

Folksworth CofE Primary School

Apreece Road, Folksworth, Peterborough PE7 3TY

Inspection dates	15–16 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leadership and management have remained good since the last inspection. Senior leaders and governors have worked effectively to improve outcomes and the quality of teaching. They are identifying the right priorities to drive further improvement.
- Good teaching and a range of relevant learning experiences in the early years enable children to make good progress. The proportion of children who have reached a good level of development since the last inspection has been above that nationally – and, in some cases, well above.
- Good teaching is enabling pupils currently in Key Stages 1 and 2 to make at least the expected amount of progress, and an increasing proportion are making rapid progress.
- The school works well with other agencies to promote the learning and welfare of pupils who need extra help, including those who have special educational needs or disability.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and enjoy learning. Their personal development is good. The warm and friendly atmosphere means that pupils feel safe and valued as individuals.
- The school has effective procedures for assessing pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. Leaders make good use of assessment information to check on pupils' progress and to identify where improvement is needed in these areas.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teachers do not plan to meet the needs of the mixed ages and abilities in their classes as well as they could, especially in mathematics. Leaders' checks on this aspect of teaching are not as rigorous as they could be.
- Standards in English grammar, punctuation and spelling were below average at the end of Year 6 in 2015. They are only improving slowly.
- Parents are not as closely involved as they could be in their children's learning in the early years.
- The school has developed an assessment system for non-core subjects but it has not yet begun to put it into practice.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and increase the proportion of pupils who make better than expected progress by:
 - making sure that teachers consistently plan activities and approaches that meet the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in their classes, especially in mathematics
 - sharpening the rigour and frequency of leaders' checks on teachers' planning so that all teaching is as good as the best within the school
 - placing greater emphasis on the teaching of English grammar and punctuation, regularly reminding pupils of the importance of this aspect of their writing and ensuring that they make greater use of dictionaries to check their spellings
 - providing parents in the early years with more information about what they could do to promote their children's learning at home, including through everyday activities
 - putting into practice the newly developed assessment system for non-core subjects and using the resulting information to inform teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher provides good leadership and has received strong support from the deputy headteacher in her work to increase the rate of pupils' progress and improve the quality of teaching.
- While the school has been unable to recruit a teacher of sufficient calibre yet to fill the vacancy in the Year 5 and 6 class, the headteacher's decision temporarily to teach the class for part of the week has been a positive move. It reflects her determination that pupils should receive good teaching. It is contributing to improved outcomes for pupils and helping to set high expectations for other staff. In the meantime, the sharing of senior leadership responsibilities between the headteacher and deputy headteacher is working well.
- Senior leaders are right in their evaluation of the school's effectiveness and they are taking appropriate action to bring about further improvement. The headteacher's judgements about the quality of teaching are very accurate, as evidenced by her identification of strengths and areas for development in joint observations during the inspection.
- Leaders make good use of assessment information to identify where improvements could be made. Half-termly meetings with teachers to check pupils' progress help to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities. Leaders tackle any form of harassment or discrimination effectively. They have established an environment where relationships are good, pupils can flourish and staff morale is high.
- The school makes good use of external expertise and, in response to the 2015 National Curriculum results, leaders have employed a mathematics adviser to provide training and coaching for teachers to promote greater mastery and depth in the teaching of mathematics. This has led to improvements in the teaching of mathematics, especially in better meeting the needs of more-able pupils.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium funding to employ staff to provide a range of support for eligible pupils. This has included work in small groups and on a one-to-one basis in reading, writing and mathematics. It enabled disadvantaged pupils to make at least as much progress as their classmates in 2015 and ensures that gaps are narrowing between the achievement of these pupils and other pupils nationally.
- Leaders use primary sports funding well to promote pupils' physical development and well-being. Partnership with a local secondary school and with sports coaches has developed pupils' skills and provided increased opportunities for them to take part in competitions as well as improving the teaching of physical education. Pupils have received training in athletics and had the chance to take part in after-school clubs, such as those in street dance and multi-skills, and in holiday sports days.
- The curriculum meets pupils' personal and academic needs effectively. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about topics they have studied, and learning in lessons is enriched by a variety of educational visits, residential trips for older pupils and school clubs. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, including British values; tolerance and mutual respect are at the heart of the school's values.
- The local authority supports and challenges the school appropriately through regular reviews of the impact of its work. The authority has provided valuable support in the analysis of data, in developing provision in the early years and in a recent detailed audit of safeguarding.
- Senior leaders are rigorous in monitoring most aspects of teachers' work so that weaknesses are tackled. Leaders regularly visit lessons and look at pupils' books to pinpoint where teaching could be improved. They provide appropriate training and coaching for individual teachers to develop aspects of teaching. However, they are not as rigorous as they could be in checking to make sure that teachers' planning consistently meets the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in their classes.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body is ambitious for the school and takes an active part in the drive for improvement.
 - Governors have a good awareness of the school's effectiveness and understand what information reveals about pupils' progress. They ask challenging questions about the progress of different groups of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, and hold senior leaders to account.
 - Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning. They make sure that the school has effective arrangements for managing teachers' performance so that good teaching is recognised and weaknesses are tackled.
 - Governors oversee the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively and

have a good understanding of how aspects of provision, such as the pupil committees, model the British democratic process.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and the school has acted on the development points identified in its recent safety audit. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure pupils are suitably protected. The school works well in partnership with parents and other agencies to create a safe culture in the school. Much emphasis is placed through the curriculum on promoting pupils' awareness of how to stay safe in different situations.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection, when teaching was found to require improvement. The school's own records of teaching, work in pupils' books and an increase in their rate of progress show that teaching and learning are now good.
- The teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics is good, and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is a clear strength. Pupils' books show that teachers usually set them interesting and challenging work. Pupils have good opportunities to write for a range of purposes and draw on their literacy skills well in a number of other subjects.
- Teachers have very positive relationships with their pupils and have established a good atmosphere for learning. They normally use a wide range of resources to support pupils' learning, including practical equipment, interactive whiteboards and electronic tablets.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up quickly. Staff who work with pupils with autistic spectrum disorders show clear insight into their needs and make good use of specialist strategies such as visual timetables and symbols to support their learning.
- The teaching of more-able pupils has improved since the last inspection and this is, rightly, a priority in the school development plan. In English, pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 are encouraged to write imaginatively and to select their vocabulary with care to have a particular effect on their audience. In a lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher's very skilled questioning and explanations resulted in pupils thinking deeply about their use of language. They quickly came up with very effective descriptions of the butterflies in their story, including: 'a dainty and dazzling speck on earth', 'a pretty patterned rainbow' and 'stunned into fascination at the colours spreading from my prism-like wings'.
- Recent work with a mathematics adviser has led to teachers having greater understanding and strategies to support the development and assessment of mastery in mathematics. In Years 5 and 6 in particular, lessons and pupils' books show that teachers are now setting more-able pupils problems that provide a greater level of challenge.
- Teachers' planning for what takes place in lessons and for learning over time is generally good, and it is a particular strength in the early years and in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teachers share information with pupils about what they are meant to learn and let them know what they need to do to succeed.
- Nevertheless, on occasion, teachers do not think clearly enough about what they want the different ages and abilities in their classes to learn or how best to achieve this. This was evident in a lesson during the inspection where all the class worked on the same times table, though some pupils already knew it thoroughly, and in a lesson on telling the time, where some of the work was not well pitched to the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Homework tasks contribute meaningfully to pupils' learning, especially at Key Stages 1 and 2. For instance, in Years 5 and 6, the main emphasis is on providing practice in solving mathematical problems and on aspects of their writing.
- A new marking policy sets clear expectations and teachers are generally putting these into practice well so that pupils receive helpful advice about how to improve their work. They mostly respond well to their teachers' comments.
- The school has, rightly, identified the need to improve pupils' grasp of English grammar, punctuation and spelling, as standards in this area were below average at the end of Year 6 in 2015. It has introduced regular tests and is providing greater coverage of grammar in lessons and for homework. This is having some effect but teachers are still not placing as much emphasis as they could on raising pupils' awareness about the importance of grammar, punctuation and spelling. They do not always point out important errors when marking pupils' work or make sure that pupils use dictionaries regularly to check their spellings.

- The school has introduced an effective system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. This is providing valuable information for teachers and providing good opportunities for leaders to identify where pupils are making rapid progress and to pinpoint gaps in their learning.
- The school has developed a system for assessing pupils' learning in non-core subjects but it has not yet put this into practice. This makes it difficult to identify exactly how effective teaching and learning are in these subjects for different groups of pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils have a clear understanding about what they need to do to be successful learners. They listen carefully to their teachers and concentrate well in lessons. Pupils take a pride in their work and usually present it with care. Pupils of all ages are confident to share their ideas and respect each other's contributions.
- Pupils enjoy school and they are positive about how it supports their personal development. A group of pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the responsibilities they have as members of the pupil committees that work together on different areas of school life. This role provides them with considerable responsibility as well as giving pupils a real voice in school improvement.
- The school promotes pupils' emotional and physical well-being effectively. In this small school, pupils are known and valued as individuals. Furthermore, the before-and-after-school club provides good personal support for the many pupils who attend and offers a range of interesting activities.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They know about different types of bullying and the importance of taking precautions to protect themselves when using the internet. They say that there is very little bullying in school and they are confident that staff will deal with any concerns they may have.
- Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and gain a clear understanding of British values. They respond well to opportunities for reflection in assemblies and enjoy taking part in celebrations, including those of other cultures. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and have a clear understanding of the importance of fairness and showing consideration for others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection, and pupils conduct themselves well in lessons, at lunchtimes and around the school. In all year groups, pupils respond quickly to instructions and requests from staff.
- Most parents consider that behaviour is managed well. The school has good systems for promoting appropriate behaviour and pupils value the reward systems. Just occasionally, some teachers could set even higher expectations for behaviour when pupils move between activities, but disruption in lessons is rare.
- The school is effective in the way it tackles persistent absence. As a result, the attendance rate has improved since the last inspection and it is now above average.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Information from the tracking of pupils' attainment and progress, work in their books and in lessons show that current pupils are making good progress. Pupils are being prepared effectively for the next stage of their education.
- The proportion of children who reached a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was well above average in 2014 and above average in 2015. In both years, children made good progress from their starting points on entry to the school. Current children are making good progress and working above expectations for their age in most areas of learning.
- The school's results in the Year 1 screening of pupils' knowledge of phonics have been above average over the last two years and all pupils have reached the expected standard by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' attainment in reading at Key Stages 1 and 2 has been consistently above average. Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2015 was broadly average in mathematics and writing, where all pupils reached the expected standard (Level 4). In reading, the proportion of pupils who reached a higher standard (Level 5 or above) was above average.

- There has been gradual improvement in pupils' overall progress since the last inspection. In 2015, pupils at Key Stage 2 made good progress in reading and most pupils made expected or better progress in writing. However, more-able pupils made less progress during their time in Years 3 to 6 than similar groups nationally in writing and particularly in mathematics.
- Lessons visited and work in pupils' books show that current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- Pupils now have far more opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning than they did at the last inspection. The impact of this is particularly evident in the redrafting of their written work in English.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is too small to compare these pupils' attainment with that of their classmates or of pupils nationally without identifying individuals. The school provides good support for disadvantaged pupils and they are currently making at least as much progress as the rest of their class.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are making good progress. The school provides effective support for pupils who need to catch up quickly and leaders are focusing appropriately on those who did less well than expected in 2015 in order to raise their achievement. The very few pupils for whom English is an additional language and those of minority ethnic heritage make similar progress to their classmates.
- Whereas more-able pupils did less well than other groups at Key Stage 2 in 2015, lesson observations and their books show that they are now making faster progress, including in writing and mathematics. Improved opportunities to develop their mathematical thinking and to tackle more complex problems is providing them with greater challenge and extending their learning.
- At Key Stages 1 and 2, more-able pupils are producing thoughtful pieces of writing. Pupils use drafting and redrafting to very good effect which results in some high-quality work, including in Year 2. In Year 6, more-able pupils choose their language with great care. A pupil set the scene for a story as follows: 'The sky was dull and grey. The gusting wind howled like an untamed wolf. The seagulls squealed. The sea's almighty power had been unleashed, unloading everything at the lighthouse. Total mayhem struck. The white horses raced over the bridge, using it as a hurdle. The waves crashed at everything in sight. It was eye-catching, breathtaking.'

Early years provision

is good

- Provision in the early years is led and managed well. The permanent early years teacher has been absent through illness for a considerable time. However, the quality of provision is still good because teaching is being provided by a long-term supply teacher who has a very good understanding of the learning of young children.
- Outcomes at the end of the Reception Year have been good over the last two years and children currently in the early years class are progressing well in the different areas of learning. They are being prepared effectively for moving up to Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good and children make exceptional gains in their skills and knowledge in some lessons, especially in teacher-led sessions. Highly skilled questioning enabled children to make rapid gains in mathematics and in reading and spelling during the inspection. More-able children received a high level of challenge and had excellent opportunities to explain their thinking as they explored the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. The teacher's high expectations were evident when she introduced them to the term 'vertices' as the correct word for 'corners'.
- The teacher provides many opportunities for pupils to solve problems for themselves and the spacious outdoor area offers a wealth of interesting activities.
- The school uses effective methods for assessing and tracking children's development, and staff use this information well to identify children's learning needs. They carefully target children who need extra help, including those who have special educational needs or disability, and work closely with external agencies where children need specialist support. The school is making good use of additional funding to narrow the gaps for disadvantaged children.
- The teacher communicates her expectations precisely so that children know exactly what is expected of them. As a result, they behave very well and concentrate for extended periods of time. The learning opportunities provided and the positive relationships children develop enable them to make good progress in their personal development. They learn in a safe environment where staff pay careful attention to their welfare.

- Partnership with parents and with pre-school settings is good when children join the school and this helps them to settle in well. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress and have the chance to contribute comments to their learning journals. Children take reading books home regularly and there have been some information sessions for parents about aspects of learning, such as the teaching of phonics. However, the school does not provide as much regular information as it could about how parents might support their children's learning at home, including through everyday activities.

School details

Unique reference number	110812
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10001952

This inspection 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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Duncan
Headteacher	Caroline Adams
Telephone number	01733 240562
Website	www.folksworthprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	office@folksworth.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 December 2013

Information about this school

- Folksworth is smaller than most primary schools.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- Almost half the pupils attend the school's before-and-after-school club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Apart from class 1, which provides solely for children in the early years, pupils learn in mixed-age classes: in Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.
- The school has had staffing difficulties over the last year and been unable so far to appoint a replacement teacher for the Year 5 and 6 class. In the meantime, the headteacher teaches the class for part of the week, while a long-term temporary teacher takes the class on the remaining days. A long-term temporary teacher is also teaching in class 1 while the permanent teacher is on sick leave.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited a wide variety of lessons, nearly all jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work in different subjects, across all year groups.
- The inspector looked at data and the school's tracking information to determine the progress pupils are making across the school and in the early years.
- The 37 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, together with written comments received from parents during the inspection. Informal discussions also took place with a few parents when they brought their children to school. The inspector looked at the nine responses of staff to their completed questionnaires.
- The inspector held meetings with school leaders, seven members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and with a group of pupils.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation including: safeguarding policies and procedures; records of behaviour and attendance; minutes of governing body meetings and records of their visits to school; the school improvement plan and the school's self-evaluation of its work.

Inspection team

Margaret Goodchild, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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