers know you well. I was very pleased to hear that you feel really comfortable in school as there is always someone to help when needed. I was also impressed that you are so welcoming to the many pupils who join you throughout the year, sometimes knowing little English. This is just one of the ways you take your FOX responsibilities seriously. I was also pleased to see the good care you take of younger children, especially on stairs and in the playground.

When thinking about how FOX could be even better, your school thought that it needed to make sure you did as well in mathematics as in English and science. It also wanted to make sure that lessons always build well on what you learned in the previous session. Because you have a number of new teachers, your school is also keen that they get very good training to manage their responsibilities really well. I agree with all of these points. For your part, you can help by continuing striving for good attendance and punctuality to school and by continuing to work hard.

I am sure you will continue to thrive at FOX and I wish you the very best for your future.

Sheila Nolan

Lead inspector