

Fawcett Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110766
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	325215
Inspection date	1 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Jill Bavin

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	175
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Jacqui McCary
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Osler
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Alpha Terrace Trumpington Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB2 9FS
Telephone number	01223840258
Fax number	01223840258

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- How involved are subject leaders in driving school improvement?
- Can the school unequivocally judge standards and achievement in subjects other than English, mathematics and science?
- What is the school doing to promote cultural development and an understanding of British diversity?

Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, chair of governors, pupils and staff, observations of lessons and children at work, parents' questionnaires and scrutinising documents, including records that track children's progress. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors 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 this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller primary school than most. Far more pupils come and go from the school during each key stage than is typical, largely because a lot of the parents of the children are visiting academics working or studying at Cambridge. This also contributes to the school's high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. There are more pupils in school who are learning English as an additional language, than is typical nationally. There is a smaller proportion of pupils with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the school than is usual nationally. That said, the percentage of children with statements of special educational needs is higher than nationally and in some year groups the proportion of pupils who find learning difficult is very large. The school has very strong links with a local special school and some children with severe difficulties or disabilities attend this school on a part-time basis.

There is a local authority funded Nursery for 26 children on site with the afternoon Nursery provision for 16 children managed by the school governors, who also provide a breakfast and after-school club. The Cambridgeshire Access and Inclusion team and Hearing Support team are based within the school building. The school has experienced significant changes to staffing this academic year for reasons beyond its control. The school is preparing for federation with a new primary school, due to open in the near future. The school has held the Health Promoting Schools and Activemark awards since 2006 and gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2008.

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. Some elements of its work are outstanding and inspectors' views endorse the school's own evaluation. The vast majority of parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. Many parents commend the approachability of the headteacher and her staff. Additionally, comments such as, 'my child is thriving', 'our bilingual and mixed race daughter settled well', and 'the school is extremely caring for children with special needs', reflect the views of many. Standards currently are broadly average at Year 6 in English, mathematics and science which represents good achievement. The school's constantly changing population means that standards fluctuate from year to year but achievement is consistently good and there are examples of individual pupils making very good progress. Strong links with other professionals contribute to effective provision for those who struggle with learning, for more able pupils and those who are gifted or talented, ensuring they also make good progress in their learning during their time at the school.

The headteacher provides a strong and consistent steer to school improvement, in which she is extremely well supported by governors. The headteacher and governors are working extremely closely with local authority planners, preparing for significant school development while also managing changes in staffing, some of a temporary nature. It is to their credit that the school's considerable strengths have led to such happy and secure pupils who are achieving well through this period, in spite of a constantly changing group of friends. Leadership and management are good overall. The school accurately evaluates its provision, including its role in bringing community members together and promoting tolerance and understanding. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the community the school serves and are extremely successful in valuing its ever changing diversity. This in turn promotes an extremely harmonious school community and excellent awareness and appreciation by pupils of the diversity of communities beyond the school. The school is constantly evaluating its impact on promoting community cohesion. Although the senior management team is in a period of transition there is a shared commitment to school development. Governors are lending strength, with the headteacher, to a strategic review of roles and responsibilities, given the school's planned developments. Improved assessment procedures mean that all subject leaders have a good understanding of standards in their subjects. They know that standards are broadly at expected levels in most subjects, but a little above in information and communication technology and in musical performance. Excellent links with other professionals, the local community and community groups from further afield contribute very effectively to the school's strengths and plans for continued improvement.

The rate of each pupil's progress is tracked very closely in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The system for doing this is well established, but since the previous inspection far greater use is made of the information generated. It underpins a rigorous analysis of what is working well in the school, where individual pupils need greater help and where they need greater challenge. It contributes to increased accountability for staff. The information generated is now shared more comprehensively with class teachers and subject leaders and helps promote good academic guidance. It is used well to trigger direct intervention, such as individual support, the development of a particular support programme, or inclusion in particularly challenging programmes of work, as necessary, according to pupils' identified needs. Increasingly, if the school cannot identify why a pupil is apparently not making progress, staff involve the home

support worker who was appointed this year. The school's good track record of development means that it is well placed for further improvement.

The headteacher and governors have an astute and precise understanding of the school. They recognise that while the quality of teaching and learning, is good overall, and sometimes outstanding, a small proportion remains satisfactory because pace and expectations occasionally decrease for part of the lesson. That said, lessons are generally well planned to take account of the differing needs and abilities within each class. In some lessons pupils make exceptional progress because of extremely stimulating teaching strategies and a cracking pace that is sustained throughout the lesson. Relationships between teachers and pupils are consistently good. Skilful management and deployment of staff demonstrate the headteacher's and governors' outstanding commitment to equality of opportunity for pupils by ensuring that they have equal access to all that the school offers.

Extremely strong pastoral care results in pupils' outstanding personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are impressively willing to walk or cycle to school and have a very good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. They feel entirely secure within school because of the trust they have in staff and the mutual respect that exists between pupils. Given the constantly changing school population, pupils' sense of ownership of their school, and their contribution to the school community, is impressive. This is exemplified by comments such as 'we are working on it', in relation to discussions between the headteacher and pupils about funding the resurfacing of the school playground. Projects such as categorising, tallying and costing the lost property held in school enable pupils to demonstrate an exceptionally mature sense of responsibility. Strengths in personal, social and health education within the good curriculum also help pupils to understand the importance of respecting each other's different views and needs. Consequently, pupils work very effectively together whether in lessons or in devising their own school development plan. Their behaviour is impeccable. Pupils' cultural development is enriched through innovative arts projects and the extremely good use that is made of the culturally diverse school population. The curriculum is under review as the school rightly seeks to ensure even greater relevance and interest for pupils through increased links between subjects. Meanwhile it serves pupils well. Activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage are suitable for children at this age. The school recognises that there is more to be done in making greater use of children's interests as a basis for their learning at this stage.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, because the manager for the provision has a good understanding of how to meet the needs of young children. She has successfully supported a new staff team this year and together they have ensured that children achieve well. Children make good progress in key skills because this is emphasised both in adult-led activities and in the resources made available. Staff provide suitable resources and activities for children to acquire skills in all six areas of learning through direct and practical experience, both indoors and outside. There is a spacious outside area alongside the Nursery and Reception classrooms. For much of the day children can opt to work either inside or outside. However, planning to reflect the latest national guidance is still being developed. Consequently, there are occasions when not all the space is available for all the children and times when their choice of where to work is restricted. Similarly, while the team responds flexibly to reflect children's interests, there is more to be done in enabling them to learn through pursuing their own interests and ideas.

Staff take enormous care to ease children's transition into school, at whatever point they join the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is much appreciated by parents who are very pleased with how well their children settle and the communication between themselves and staff. Children's welfare is paramount and a particular strength is the inclusion of children in conducting their own 'risk assessments' of the outside learning areas. This clearly supports their personal development extremely well. Their personal development is good overall despite missed opportunities for them to learn independently. Children clearly enjoy good relationships with the adults who work with them, and readily appeal to them for help, for example in accessing more water to continue wielding large paintbrushes for water painting. They enjoy school and having older 'buddies' from Year 6.

What the school should do to improve further

- Place greater emphasis upon using children's interests and child-initiated activities to extend their skills further in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Share the outstanding practice in school to ensure greater consistency in teaching, thereby raising achievement 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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

2 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fawcett Primary School, Trumpington, CB2 9FS

Thank you for all the help you gave us when Mrs Smith and I inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you very much, and it was very interesting to see your work and hear your ideas. We agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school, and some of the school's work is outstanding. Here are some of the good things we found.

- You achieve well in English, mathematics and science.
- You behave exceptionally well and enjoy school enormously.
- You are extremely mature for your age in the way you help to keep improving the school.
- You know a great deal about keeping safe and healthy.
- The teaching at your school is good and the activities in lessons are often fun and help your learning.
- All the adults in school care about you a great deal and look after you exceptionally well.
- Your headteacher, governors and staff keep working at ways to improve the school and have plenty of good ideas about how to carry on with this.

We have asked the governors, headteacher and staff to do two things in particular to make your school even better.

- Give the children in the Reception classes and Nursery even more opportunities to pursue their own interests and make their own choices
- Make sure the teachers share their very best ideas so that more lessons become like the very best.

You can help by continuing to behave so well and showing how very interested you are. We hope you always enjoy learning so much.

Yours faithfully

Jill Bavin

Lead inspector