

Fawkham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118592
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	313005
Inspection date	2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Timothy Feast

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fay Parkin
Headteacher	Dorinda Perry
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2004
School address	Valley Road Fawkham Longfield DA3 8NA
Telephone number	01474 702312
Fax number	01474 709594

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school that serves the village of Fawkham, surrounding villages and nearby towns. Numbers in each year group are small and the results of a single pupil in national tests can have a significant impact on the school's overall results. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is below average. Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes of teaching staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Fawkham Primary is a good school, where children develop well, both academically and personally. The school's capacity to improve further is good, because school leaders and governors know from their thorough and accurate self-evaluation what needs to be done. The headteacher provides clear direction with a relentless focus on raising standards

Children make a good start in the Reception Year and standards at the end of the year are above those expected nationally. Standards in English, mathematics and science for the current Year 6 are above those found nationally. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress towards meeting their challenging targets, particularly in science. Achievement is good, with the rate of progress accelerating this year in all classes, although there is some variation in pupils' progress. It is often better in English than in mathematics. Teacher assessments show that the current Year 2 pupils have made good progress this year, particularly in writing, and standards are above the national average.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as a result of the good care, guidance and support they receive. Pupils are very happy and really enjoy coming to school. As a result, their attendance is outstanding, being significantly above national figures. They are particularly pleased with the range of facilities the school has to offer and which, through the school council, they have been involved in helping to develop. Behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe in school and say that they can always find someone to give them help and support. Pastoral care in the school is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. There is good use of specialist teaching in areas such as science, music and modern foreign languages. Teachers plan well to meet the challenge posed by teaching mixed age classes. Work is marked regularly and praise given. However, guidance given in the marking is not always good enough to enable pupils to know what they need to do to improve. The curriculum is broad and enriched well with clubs, sporting and cultural activities and a wide range of visits. The school has developed its tracking systems this year and pupils know their academic targets well. Teachers do not always make enough use of what pupils know and can do to secure good progress towards the next steps in learning.

Leadership and management are good. Leaders have had a good impact on improving attainment in science and writing this year. School leaders have introduced a number of new systems, for example to track pupils' progress, but this information is not yet being used equally well in all subjects. The school's leaders have been successful in driving up standards without losing the breadth of curriculum opportunities and the strong focus on personal development that parents and pupils value highly.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly in line with expectations. When they leave the Reception class, children's skills are above those found nationally. Progress is particularly good in reading, calculation and writing and in aspects of personal development. An exciting but purposeful learning environment is being created in which children respond very well to well-ordered routines. The curriculum

is good at meeting the needs of the children. Teaching is well planned and makes good use of the facilities, both inside and outside the classroom.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the use of assessment information to ensure that pupils make progress at a consistently rapid rate in all subjects.
- Improve the quality of marking so that pupils are given good guidance on what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the Year 6 national tests in 2007 improved in English and mathematics, but declined in science to bring the results down to being broadly average overall. Current Year 6 pupils have maintained attainment above that expected nationally in English and mathematics and have improved significantly in science so that their current attainment in this subject is above national expectations. This represents good achievement for these pupils and good progress towards exceeding the challenging targets set by the school. Standards in science have risen this year because of the adoption of a new scheme of work, the use of a specialist teacher in Years 3 to 6 and access to a range of new resources that have raised pupils' enthusiasm for the subject.

The standards achieved in Year 2 tests in 2007 were above the national average in reading and mathematics, but broadly in line in writing. Results in reading improved greatly. Current Year 2 pupils have made outstanding progress in writing this year primarily as a result of the adoption of the new national literacy framework. Their current attainment is above that expected nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good achievement for these pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in all years.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is a strength of the school. Pupils respond very well to the wide range of opportunities presented to them, for example to participate in local music festivals. Pupils are welcoming, friendly and polite and they say they feel safe and know how to take good care of each other. They have very positive attitudes to work and to the school's facilities and take on responsibility well, for example, helping younger pupils at meal times. Pupils are confident and articulate. In discussion, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of healthy living. The school council provides a good vehicle for pupils to gain experience of decision making, for example in helping to improve the toilet facilities. The pupils contribute well to the life of the church and the local village and their fundraising work has an international flavour. The good progress pupils make in both their personal and academic skills prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well planned and proceed at a good pace. Teachers make effective use of competitive activities such as speed races for basic calculation skills to get lessons off to a good start. Good

use is made of interactive whiteboards to promote pupils' interests and increase their involvement in what they are learning. Pupils respond well to teachers' probing questioning, and teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils' learning. Teachers' planning takes good account of the mixed age classes so that progress in all classes is good. Teachers make particularly good use of assessment information in English to plan the next steps of learning. This has helped to accelerate the progress in writing this year. Assessments are not yet used as effectively in mathematics and science. Marking of pupils' work is regular and celebrates success but does not always provide clear guidance for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which meets their needs well and which results in them making good progress. The curriculum makes full use of the opportunities to be found, both on the school site and wider afield, to make learning enjoyable. As one parent put it, 'They go into school with a smile and come out with one.' There is good provision for pupils to develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills, to learn a modern foreign language, and to develop their musical talents. The science curriculum has been improved and the school has rightly identified the need for further practical work in the subject. Homework is routinely set and marked and enhances pupils' learning well. Pupils and parents value the range of clubs and special events, one parent commenting that 'the range of extra-curricular activities available was pleasantly surprising.'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care for individual pupils is a particular strength, enabling them to make good progress in their personal development. One parent commented, 'The staff are most helpful, supportive and very caring and have one's child's interests in mind at all times.' The effective pastoral support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make good progress and they are well included in all that the school offers. New pupils and their parents comment on how well they settle and quickly adapt to new school routines and expectations. The school's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements. Good health and safety routines and risk assessments are in place. New target-setting and tracking procedures have been introduced throughout the school. Nearly all pupils are clear about their personal targets and how well they are doing, but some are not so sure what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has established a new staff team that works well together and is focused on raising standards and improving achievement. School leaders have a good vision for the school, evident in the development of an inspirational learning environment, achieved through effective use of the budget. The headteacher, with good support from subject leaders, has taken effective action this year to raise attainment in science and in writing. Attendance has improved this year from a figure already well above the national average. The school has successfully recruited staff that offer a good range of expertise. Governors are very supportive of the school and are developing good strategies to check on the quality of the school's work. The school works well in partnership with other schools and local agencies to enhance provision. For example, students

from the University of Greenwich contributed to the development of the high quality outdoor learning environment for the Reception class.

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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	2
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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	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

7 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fawkham Church of England Primary School, Fawkham DA3 8NA

Thank you for helping us with the inspection and making us feel so welcome in your school. We enjoyed talking with you and finding out how much you like school and all that it has to offer you. We think your school gives you a good education. You are making good progress with your studies, particularly this year with your writing and with your work in science. To help you keep up this good progress, we have asked the school to make more use of information from tests and assessments to help you to improve.

You told us that you really enjoy coming to school and this is obvious from your outstanding attendance. You told us you liked all the clubs, sports and visits that you do while you are at Fawkham. Your behaviour and attitudes in class and around the school are good. You like being given opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as looking after younger children at lunchtime, and you respond really well. You told us you feel safe and happy, and about all the things you do to have a healthy life. You are prepared well for secondary school. Adults take very good care of you and you told us there was always someone to talk to if you had a problem. You were able to tell us what your targets are and how well you are doing. We have asked your school to make sure that when your work is marked it is clearly explained to you what you need to do next to improve.

We are sure that you will continue to enjoy your time at Fawkham. We wish you all success and happiness this year and in the future.

With best wishes

Tim Feast Lead Inspector