



The Fourfields CofE School, Sutterton

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120559
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 291780
Inspection dates 13–14 November 2006
Reporting inspector George Knights

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Park Avenue
School category	Voluntary controlled		Sutterton, Sutterton
Age range of pupils	4–11		Boston, Lincolnshire PE20 2JN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01205 460547
Number on roll (school)	101	Fax number	01205 460906
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Adrian Down
		Headteacher	Mrs Christine Bishop
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Fourfields is a smaller than average sized school serving the villages of Sutterton, Wigtoft, Fosdyke and Algarkirk. Pupils join the school in the term after their fourth birthday. Attainment on entry is below average and the number of pupils who have identified learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average. More pupils than is usual join or leave the school during each school year. The school has a small but increasing number of pupils for whom English is not their first language. Pupils come from a variety of socio economic backgrounds. The number eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school holds the Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and this is also the school's own judgement. Pupils settle well into the Foundation Year and make good progress so that, by the time they enter Year 1, they are working at expected standards. During the recent past the school has experienced severe staffing difficulties that have resulted in pupils underachieving as they moved through the school. This has been reflected in results for English, mathematics and science in recent national tests, particularly at the end of Year 6. Although these results have been broadly average, pupils have not done as well as expected. Decisive action has been taken to improve this situation and pupils now in the school are doing much better. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is now good in Years 3 to 6. This improvement stems from much-improved teaching, particularly for older pupils. Teaching and learning are now satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Year and in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are enthusiastic learners because they find their lessons challenging and enjoyable. They want to do well, both for themselves and for their teachers. They behave well and help one another.

The school is now fulfilling its mission to provide 'a happy, secure, stimulating environment within which all children are valued, encouraged to care for others and strive for excellence in all they do'. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils and their parents feel confident that pupils are safe and looked after well. Pupils are encouraged to take good care of one another, for instance through the peer mentoring scheme and the work of playground pals. The care, support and guidance the school provides are good, with the needs of each individual being met. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities receive effective support, as do those for whom English is not their home language. Induction arrangements for the many pupils who arrive during the school year are good. Lively, welcoming, classrooms help these pupils to settle quickly and become integrated into the school community.

Pupils receive good guidance on how well they are doing and they talk confidently about what they need to do to improve their work. In keeping with the school's Christian ethos, a strong emphasis is placed on caring for one another, both in the school and the wider community. Pupils are proud of the work they do to support others less fortunate than themselves. The school provides a sound and improving curriculum. Teachers are working successfully to make more links between subjects and further work on this is planned. Pupils enjoy taking part in the extra-curricular activities and the trips and visits arranged for them. Very good attention is paid to helping pupils become aware that they are growing up in a diverse cultural society. Involvement in a Young Enterprise is planned as a means of enriching the satisfactory work already being undertaken to prepare pupils for adult life.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has, through a challenging period, maintained a clear view of what the school seeks to achieve. Teaching and learning has subsequently improved and a regular programme of training is enabling the best practice to be shared among colleagues. Much improved staffing arrangements and a reinvigorated governing body have enabled the school to begin to move forward again. A detailed and valuable plan for further improvement

identifies pertinent priorities and sets out a clear programme of activity. Its implementation is already evident in the good work that the school is doing this year. Effective monitoring of performance has helped shape these priorities and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work is improving. The role of the subject coordinators is not yet extended to ensure their active involvement in school improvement. Similarly that of governors in evaluating the work of the school is still at an early stage. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory and the school now gives satisfactory value for money. The capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Consolidate and build on recent improvements in teaching and learning in order to improve standards, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- Extend the role of subject leaders in order to share management more widely and to engage them in evaluation of the school's work.
- Involve governors more in shaping the direction of the school and evaluating the impact of its work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Results in national assessments at the end of Year 2 have, in recent years, been broadly average and this represents satisfactory achievement for the pupils involved. Results in national tests for Year 6 pupils have also been broadly average, but the pupils involved did not do as expected. Better teaching this year is enabling pupils currently in the school to achieve well, especially in the Foundation stage and in Years 3 to 6. Teachers ensure that the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are met and these pupils make similar progress to others in their class. The school has not met its targets in recent years. However, recent improvements mean that pupils currently in school are on course to reach the challenging targets it has set for the coming year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of all pupils is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave well and work hard in lessons. Their attendance is satisfactory. Pupils quickly become confident and enthusiastic learners and establish good relationships with one another and with adults. Steps taken to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are effective, with a particularly good focus on multi-cultural awareness. Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe and they talk knowledgeably about the need to adopt healthy lifestyles. They are kind, helpful and considerate to others. They contribute well to the local and wider community, especially through many fund-raising activities. Pupils successfully acquire the essential skills that will equip them well for the next stages of education and for adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall and is good in both the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. Teaching has improved considerably in the recent past and consequently the older and youngest pupils are now achieving well. Teachers provide activities that engage and stimulate pupils. A major improvement has been in matching work to the needs and abilities of individuals so that all can make good progress. Good care is taken to support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities well, either by modifying tasks or by occasional withdrawal for individual or small group work. Teachers maintain detailed records of pupils' progress and they use this assessment information well to set pupils challenging targets for them. They mark pupils' work carefully and pupils value the guidance they get on how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision is satisfactory and has improved following a recent review. Teachers have begun to link work in different subjects together well and plans are in place to extend this linkage. Lessons are generally varied and stimulating, with many activities enabling pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. Good work is being undertaken to provide activities that improve pupils' writing, because this has been a weakness in the school for some time. Lessons are enriched by trips and visits and by special events, such as a multi-cultural week, and by extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Arrangements to ensure that pupils are safe are applied carefully by all staff and are taken seriously by pupils. Steps to safeguard learners are fully in place. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is good. Arrangements for inducting the many pupils who join the school during the term are effective, enabling these pupils to settle quickly into school routines. The work of class teachers in meeting individual needs is supported well by both teaching assistants and learning mentors. The tracking of pupils' progress is thorough and the analysis of pupils' performance is used skilfully to plan future work. Teachers keep pupils well informed about the progress they are making and guide them on how to make their work better. Pupils understand the individual targets that teachers set for them. Good arrangements are made to find out pupils' views, both through questionnaires and the working of the school council. The school also regularly seeks the views of parents, who are very confident that their children are safe, well cared-for and challenged to do their best.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher gives a very strong, clear lead. She has ensured that the school has continued to function during a period when staff changes might potentially have undermined its success. All members of the school community now work together well. A clear vision for the future, set within a context of shared values, is helping guide future developments well. The plan for improvement, which is being implemented successfully, identifies pertinent priorities and actions necessary. The analysis of pupils' performance is thorough and effective in helping set challenging but attainable targets. The school has an accurate overall evaluation of how well it is doing. Steps are in place to ensure the greater involvement of staff in the evaluation of the school's work. Until recently governors had not been fulfilling their responsibilities adequately. Changes in personnel and effective training have rectified this situation. However, governors are still not yet involved enough in helping shape the strategic direction of the school or evaluating its work. The school makes sound use of the resources available to it.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

15 November 2006

Dear Children

The Fourfields C of E Primary School, Park Avenue, Sutterton, Boston, Lincs, PE20 2JN

I would like to thank you all very much for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I really enjoyed coming to your lessons, joining you in assembly and watching you play together. Thank you for talking to me about your work and helping me to find my way around.

You clearly enjoy your time in school and your teachers and their assistants help you learn and get along well together. I was pleased to see how you welcome new pupils to the school and help them to settle quickly. You told me how much your school has improved recently and this is evident in the progress you are making in lessons. A big improvement has been in the teaching, especially for those of you in Years 3 to 6. There are still more improvements that teachers need to make in order that you can do even better, especially in English, mathematics and science. You obviously feel very safe in school and this is because your teachers and other members of staff get to know you well, care for you and make sure that you get the support you need. Your teachers give you good guidance on how well you are doing and how you can improve your work and you told me how helpful this is.

Your headteacher has put together a useful plan for making the school even better. This plan includes getting teachers more involved in leading improvements in subjects and in making sure that governors are more involved in the life of the school. Both of these things need doing. The plan also contains exciting ideas about providing more activities that will help you improve your thinking skills and make more links between the different subjects you learn.

My very best wishes to you. I hope that you all do very well in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Knights

Lead inspector