

The Fourfields Church of England School, Sutterton

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120559
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339722
Inspection dates	21–22 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Richard Blackmore

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 of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Gent
Headteacher	Rob Little
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2006
School address	Park Avenue Sutterton Boston
Telephone number	01205 460547
Fax number	01205 460906
Email address	enquiries@fourfields.lincs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited six lessons and observed five teachers. They held meetings with governors, members of staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors examined the school's tracking of pupils' progress, samples of pupils' work, attendance data and school improvement plans. The questionnaire responses of 17 parents and carers were also taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2 and in mathematics across the school, to determine whether teaching is sufficiently effective
- how well curriculum opportunities are helping to raise standards
- the impact of the leadership of the school on raising standards and the rates of progress made by pupils.

Information about the school

Fourfields Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school. Since 2007 the school has been federated with another school so that there has been one headteacher with responsibility for leading both schools. A 'school leader' is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. The overwhelming majority of the pupils are White British. A very small number of pupils' speak English as an additional language. There is provision for family and parenting workshops managed by the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average and the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is a little below average. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. As a parent/carer wrote: 'The school has a lovely family feel which is exactly what I looked for in a school.' It has made significant improvement since it became federated because of the wider range of staff expertise and skills that have become available through the federation. These have been used well to support school development. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, pupils having a keen understanding of their own beliefs as well as those of others. They readily apply their interest in moral and ethical issues to their work through discussion and express their ideas maturely. An excellent range of well attended extra-curricular activities successfully supports pupils' personal development.

Children in the Reception class get off to a good start progressing well from starting points that are well below those expected. They achieve well because of exciting and well planned activities. Although standards in writing are lower than in mathematics and science, standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Useful strategies to improve pupils' writing have been implemented with some effect but these have not been in place long enough or been sufficiently extensive to have had the full desired impact. Progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as they move through the school is good. Their progress is underpinned by effective support and interventions because the school makes use of a wide range of information and external services to aid pupils' well being and their learning.

Staff know individuals well and pupils appreciate and respond well to this with good behaviour in classrooms and around the school. Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for and enjoy caring for each other and the school. They are particularly proud of their responsibility on the school council where they 'improve things' as one pupil commented. Pupils have an adequate understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle and take advantage of the very wide range of sporting activities provided, including the much liked and enjoyed archery club. Despite pupils' obvious enjoyment of school, attendance is only average and lateness at the start of school interrupts learning for some pupils.

Teaching is good and lessons are typified by enthusiastic teachers who strongly promote enjoyment. Consequently, pupils are well motivated and come to school ready to learn and eager to contribute to lessons. Lesson plans are detailed but do not set out precisely enough the learning that is expected to take place. Teachers move lessons along at a good pace. However, work is not always sufficiently well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, especially the higher attainers for whom work is often a little too easy. In addition, higher attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding by practising cross-curricular

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skills, such as literacy and numeracy, in different subjects. As a result, not all make consistently good progress.

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good and support their generally good personal outcomes. Staff also nurture the potential of pupils and give them the self-confidence to work hard and aim high. Teachers provide helpful and timely feedback to pupils about how to improve their work.

The headteacher together with the senior leader and other senior colleagues lead the school well and has worked successfully with staff and governors to improve systems for accurate self-evaluation. There are good outcomes for pupils because leaders at all levels know exactly what to do to sustain the school's journey of improvement. This, together with the successful actions to remedy weaknesses and the effective use of resources, means the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- – Raise further the standards gained by pupils by:
 - ensuring lesson plans more rigorously detail the learning expectations for pupils
 - developing the school's strategies to improve pupils' writing skills.
- Increase the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils by:
 - making sure teachers specifically plan for, and extend, the learning of the more able pupils
 - using different curriculum areas to extend the knowledge and understanding of higher attaining pupils by practising skills in a range of contexts.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well because most teachers expect much of their pupils and explain complicated ideas well. Much effective work has been undertaken by the school in writing because of a focus on extending writing using the 'Big Write' project which has helped pupils to develop and sustain interesting ideas in their writing. However, aspects of their writing, including the consistent use of punctuation, remain underdeveloped. Pupils would benefit from increased time and additional practice on this aspect of their writing. Pupils have well chosen targets for improvement and in a good literacy lesson seen during the inspection pupils were adept at complex sentence building because the teacher referred to clear targets for using adverbial clauses. Nonetheless, the work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of good progress. There is little difference in the progress made by the various groups of pupils, except for more able pupils who do not always do as well as they could partly because work is too easy for them.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, settling to work quickly and applying themselves well. This is because social skills are very well developed and used at different times of the school day, including being play leaders during break times,

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helping pupils to play happily together. Despite less involvement in the local community, pupils make some important contributions to the school community through the roles they take on such as the school councillors and eco monitors, who were seen responsibly checking the use of electricity throughout the school day. Year 6 pupils took this a stage further by being instrumental in installing a solar tube in the school building to reduce the amount of energy used during the day. Pupils' average skill levels demonstrate the school soundly prepares them for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good overall. Where outstanding teaching was seen this was particularly creative and imaginative. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson the teacher very skillfully combined the pupils' knowledge of strategies for measuring area into a real life problem of needing to know the area of the allotment for the Eco award application. Teachers mark pupils' work well so they know how to improve their work and there is good use of high quality resources including real artifacts to support learning. For example, pupils studying Peru developed a good understanding of its location and customs by the

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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effective study of different types of maps and being able to handle indigenous objects such as clothing and musical instruments. Lessons include a good range of activities that keep the pupils on task, and teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards so that pupils are engaged from the start. However, teachers, particularly in literacy lessons, do not always question pupils and challenge the responses of more able pupils at a high enough level to enable them to achieve better.

The good curriculum is responsive to pupils' interests and provides good opportunities to support personal development. It is presented imaginatively and thoughtfully. Learning is meaningful because the school carefully plans themes which are systematically built on previous learning. Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced well through the many visitors and trips. For example, the federation jointly plans a trip to the Peterborough Mosque to develop pupils' understanding of different religions. However, opportunities are missed for higher attaining pupils to extend skills, such as literacy and numeracy, by applying these to an increasingly high standard in other subjects.

Adults use assessment data well to identify underperformance by pupils and the school successfully targets these pupils and effective support programmes are introduced. Transition arrangements across the school are good and help pupils settle quickly. The leadership of the special educational needs provision strengthens considerably the school's work by organising extended services and a variety of outside agencies to provide extra support for individuals. Through the number of help groups run by the school, parents are becoming involved increasingly effectively in their children's learning. The school actively encourages pupils to attend school regularly by monitoring absences carefully and working closely with families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There are some significant strengths in the leadership and management of the school including very effective teamwork at all levels and between the two schools. Leadership is strengthened by sharing the roles across the federation enabling leaders to focus on one or two aspects of the school's work, albeit across two institutions, rather than leading too many areas of responsibility. The school is equipping middle leaders with the skills to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning but the frequency of this is variable. The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively in the main and

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tackles discrimination well so that all pupils and families have good access to a range of services within the school and beyond. Most pupils achieve equally well and the school is aware of the need to improve provision for higher attainers to enable them to achieve better. Effective partnerships with other organisations, including health agencies, promote the learning and well being of pupils. The governing body is extremely supportive of all the school's work and is growing into its role as a critical friend. However, it is at an early stage of challenging the school. Measures to keep pupils safe are appropriate and arrangements to engage with parents are satisfactory. The school is a very cohesive community and there are some good examples of community cohesion in the local community, not least the benefits of federation. The school's planning recognises the need, for instance, to forge links with other schools in more ethnically diverse areas in England and globally.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

As a direct result of good leadership, planning and organisation, the school copes well with the mixed age class of Reception children and Year 1 pupils. There is always a clear focus for each group of children. Children reach standards, that though below average, are notably better than when they started, representing good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. This is because of the individual care and support from staff beginning with home visits when children first begin school and close support for families. These establish important early links between children's school life and home. A wide range of exciting learning experiences are planned and this encourages children to

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investigate these at their own pace. The learning environment buzzes with independent and purposeful activity as, for example, children make good gains in social skills when making 'pies' in the 'kitchen' set up in the classroom. Staff are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and are effective in helping children to choose activities for themselves and, as a result, they develop good skills as independent and inquisitive learners. Teachers regularly assess children's progress on a day-to-day basis and use this information well to plan next steps for learning. They have created a vibrant and stimulating learning environment both indoors and outside although use of the covered outdoor area is not continuous throughout the day, limiting the use of some larger resources.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

At a return rate of less than 15%, the number of returned questionnaires was relatively low. Most parents and carers who responded are happy with the experiences the school provides. All of these parents and carers believe that the school keeps their children safe and ensures that they enjoy school. A very large majority are of the opinion that the school meets the individual needs of their children through effective teaching and good quality support and guidance. A small minority do not feel the school is well led and managed, mainly linked to concerns of how the federation works. The inspection evidence indicates that the school is well led and that it benefits from being federated to another school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Fourfields Church of England School, Sutterton to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 17 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 118 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	47	9	53	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	59	7	41	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	5	29	10	59	2	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	5	29	10	59	2	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	47	7	41	2	12	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	41	8	47	2	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	35	10	59	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	5	29	8	47	1	6	1	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	35	9	53	1	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	3	18	9	53	1	6	1	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	29	7	41	2	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	35	6	35	1	6	3	18
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	7	41	8	47	1	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Fourfields Church of England School, Sutterton, Boston, PE20 2JN

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and you all helped us get to know your school really quickly. Your school currently gives you a good education and you reach average standards at the end of Year 6.

You make good progress particularly in reading and science.

Your behaviour is good - well done!

You told us how much you enjoy coming to school.

There is an excellent range of clubs on offer, many of which help you to enjoy school. I enjoyed seeing the work in the pottery club.

You have a good awareness of how to stay safe.

Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The way you reflect on events that happen in the world is excellent.

You play a highly important role in organising the school through your elected school council and the jobs you do, such as monitoring when lights are on but not being used.

I have asked your headteacher and staff to make your school even better by doing three things: making sure those of you who find work easy have more challenging opportunities that make you think more; planning the work that each group will do in lessons in more detail and developing new and more effective ways to help you improve your writing. I know you will help your teachers make these improvements. You can start by telling your teachers if you find work too easy and trying your hardest.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Blackmore

Lead inspector

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