

Fitzwilliam Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130970
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	341076
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Linda Murphy

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neal West
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2007
School address	Second Avenue Fitzwilliam Pontefract WF9 5BA
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons or part lessons were observed; eight teachers were seen; meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including pupils' books, the school's data records, policies and minutes of the governing body's meetings, and the notes of the School Improvement Partner's visit. They analysed 76 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, 103 questionnaires returned from pupils and 28 from staff.

- the achievement of groups of pupils, such as the higher attainers, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and boys
- how well leadership at all levels contributes to pupils' achievement
- whether the school has maintained the good aspects of pupils' personal development as judged at the last inspection.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark, ICT Mark and the Financial Management in Schools Standard. It is an Investor in People.

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. Pupils make good progress at each stage. From starting points in the Nursery mostly well below those typical for their age, they attain broadly average standards by Year 6. Good teaching and learning, including that in the Early Years Foundation Stage, underpin pupils' good academic and personal development. These features are well led by senior leaders. As a result, the school has made good progress since the previous inspection. For example, standards have risen in mathematics from below average to average by the end of Year 6. This is because teachers have received extra training: they are held to account for pupils' progress and action is taken should any pupil be at risk of falling behind. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and together with a governing body that is astute in its work means the school is well placed to continue its development.

Boys enter school with skills mostly at lower levels than girls and, although all groups make good progress, boys do not catch up with the girls by the time they leave school. There are more boys than girls with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a higher proportion of boys with persistent absenteeism. The good overall teaching ensures that pupils' achievement is good. Even so, there is some inconsistency in approaches, such as in the use of assessment which, although good overall and rock solid in Year 6, varies in some other year groups.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development paves the way for their good behaviour and very effective understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. Pupils enjoy school and contribute a great deal to their class, school, local and wider communities. The curriculum is based well on developing pupils' skills through a thematic approach. The school has not looked in detail at how it meets the sometimes differing needs of boys and girls.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of boys by:
 - – improving attendance from a satisfactory to good level
 - – ensuring that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given guidance to access the full breadth of activities
 - – hastening the pace and improving the quality of boys' written recording
 - – amending the curriculum so that boys consolidate their basic skills and are fully engaged and motivated to give of their best.
- Ensure that all teaching is the best it can be by:
 - – consistent use of assessment, with particular emphasis on questioning to

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challenge all groups of pupils

- – increasing the pace of the satisfactory teaching to a good pace
- – raising pupils' expectations of what they can achieve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy learning and are exceptionally keen to work with partners to discuss their work: they take pride in responding to the tasks given. Pupils behave well and thrive in the pleasant and purposeful atmosphere created in lessons.

Pupils achieve well. From levels below those expected on entry to Year 1, pupils make good progress. For the present Year 2 standards are below average in writing and mathematics because these pupils have not had the full benefit of the improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result of the focus placed upon it, reading is a strength across the school. It is helped by a good library which is well used and also regular opportunities for reading in lessons. In writing, strengths are in pupils' handwriting style because they begin to join their letters early on. Spelling and grammar, although broadly average, are weaker elements. In mathematics, calculation is an ever-improving strength based on an agreed policy of how it is taught, which is shared with parents and carers. When it comes to written recording boys do less well than girls overall because they prefer to solve problems and discuss their tasks rather than put pen to paper.

Pupils find much joy in learning and in the wonders of nature. For example, a small group stood underneath a cherry tree and when the breeze wafted the blossom in the air pupils commented on the 'pink snow storm' and one commented it made them so happy they 'bubbled inside'. Pupils have a good understanding of right from wrong and take on many and varied responsibilities in school. They say they feel very safe and certainly assemblies, such as an excellent one at Key Stage 2 on e-safety, provide good stepping stones for pupils' moral development.

Attendance has remained average since the last inspection. It is no higher because a very small minority of boys attend much less well than girls.

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

¹ 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 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Warm relationships, praise linked to pupils' work and much encouragement from staff are features of the good teaching. Pupils' skills are regularly assessed. The information is mostly used well to inform the teaching and learning. Where this is excellent the teaching is of particular note. However, its use is not yet outstanding in every class. Questioning is challenging and teachers' use of supplementary questions explores the depth of pupils' knowledge. Even so, the questions often go to those indicating they know the answer. Marking is very informative and pupils 'answer' teachers' written comments to show they understand what they need to do next. The objectives of lessons are clear and referred to throughout to keep a focus on what is being learnt. Teaching assistants are deployed carefully. These best practices are not always consistently evident across the year groups. In teaching that is satisfactory the challenge for all pupils is, on occasion, over-reliant on outcomes and can at times adversely affect the pace of learning. For example, in a literacy lesson boys were pleased to finish the minimum whereas girls continued to record as much as possible. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as their classmates overall.

Pupils' enjoyment in lessons reflects a broad and enticing curriculum. It is based on themes of study that encompass pupils' skills and interests and surround the teaching of English and mathematics. Nevertheless, it is relatively new and the particular interests and styles of learning of boys have not been fully accommodated. Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as sport and music.

Pastoral support is caring and sensitive to pupils' individual needs. Staff know their pupils very well. The learning mentor works well with families and pupils such as those whose circumstances make them most vulnerable or pupils who may at times find it difficult to behave well. The extra help is seamless and readily available. External agencies are used well to provide extra expertise in given areas.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	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?

The school is led most effectively. The headteacher receives good support from senior and middle leaders and managers which creates a good team spirit and a willingness to work together to benefit pupils. Administrative assistance clearly underpins this work. The school runs smoothly day to day so that the headteacher can concentrate on raising standards. The school promotes equality of opportunity and is at an early stage of using data to identify differences in attainment by gender. The school is active in opposing discrimination and harassment of any kind.

Safeguarding arrangements meet current government requirements: the school pays due regard to pupils' safety. Partnership work with local schools and external agencies supports the development of skills for pupils and teachers alike. Leaders and managers consult regularly with pupils, parents and carers, and staff and value their views. The governing body is very effective: it knows the community well and provides a good level of support and challenge. It brings relevant expertise to the school, has clear links to year groups and ensures that it is up to date through training. The school understands its local context well. It works consistently to promote community cohesion and pupils' good understanding of diversity in Britain and beyond. It has links, for example, with schools in Brazil, Tanzania and Georgia in the United States of America.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills are mostly well below the expected levels on entry to Nursery, but are built upon well so that by the end of the Reception Year children have learnt a great deal personally and academically. Even so, they have yet to attain the levels typically expected for their age. Boys enter with lower levels overall than girls and this gap continues into Year 1 and beyond. Children exercise choice about the lively tasks presented. They particularly like outside activities. As with inside tasks, all are well taught with plentiful adults at hand to work alongside children. Precise teaching of letter sounds and numbers helps develop children's basic skills well. Much attention is given to children's personal development so that they grow into friendly, confident and happy youngsters ready for the next step in their learning. The curriculum is well planned, although is at an early stage in fully taking on board children's individual interests. On occasion, staff are not fully alert to the choice of task that boys and girls make. For example, during the sessions observed boys monopolised the tricycles and computers while girls were more frequently seen writing and drawing. Staff use assessment well overall and many of the whole-school systems, such as developing self-assessment, have good beginnings in this stage, which promotes transition well. Good leadership and management create good teamwork and the parents and carers spoken to showed much confidence in the education their children receive.

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

Just over one third of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. Of these, the overwhelming majority were very positive about the school. The inspectors found no evidence to support the view of a small minority who had concerns about how the school deals with behaviour and a few parents and carers with concerns over the way the school takes account of their views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fitzwilliam 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 inspection team received 76 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 232 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	63	28	35	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	69	25	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	55	32	40	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	60	26	33	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	55	69	23	29	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	56	32	40	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	48	42	53	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)	41	51	35	44	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	48	38	48	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	39	34	43	12	15	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	39	42	53	5	6	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	45	56	32	40	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	59	29	36	2	3	2	3

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 pupil's 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.



19 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fitzwilliam Primary School, Pontefract, WF9 5BA

Thank you for your help during the inspection. The inspectors judge that you attend a good school. There are many good aspects, for example the way that you:

- behave well
- know well how to keep safe and live a very healthy lifestyle
- take on many extra responsibilities and work constructively in your local community.

The inspectors also judge that:

- teaching and learning are good and you are given very interesting tasks
- the school is led and managed very clearly so everyone knows what they have to do
- there is always someone at school you can turn to if you need help.

Because of the above good attributes:

- you make good progress and attain average standards by the end of Year 6
- the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start.

To help the school improve even more the inspectors judge it needs to:

- help boys and girls do as well as each other
- improve attendance to an above average level
- ensure that all teaching is the best it can be.

All of you can help by:

- continuing to work hard and enjoy school.

All of your families can help by:

- ensuring that all of you attend school every day.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Linda Murphy

Lead Inspector

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