

Francis Askew Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117794
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number	312705
Inspection dates	6-7 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Tony Anderson

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	279
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Roper
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Calvert
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2004
School address	North Road Hull HU4 6LQ
Telephone number	01482 509627
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Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Francis Askew is a slightly larger than average sized primary school situated in an economically disadvantaged area on the outskirts of Hull. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and few have English as an additional language. A much higher than average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The school has attained the Healthy School Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Francis Askew primary is a good school with some outstanding features. It provides good value for money. An exceptionally strong and caring family ethos has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and contributes very well to their outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils demonstrate growing confidence and self-esteem as exemplified by the sterling work of the school council and in the way the head boy and girl take on their responsibilities with confidence and assurance. Pupils really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure. They understand very clearly how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and benefit from the many opportunities to do so. Pupils contribute exceedingly well to the school community through, for example, the work of the school council. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' achievement is good. The majority of children have exceptionally low skills when they start school in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress overall and by the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average, though weaker in English than in mathematics and science, particularly in writing and reading skills.

The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good and some is outstanding. The best lessons include rapid pace to learning and good challenge. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by, for example, working towards targets for improvement given to them by their teachers in the form of a 'wish'. The curriculum meets most pupils' needs and supports their learning well. It is well supported by a number of extra-curricular clubs and activities and a wide range of visits and visitors. Initiatives to provide extra practice for literacy skills across the curriculum are at an early stage of development and not yet fully contributing to raising standards in reading and writing. The school very successfully meets the needs of pupils deemed to be more vulnerable and they are exceptionally well supported by teaching and support staff. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because the match of provision to their individual needs is accurate.

Leadership and management are good. The school is well aware of its relative strengths and areas for development. However, information on pupils' performance is not analysed closely enough to identify where priorities in raising achievement lie. The very determined and highly respected headteacher is well supported by a dedicated senior leadership team, enthusiastic subject leaders, teachers and a wide range of support staff. Governors take a keen interest in pupils' personal development and provide robust and firm challenge to the leadership team. They have improved their knowledge and confidence to hold the school to account since the last inspection. The school's overall improvement since the last inspection is good as is its capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Nearly all children join the Foundation Stage with skills that are exceptionally low for their age, particularly in speaking, listening and communication skills. They make good progress, especially in gaining personal and social skills because effective teaching meets their needs well and they make positive gains in most areas of learning. Despite their good progress, by the time they enter Year 1 many children have not reached all the learning goals expected for their age. Children benefit from many exciting opportunities to play in different imaginative scenarios

and to choose the activities they will pursue, many of which take place in the very large and well resourced outside play area. Good relationships with parents help children to settle into school routines and they become increasingly confident and happy in their work and with each other. Strong leadership is the driving force behind the acceleration in their personal development and gradual independence in their learning. The Foundation Stage leader is well supported by a good range of teaching and support staff who work very well together as an effective and united team. As a result, children and their parents are very happy with the early years' provision which lays the foundation for the children's future learning and economic well-being.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards in reading and writing.
- Provide pupils with opportunities to practise their literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum.
- Improve the analysis and evaluation of information on pupils' performance in order to identify priorities in raising standards and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and the standards they reach by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. When pupils enter Year 1, many have not reached the expected levels of development for their age. They make good progress overall and by Year 6 standards reached in mathematics and science are broadly average. Results in English were in line with the national average in 2006, but they dipped to below average in 2007 because of relative weaknesses in reading and writing. Based on inspection evidence, standards in English are projected to rise in 2008. Changes to the Key Stage 2 curriculum and improvements in the level of support for pupils who have fallen behind are having a positive impact on pupils' progress, in English especially.

Results of national assessments at the end of Year 2 have been below the national average and pupils' progress has been no better than satisfactory. Many pupils experience difficulties adapting to more formal teaching approaches in Year 1 compared to in the Foundation Stage. However, a recent initiative to improve the transition between the different approaches is already showing positive results and the rates of pupils' progress are improving.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make similar progress to other pupils in response to the additional help they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils enjoy school a great deal. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory. A very small minority of pupils with very poor attendance adversely affects the overall average. Behaviour is good and often outstanding. Pupils show great respect for adults and each other. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Their wide and growing knowledge of other cultures was demonstrated by the excellent work of many pupils as they enjoyed learning about the Chinese New Year. Pupils show an excellent understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and the school promotes this exceptionally well through the wide choices of healthy food and a good range of sporting activities. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school, that there is no

bullying, and there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem. The buddy system works very well in the playground and helps to promote excellent relationships. The head boy and girl are outstanding role models for other pupils in the school. The school council work very hard and have been responsible for the provision of additional playground equipment. They say that they have a clear voice in the life of the school and are very proud of their work towards making a difference. Pupils' very good social skills and their improving literacy and numeracy skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall, resulting in most pupils making good progress. Typically, lessons are lively and interesting and are enjoyed by pupils. Good systems are in place to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Support staff work well with teachers to address the needs of different groups and individuals so that pupils can achieve their targets. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' progress and pupils know exactly what they have to do in order to succeed. A good example of this was seen in an English lesson in which pupils responded very well to the challenge to rewrite the story of Little Red Riding Hood and portray the key characters as being the exact opposite of their normal selves. Occasionally, teachers do not provide sufficiently challenging or stimulating work for pupils. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are effectively taught in subjects across the curriculum, with pupils clearly making links between their learning in different subjects. Teachers' marking gives pupils a clear idea of how well they have done and, in the best examples, guidance as to how they could improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and statutory requirements are met. Staff plan a balanced programme of work which contributes well to pupils' personal development and academic progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support through individual learning plans and special help. The curriculum is adjusted for them, to ensure that it is relevant to their needs and interests. Pupils have opportunities to improve their ICT skills in different subjects; for example, the multimedia presentation prepared by Year 6 pupils on the work of the artist Clarice Cliff. However, opportunities to practise and improve literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum are in the early stages of development and not yet contributing fully to raising standards. A well planned programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education helps to ensure pupils understand the importance of staying safe and being healthy, and prepares them extremely well to make an effective contribution to the community. The curriculum is enriched by a wide and interesting range of visits, visitors and external links, in addition to many after school activities such as the pupils' lively disco held on the second day of the inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good with some outstanding features. The school places a high priority on supporting pupils' varying needs and has processes and a

wide range of effective support staff in place to ensure that this happens. Child protection procedures and arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place. Vulnerable pupils are very well looked after because of the close and high quality links with external agencies. There is a strong focus on healthy lifestyles and pupils are actively encouraged to make healthy choices in their diet and to take regular exercise. Teachers' knowledge of their pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enables needs to be identified quickly and support implemented. The impact of this is reflected in the good progress made by the majority of pupils. Pupils are generally aware of what they need to achieve in each lesson and in the longer term. However, on occasions, pupils do not act upon the constructive comments provided by teachers, thus limiting their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership. The senior leadership team and governors have a firm grip on the school's priorities for development based on an awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is clarity of vision and a determination to make further progress, particularly in pupils' continuing practice of reading and writing across the whole curriculum. Additionally, the school has brought about recent and effective changes in ensuring a smooth transition from the Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1. These changes are already beginning to improve pupils' progress due to a better match of the work to pupils' needs and more opportunities to 'learn through play' during Year 1. Although the school has a great deal of information on pupils' progress, it is not yet analysed or used well enough to bring about consistent improvement in standards and pupils' progress. The school works very well in collaboration with parents who are regularly consulted on a wide range of issues and supported as part of the school's very effective family ethos.

Governors fulfil their statutory obligations well and display a positive level of commitment to the school's work through visits and attendance at regular meetings. Since the last inspection, governors have undertaken training that has enhanced their ability to offer robust challenge in holding the school to account for the progress of its pupils. The leadership team and governing body demonstrate a good capacity to improve further.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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

8 February 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Francis Askew Primary School, Kingston-upon-Hull, HU4 6LQ

Thank you so much for helping to make our recent inspection of your school so enjoyable. It was a delight to see so many happy, smiling faces as you worked hard in your lessons and enjoyed playtime with your friends. Your teachers think you are lovely, helpful and kind children who are a great credit to the school and we completely agree. As a result of your very good attitudes to learning and your often outstanding behaviour, you are clearly making good progress and achieving well.

We think that Francis Askew is a good school. It gives you many exciting and interesting things to do and the way you respond to all the opportunities given to you to make progress in your personal development is outstanding. There are just a few things which we think the school can do to make your learning and enjoyment even better:

- to ensure that you have even more opportunities to improve your reading and writing in every lesson
- for your teachers to look more closely at the work you have done in the past so they can plan how to help you to do even better in the future.

Thank you again for being so friendly and kind to us during the inspection and we wish you all every success with your future learning and enjoyment.

Best wishes

Tony Anderson

Lead inspector