

Fourfields Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110754
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number	288763
Inspection dates	3–4 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Brown

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Barnes
Headteacher	Mr Graham Gossage
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2002
School address	Bentley Avenue Yaxley Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 3ZT
Telephone number	01733 703611
Fax number	01733 703612

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	3–4 May 2007
Inspection number	288763

© 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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average size school serves the village of Yaxley on the outskirts of Peterborough. Recently, the village has experienced a period of sustained development, causing the numbers attending the school to increase by over 40% in the last four years. More than half of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 have moved to the school after starting their education in another school. Most pupils are of White British heritage with around 6% from a range of different backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, but the number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and has Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with many impressive features. The vast majority of parents support this view. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school and they value the opportunities offered to them. As one pupil said: 'We are lucky to be at this school, we have lots to do, and we know how to care for each other.' The high expectations of all staff support and extend the pupils' personal development and well-being very effectively. Consequently, the care guidance and support of pupils is good. The school recognises that some of its pupils have a lack of understanding of different cultures and has begun to put a lot of effort into expanding their horizons, but this has not yet had time to take effect.

The strength of leadership and management at all levels is one of the notable aspects of the school. Under the clear direction of the headteacher, the school seeks to provide the very best that it can for all its pupils and strives to constantly improve what it does. The clear vision that he provides sets the very positive climate for learning. As one parent wrote: 'It is not easy to manage a growing school whilst improving behaviour and standards, but this is what I believe this headteacher has done.' The high expectations, drive and sense of purpose of the staff have brought about improvements to pupils' achievement. Pupils are well prepared academically for their next schools. There is a strong sense of teamwork between teachers, teaching assistants and governors. The governors have developed a clear understanding of what is going well and what needs to improve.

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, ensuring a good start to their education. There is good teaching throughout the school, ensuring pupils achieve well. These factors mean that although the majority of pupils begin school at a level below that expected, standards are broadly average by the time they leave. The teachers place great emphasis on promoting good manners and good behaviour. This creates a learning environment in which most pupils feel secure and happy. However, the school has recognised that although most are enthusiastic learners, some of the boys do not value academic activities and as a result struggle to achieve acceptable levels of attainment, particularly in reading and writing.

The assessment of pupils' achievement is good, both in terms of their personal and academic progress. Teachers carefully track and record pupils' progress and use this information well to plan the next steps in learning. The good quality curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils are keen to join in the wide range of opportunities offered to them and gain much self-confidence from them. By the time they reach Year 6, many show a mature approach to their work and to school life in general. This contributes significantly to the extent that pupils enjoy coming to school and reflects in the good levels of attendance. Leadership and management are good; the evaluation of pupils' performance is particularly strong as are the measures put into place to bring about sustained improvement. Therefore the school has a good capacity to improve further and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop teaching styles and strategies that improve the engagement and involvement of some boys in their academic learning.
- Develop the range of cultural activities to extend and widen pupils' horizons and aspirations.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are broadly average but pupils' achievement is good. This is because from the time they start school to the time they leave, pupils' standards improve from below to in line with expected standards. Children's achievement at the end of Foundation Stage is good. By the end of Year 2, teachers' assessments in reading, writing and mathematics show that standards are broadly average. Pupils, including the many that join the school after starting their education elsewhere, make good progress. This ensures that by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, results in the national tests for English, mathematics and science are in line with, or just above those found nationally. Targeted work on improving the performance of pupils in science has had a significant impact and has improved the results in the most recent Key Stage 2 tests. Almost all pupils meet the challenging targets they are set. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those with distinctive gifts and talents also make good progress from their starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school. From the time they start in the Foundation Stage, teachers' expectations are high and pupils respond well ensuring that behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. This is reflected in good attendance. It is a busy school providing many opportunities for pupils to learn and to take responsibility for themselves and others. This ensures that they develop high levels of confidence and a healthy degree of independence. Older pupils eagerly act as monitors. For example, they collect items for recycling as one of their contributions to their community. They also provide helpful support for the youngest children when they begin school. Class councils enable all pupils to be involved in school decision making. They have a good awareness of keeping fit, safe and healthy, helped by regular safety reminders, varied sports activities and healthy eating options. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Most pupils understand and respect the different beliefs of others, but some still struggle with the idea of people from different backgrounds living in harmony. Imaginative activities, such as links with schools abroad are beginning to help them develop an understanding of the diverse world in which we live.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good at all stages of the school. Teachers know their subjects well. They explain ideas knowledgeably and outline objectives for lessons clearly, so pupils know what is expected of them. They use the interactive white boards well to make their teaching even more clear and interesting. Class organisation is good and time is generally used efficiently; a brisk pace to lessons promotes effective learning. Occasionally the pace of learning slows and pupils lose the sense of urgency seen in most lessons. Any unacceptable behaviour is not allowed to interrupt the progress of other pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively, know pupils well and provide skilled support. They are fully involved in the assessment of pupils' progress, especially in the Reception classes, and they contribute well to

the teacher's knowledge of individual pupils' achievement. Teachers' planning is based securely on building on what pupils already know.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good range and quality of learning opportunities. The curriculum is based on 'Six values', features identified by the school to ensure that each pupil receives a rich and varied curriculum. There are meaningful links between subjects so that learning opportunities are relevant. These are well developed in teachers' termly planning. Each teacher ensures that time across each term is allocated fairly across all subjects, a weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. It provides a good balance of learning activities and takes into account the specific needs of children in the early years of their education. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. It focuses on raising pupils' self-esteem and their awareness of personal safety. Curriculum enrichment is good. Visits out of school and visitors into school make learning interesting, but the school recognises there is more work to do to expand pupils' horizons and aspirations for the future.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Parents agree that effective procedures are in place to ensure pupils' safety and well-being. These are strengthened by very good links with outside agencies. Pupils know who to go to if they have worries and say that staff respond quickly to sort out problems. Very helpful arrangements are in place to help pupils when they start school. There is also good support for pupils when they move to secondary schools. This good care adds to the quality of learning and to pupils' sense of security. Academic guidance is also good because detailed systems are in place to track progress; the pupils have targets that are specific, accurate and regularly referred to in lessons. These help them to move forward in their learning. In some lessons, pupils are developing critical thinking skills by reviewing their own work, but this is not consistently so. Support for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory and developing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher displays all the essential leadership qualities, his personal drive and vision are strong factors in the improvement made by the school. His commitment to ongoing improvement is shared by all members of the school community. He gets excellent support from all staff, who work effectively together and share his determination to make things better for the pupils. There is more work to do improve the engagement and involvement of some boys in their academic learning.

Monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is a major strength. Senior managers thoroughly analyse a wide range of data and put action into place swiftly if any pupils are underachieving. There is a sharply focused plan for improvement, based on accurate self-evaluation, that addresses the areas that will make a difference. Governors are very supportive of the school. They also challenge and hold the school to account for its performance. The school's budget

is managed carefully and resources are being expanded to meet the needs of the school as it continues to expand.

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	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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?	2

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	1
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	2
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

4 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Fourfields Community Primary School, Yaxley, PE7 3ZT

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our visit and would like to share with you what we thought about your school.

You go to a good school. The headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to make it the best school it can be and have some good ideas about how to do this.

You too play your part in making Fourfields a good school. You have your own ideas for making changes and the school listens and acts on them. Many of you have jobs to help look after each other and the school. You carry these out well. There is a lot for you to do both in your lessons, on visits and in the clubs and activities you can attend. We were impressed to see that even though the school is getting bigger the standard of your work is improving. It was clear to us that you try hard with your work, but we noticed that some of the boys in particular do not find lessons as interesting or exciting as most of you do and they struggle with their reading and writing. We have asked your teachers to try and find new ways to help them to learn.

Nevertheless, there are lots of exciting things going on in your classrooms. We were very impressed with how often and how well you use computers. We could see that they made work fun and interesting. We did feel though that some of you were not really aware of what happens in the world outside Yaxley, and we have asked your teachers to try and open your eyes to some of the many things you might experience that you do not seem aware of now.

Thank you once again and good luck in the future.

Roger Brown

Lead Inspector