

# Fountains Earth, Lofthouse Church of England Endowed Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121561
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339971
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lesley Clark

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	30
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Peter Dunbar
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Candida Rogers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Fountains Earth Lofthouse Harrogate HG3 5RZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 755289
<b>Fax number</b>	01423 755289
<b>Email address</b>	admin@fountains-earth.n-yorks.sch.uk

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Manchester M2 7LA

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## **Introduction**

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Five lessons were observed and three teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with governors, staff and two groups of pupils, including members of the school council and pupils in Years 5 and 6 with their work. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including policies relating to safeguarding, pupils' work in English and mathematics, younger children's learning journals (detailed records of children's progress and development), the school improvement plan and 11 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as completed questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- the reasons why pupils make slightly better progress in English than mathematics
- the impact of the curriculum on pupils' personal and academic development
- the impact of the indoor and outdoor provision on children's learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the part governors play in helping the school to develop further.

## **Information about the school**

This extremely small school serves rurally isolated communities in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales. The school has doubled in size in the last two years. Half the pupils come from farming backgrounds. All pupils are White British. An average proportion has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. The school is staffed by two full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and two part-time teachers. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, the Activemark, the Inclusion Quality mark and the International School Award at foundation level.

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

## 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. The outstanding curriculum is closely tailored to the needs of pupils in an isolated rural location. It provides memorable learning experiences and rich opportunities for pupils to work with pupils from other schools on exciting educational projects. Excellent partnerships with different organisations and other providers make a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement and good social skills. As a result, pupils are lively, friendly, confident young people who make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. Behaviour is excellent and attendance is high, reflecting the outstanding partnerships the school has with parents and carers. The school takes exceptionally good care of all its pupils and gives them outstanding support and guidance. Consequently, pupils flourish and have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well from their different starting points. They are well taught at each stage of their education. While overall achievement is good by the end of Key Stage 2, it tends to be better in English than mathematics. This is because pupils have more opportunities to ask questions, discuss with a partner and to work independently at their own level in literacy lessons than they do in numeracy lessons. They also do not have enough opportunities to practise mental and oral mathematics. This holds back the progress of a small group of more-able older pupils. Good provision for indoor and outdoor learning enables children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to make good progress. The records of children's learning and development are not as detailed as they should be in terms of recording children's step-by-step progress.

The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and uses self-evaluation effectively to bring about changes. Governors take a warm interest in the school but readily acknowledge they need further training to help them be more effective in holding the school to account for what it does. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Areas of weakness such as pupils' communication skills, involvement in assessing their own learning and the outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage are now notable strengths as a result. The school demonstrates its capacity to improve at a good rate.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics, especially for older more-able pupils in Key Stage 2 by:

- increasing the opportunities for pupils to practise their mental and oral skills so they learn to calculate quickly, accurately and confidently
- giving pupils more opportunities to discuss and set mathematical problems
- setting suitably challenging and independent tasks so as to accelerate progress.
- Collate systematic observations of what children know and can do in the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide a more complete, balanced and positive record of their learning and development.
- Ensure that governors have up-to-date training so they can play a more active part in challenging and supporting the school.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and achieve well. They arrive punctually and rarely miss a day. They find lessons interesting and like playing with their friends. They are proud of their written work on a wide range of topics which teachers collate into laminated books and keep in the library. Pupils especially enjoy literacy lessons when lively discussions take place. Older pupils asked 'the dragon' in 'St George and the Dragon' some searching questions about his behaviour such as 'Do you have problems with anger management?' Attainment varies widely from year to year because year groups are tiny but it is generally average to above average by the end of Year 6. Attainment in mathematics is a little lower but still broadly average. The progress of older, more-able pupils in numeracy lessons slows when they have to wait for others to catch up. Pupils agree that they do not know their times tables sufficiently well. They do not have enough opportunities to use and explain a wide range of mental and oral strategies to help them calculate efficiently and accurately. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are given good individual support in lessons.

Members of the school council are very sure that the school takes notice of their views. They regularly report their activities to the governing body and were involved in interviewing the next headteacher. School councillors point to numerous examples of where they have had an impact, including in risk assessments and designing the outdoor area. Pupils are committed to their school community. They talk excitedly about all the projects they have been involved in, such as the Animation project with four local schools funded by the National Lottery. Their spiritual development is a strength, reflecting the school's Christian focus and strong links with the parish. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures because they have lots of educational visits. They are well prepared for their future lives and firmly believe they 'must try and try again and never give up'.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

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

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

There are considerable strengths in the consistently good teaching, especially in literacy and when teachers link subjects together imaginatively. Teachers question well, tailoring the type of question to suit the age and ability of individual pupils. They use up-to-date technology well to make teaching points and ensure that all pupils know what they are aiming for. Marking successfully balances encouragement with points for improvement. Pupils use their targets well to check their work so they know what they need to do to improve its quality. Teaching is less confident in mathematics for older pupils. Explanations tend to be to the whole class. While this benefits the younger pupils it restricts opportunities for older more-able pupils to forge ahead at their own pace. Pupils' mental and oral work is not as strong as their written calculations because teachers do not give pupils enough practice each day or have high enough expectations of speed and accuracy.

The curriculum is distinctive to the school. An exceptionally wide variety of educational visits and special projects successfully expand pupils' social and cultural awareness. These often involve all pupils and make enrichment activities integral to what they learn in school. For example, pupils worked at a local reservoir with pupils from a school in Bradford who came to learn where their water came from. The impact is seen in pupils' creativity and aspirations, their delight in learning and their outstanding attendance. Pupils are known as individuals. The school's close links with families contributes successfully to pupils' learning and development. Individual education plans clearly help pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties to make progress. An outstanding feature of the support given to these pupils is the weekly review of their

progress which is then used to plan the next steps in their learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Despite having very little designated management time, the headteacher ensures that all staff are involved in helping the school to build on its strengths. This is achieved through scrupulously accurate self-evaluation and sharing of information. Much of the leading of teaching and learning is necessarily done through example, discussion and informal observations. Staff are given good pointers as to how to improve their practice. Staffing is used creatively so that staff can use their specialist expertise across the school as in art and modern foreign languages. The school tracks pupils' progress carefully. Target setting is realistic and challenging, ensuring good achievement overall. The school makes a good commitment to community cohesion. It promotes equality and diversity well. Pupils are outward-going and are developing an understanding of the ethnic diversity of Great Britain. The school has extremely good local links and is strengthening its national and international links with other schools. It has clear plans to further its provision, based on an accurate evaluation of the impact so far. Governors readily acknowledge that they are dependent on the headteacher to lead them. They have not had sufficient training to enable them to lead different committees with sufficient knowledge and confidence. As a result, while extremely supportive and having a good day-to-day understanding of what goes on at school, they have a limited impact on shaping the school's strategic direction because they do not ask the right sort of questions. However, they are rigorous in ensuring that pupils and staff are safe. All aspects of safeguarding and safe recruitment are good. Risk assessments are especially strong because they involve the pupils' views.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>

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

<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in their learning and development throughout the Reception Year. They make the best progress in their personal, social and emotional development. In part this is because they learn rapidly from the older pupils and mirror their behaviour. Children quickly become independent learners, able to make choices because they spend much of their day choosing what they do. Activities are mostly thought-provoking, especially those outdoors which invite children to use materials in interesting and constructive ways. Staff are good at encouraging children to work together and this promotes their communication and social skills well. Children make decisions and share and cooperate well. More-able children set their own challenges, for example making up stories about jungle animals as they moved them through rice and cornflakes, pretending it was raining. Children are well taught. Questioning is good and invites children to explain what they are doing, prompting them gently with words such as, 'Can you work it out?' as children tried to explain where the flood water they were creating was going to. Records of children's learning and development lack detail and balance, tending to focus on what children cannot do rather than what they can. Although staff clearly use the information to help them plan activities that reflect children's interests, opportunities are therefore missed to celebrate the small steps in children's learning. The provision is well led and managed and children are happy and well cared for.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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



Parents and carers have extremely positive views. They especially like the fact that the school is 'warm, friendly and welcoming' and think that it 'plays an important part in the wider community of the Dale'. The inspector agrees with these views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fountains Earth, Lofthouse Church of England Endowed Primary School 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 inspector received 11 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 30 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	73	3	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	91	1	9	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	91	1	9	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	64	4	36	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	5	45	6	55	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	73	3	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	91	1	9	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)	6	55	4	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	73	3	27	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	82	2	18	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	45	5	45	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	91	1	9	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	73	3	27	0	0	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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fountains Earth, Lofthouse Church of England Endowed Primary School, Harrogate, HG3 5RZ

Thank you for your very friendly welcome. A special 'thank you' goes to pupils in Years 5 and 6 who spent time showing their work to me and to the members of the school council who told me all about the work they do in school. You go to a good school. All the adults in school take excellent care of you and they take notice of your views. Your behaviour and attendance are excellent. You have an excellent understanding of safety and you work and play very happily together. Your curriculum is extremely good and takes you to many different places as well as giving you opportunities to work with children from other schools.

You write well and are good at checking your own work and making it better. Some of you, especially older pupils, are not very quick at mental and oral mathematics. Some of the older pupils who find mathematics easy tend to switch off when others are being given some help. This is what I have asked your school to do next to help you all make further progress.

- Give you more practice at mental and oral mathematics so you get better and quicker at calculating and give those of you who find learning easy some special challenges and times to work on your own.
- Make full notes about what Reception children know and can do so there is a complete record of how they are making progress.
- Provide the governors with more training so they can help the school more.

I hope you enjoy these new challenges. Perhaps you will set each other some mathematical challenges too!

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lesley Clark

Lead Inspector

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