

Foxton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119923
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313447
Inspection date	9 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charlotta Hickie
Headteacher	Philip Clark
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
School address	Gallowfield Road Foxton Market Harborough LE16 7QZ
Telephone number	01858 545328
Fax number	01858 540171

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	9 October 2007
Inspection number	313447

© 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. The inspector investigated the following issues: current achievement and standards, teaching and learning, pupils' personal development and well-being, personal support and academic guidance, elements of the curriculum and aspects of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form (SEF), assessment and tracking records, observations of the school at work and discussions with staff, the chair of the governing body and pupils. The parental questionnaire responses were analysed. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a small rural primary school. When children start in the Reception class they generally have the skills and knowledge typical of four year olds. However, this can vary from year to year because of the small numbers involved. The school population is predominantly White British.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Foxton is a good school. It enables pupils to achieve well and attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The school provides a very friendly and caring atmosphere in which pupils flourish in their work and play. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One comment is typical of many, 'This is a happy, balanced school where my daughter feels relaxed and is confident about her work'.

Children get off to a good start in Reception and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. This good foundation is successfully built on and pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 to 6. Pupils make good progress through the school because of consistently good teaching and a good curriculum. Teachers plan their lessons thoughtfully to build upon previous experiences. As a result, pupils are able to use prior understanding and knowledge to take their current learning forward. Teaching assistants provide good support for all pupils, especially those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff usually tailor activities well to meet the different needs of individual pupils. There are times when work is not sufficiently challenging and pupils' skills are not extended as much as they might be. This is most evident in writing and particularly for pupils who are more able. A reflection of this is the fact that, although standards in English are above average, pupils' performance in writing is a relatively weaker aspect of the subject. The school has rightly identified improvement in writing as a priority for development. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and are keen to learn. This makes a positive contribution to the progress they make.

The headteacher provides clear direction for the school and has been the driving force in the good improvement made since the previous inspection. This has included improving the effectiveness of management, raising attendance rates and ensuring that all pupils now show good attitudes and behave well. A strong team ethos has been created with all involved in the work of the school being fully committed to helping pupils achieve as well as they can. Being a small school, individual staff have to take on a range of responsibilities that includes leadership of a variety of subjects. The standards that pupils attain are a testament to the hard work and diligence that staff show in carrying out their responsibilities. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, enabling it to correctly identify and prioritise those areas in need of improvement. The procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning are good and successfully help teachers to improve their expertise. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and play an important role in helping it to develop further. The school's recent track record shows that there is good capacity for future improvement.

A particular strength of the school is the outstanding range of opportunities for pupils to extend their experiences. Pupils have access to a wide variety of stimulating visits and visitors as well as out of school clubs to develop further their academic and creative talents. For example, they are currently working with an artist in residence to plan and create a sensory garden. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the residential visits in which they take part. These include a visit to Madrid and to the Peak District in Derbyshire. Such experiences play a strong role in pupils' personal and social development. The curriculum for music has recently been enhanced by the provision of free tuition of cello and violin for pupils in Years 3 and 4. The curriculum for information and communication technology (ICT) is strong and plays a significant part in the good standards that pupils reach in this subject. There are many effective opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their ICT skills through work in other subjects. For instance, Years 5 and 6 pupils developed their literacy skills by creating an advertisement, using a video camera

and computers, aimed at selling slippers made in design and technology. Good links with specialist coaches, such as a professional basketball coach, effectively extend pupils' sporting skills.

Pupils behave well and clearly know the difference between right and wrong. They are happy to take on responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council. They also make a positive contribution to the local community. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as is shown in their steadily increasing attendance rate. The school is working hard to improve this further by encouraging parents not to take their children on holiday during term time. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the need to take regular exercise and eat healthily. As one of them said, 'We like school dinners because there are healthy choices'. Pupils show a good awareness of how to stay safe by acting responsibly in and around school. The school has identified the need to support a few older pupils in developing more consideration for the feelings of others. To this end, a programme has recently been introduced to further promote pupils' social and emotional development. Pupils' cultural development is good, being positively encouraged by links with partner schools in Madrid and Birmingham. Because of these links, pupils show a good awareness of the traditions and beliefs of other cultures. This is important as pupils live in an area with little ethnic diversity. Pupils are prepared well for their future lives.

Parents are very appreciative of the way the school looks after and cares for their children. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and pupils say they feel safe and secure in school. There are good links with outside agencies to provide extra support to pupils when needed. Academic guidance successfully helps pupils to see how they might improve their performance. Pupils are becoming increasingly involved in assessing for themselves how well they are doing and in setting their own targets for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress because staff have a good understanding of their individual needs. They set activities that are exciting and effectively capture the children's interest and imagination. Consequently, children achieve well and by the time they enter Year 1 are exceeding the levels expected of them in all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to make choices for themselves and this lays a firm foundation for their future development as independent learners. Good links with the local pre-school group ensure a smooth transition when children join the Reception class. Because of this, they settle in quickly and soon become accustomed to everyday school routines. The outdoor area has been much improved since the previous inspection. The school is currently reviewing its use to promote further children's investigational and creative skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that pupils, especially the more able, are given tasks that extend their skills so that they think about how to organise and present their work.

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
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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Foxton Primary School, Foxton, LE16 7QZ

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I really enjoyed meeting you and seeing the things you do. The pupils I spoke to were very enthusiastic about your school, as were your parents. I would like to tell you that I consider your school to be good. It helps you to achieve well, and attain standards by the end of Year 6 that are above average in English, mathematics and science. You also attain good standards in information and communication technology (ICT).

The main reason for your good progress is the quality of teaching that you receive. Teachers give you interesting things to do and are keen for you to do well. The standards you reach in reading are better than those in writing are. This is because sometimes you are given work that is too easy and this does not stretch your skills in writing.

You become mature and responsible and behave well. You enjoy your work and are getting better at deciding what you need to do next to improve it. You are given excellent opportunities to extend your learning. These include the many out of school clubs you can join and the wide range of visits and visitors you experience. You told me you especially enjoy the residential stays in Madrid and the activity centre at Castleton.

All adults take very good care of you and ensure you are safe while in school. You told me that if you have any worries or concerns you can talk to an adult and are confident you would be listened to. The people in charge of the school do a good job and continue working hard to improve it even further. They have done well to get attendance levels up. You can help by making sure that you are in school every day that you can possibly be there

I would like to give a special word of thanks to the members of the school council who gave up their time to talk to me. The school is right to be proud of you.

What I have asked your school to do now

- Make sure that the writing tasks you are given always make you think hard.

I hope you continue to enjoy your learning in the future.

Best wishes Melvyn Hemmings

Lead inspector

10 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Foxton Primary School, Foxton, LE16 7QZ

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I really enjoyed meeting you and seeing the things you do. The pupils I spoke to were very enthusiastic about your school, as were your parents. I would like to tell you that I consider your school to be good. It helps you to achieve well, and attain standards by the end of Year 6 that are above average in English, mathematics and science. You also attain good standards in information and communication technology (ICT).

The main reason for your good progress is the quality of teaching that you receive. Teachers give you interesting things to do and are keen for you to do well. The standards you reach in reading are better than those in writing are. This is because sometimes you are given work that is too easy and this does not stretch your skills in writing.

You become mature and responsible and behave well. You enjoy your work and are getting better at deciding what you need to do next to improve it. You are given excellent opportunities to extend your learning. These include the many out of school clubs you can join and the wide range of visits and visitors you experience. You told me you especially enjoy the residential stays in Madrid and the activity centre at Castleton.

All adults take very good care of you and ensure you are safe while in school. You told me that if you have any worries or concerns you can talk to an adult and are confident you would be listened to. The people in charge of the school do a good job and continue working hard to improve it even further. They have done well to get attendance levels up. You can help by making sure that you are in school every day that you can possibly be there

I would like to give a special word of thanks to the members of the school council who gave up their time to talk to me. The school is right to be proud of you.

What I have asked your school to do now

- Make sure that the writing tasks you are given always make you think hard.

I hope you continue to enjoy your learning in the future.

Best wishes
Melvyn Hemmings

Lead inspector