

Fulbridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134461
Local Authority	City of Peterborough
Inspection number	328904
Inspection dates	2–3 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Killman HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	0–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	681
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	17
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Bath
Headteacher	Mr Iain Erskine
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Keeton Road Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE1 3JQ
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Age group	0–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school in an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. A significant proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the largest groups are Pakistani and Eastern European. About two thirds of the pupils come from a diverse range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost half of the pupils have a home language or languages other than English; a third are at an early stage of learning English. Some pupils leave or join the school mid-year. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school has achieved several awards including Artsmark, Activemark, Healthy Schools and Race Equality. There is a Children's Centre on site that opened in May 2008. This is inspected and reported on separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory standard of education and care for its pupils with some good features. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and the school is proud of the high levels of racial harmony within it. Most parents have high regard for all that the school provides for their children. Several parents describe it as one of the 'best schools in town' because their children find school 'fun and inspiring'. Leadership and management provide the school with a satisfactory capacity to secure improvement and to ensure that the school continues to head in the right direction.

Since the school's last inspection in 2005, the school has moved forward in some areas. For example, the school's strategies to raise attendance to the national average have borne fruit. Nonetheless, improvement in raising standards has been slow. Following a sharp dip in standards in 2007, the headteacher and governors took decisive action to restructure the leadership team with clearer strategic roles and responsibilities and to hold teachers to account for pupils' achievement. These well chosen actions have contributed to significant gains in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2. The school's data shows that although standards are below national averages they are rising and most pupils in middle and upper school are now making adequate progress. The school is energetically tackling a legacy of underachievement. However, the same improvement is not apparent in lower school where standards remain well below average. The school is not evaluating new approaches used in teaching in Key Stage 1 rigorously enough to ensure that they are working and making a difference to pupils' learning.

One of the school's strengths is teamwork. Staff are committed to improvement, hard working and responsive to change. Teaching is satisfactory, with some good features. The best teaching generates a sense of urgency with a variety of well-chosen, challenging activities that engage pupils and encourage productivity. As a result, in these lessons, pupils make good progress. An underlying weakness in some teaching is that information about pupils' prior learning is not being used accurately enough to plan the next steps. As a result, the pupils often work on tasks that are well within their capabilities.

The curriculum meets most pupils' individual needs and is impressively enriched. The pupils have much to look forward to and enjoy in school and out of hours. The school celebrates cultural diversity and promotes community cohesion effectively with an excellent programme of extra-curricular activities that promote pupils' good cultural development. One parent commented that 'learning to play Bhangara instruments gives my son an opportunity to learn about his culture'. Staff work hard to make the building's interior and outdoor play spaces attractive and inviting and to make learning exciting.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The school cares for children aged from six weeks to three years old in the 'Little Gems Nursery', from where they move into Fulbridge Gems and on into Reception classes. Staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and all welfare requirements are met. Good induction arrangements ensure children and their parents are well prepared for their first days in school. All children enjoy learning through play indoors and outside where they participate in a variety of exciting activities. Relationships are very positive and this is a key factor in helping the children to settle so happily and learn routines quickly. Children behave well and, because teaching is supportive

and encouraging, they develop as confident and independent learners. Staff have a good understanding of how young children learn and use this knowledge well to plan an exciting curriculum, covering all areas of learning through a good balance of teacher led and child selected activities. Leadership and management are good and close attention is given to observing and assessing children in order to plan the next steps in learning. The school acknowledges that there is a need to strengthen links as children progress from one class to the next. Children make good progress so that by the end of the Reception year their attainment is close to that typically found for this age in all areas of learning, except in communication, language and literacy where it is below.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1.
- In curriculum planning, ensure that pupils' prior learning is fully taken into account so that their learning builds successfully on what they already know and can do.
- Ensure that self-evaluations, especially of new approaches used in teaching, focus on the impact that provision has on learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory but the progress they make is uneven from their starting points, which are well below expectations when they start in Reception. There is a careful analysis of attainment and progress of specific groups of pupils in order to promote pupils' achievement. This approach has been effective in identifying, for example, that White British boys' achievement is significantly lower than all other groups. The school has responded appropriately by introducing specific ways of working to improve boys' engagement in lessons for example by extending their access to computers and making tasks more stimulating and interesting. As a result, the gap is closing. Pupils who find learning more difficult receive adequate support to ensure their satisfactory progress. Work seen in pupils' English books shows that, in some classes, practice in writing is not regular enough and marking does not always direct pupils well enough towards achieving their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are keen to learn and pupils usually participate well in lessons, with a confidence that grows steadily as they get older. The pupils know how to stay safe and be healthy, and where to seek support from adults if they need it. They are polite and show a genuine concern for each other. Pupils make a valuable contribution to the community through their involvement in community projects, such as visiting senior citizens during the year and organising and managing the school fete. They value and respect the work of the school council, confident that their representatives have influence in decision-making processes. Pupils thoughtfully express their views about the curriculum and the school responds to them, for example, by extending the school visits programme. Although their skills in literacy and numeracy are underdeveloped, the good

speaking and listening skills and their demonstrable capacity for teamwork equips them with valuable skills for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers plan conscientiously and in the best lessons provide pupils with activities that are lively, challenge their thinking and accelerate their learning. Relationships are strong creating a positive climate for learning. The staff manage their classes well ensuring that no time is wasted but some are inclined to overly direct the pupils and, in doing so, they restrict opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. Most teaching assistants and the learning mentors play a positive part in supporting learning, especially for pupils needing extra help. When learning and therefore progress is less effective, activities in the lesson do not challenge and engage all pupils especially the most able. This occurs when teachers do not use assessment information well enough to ensure that learning builds effectively on what pupils already know and can do. Marking is used satisfactorily by some teachers to move learning forward, but less so by others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The balanced, rounded curriculum meets all requirements and there is an appropriate focus on the development of pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy, science, and information and communication technology (ICT). Cross-curricular links are strong. For example, pupils practise their reading, writing and investigative skills when learning about topics such as the Ancient Greeks and the Second World War. In order to raise achievement and create flexible, independent and confident learners, the school is keen to provide a more creative curriculum. To this end, the school is participating in several initiatives, such as the Oasis project investigating the impact on learning when pupils move in and out of the school mid-year. Although it is still early days, the impact of these projects is starting to be reflected in rising standards in Year 6 and improving achievement in Key Stage 2. However, there is more to be done regarding provision for the most able and the transition curriculum as children move from Reception to Year 1.

Take up is high for the many clubs on offer such as the popular school choir, rock music club, dance and drama. Themed weeks such as 'Shine' week and residential trips contribute to pupils' good enjoyment of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures for safeguarding, including child protection, are fully in place and the school promotes pupils' health and safety. The school provides a high level of pastoral care, so that pupils feel secure and happy in their relationships with staff. This is especially true for the high number of pupils moving into the school, many of whom are new arrivals in Britain, who benefit from good induction procedures. A new tracking system has been established which efficiently analyses how quickly pupils are moving towards their academic targets. Teachers are more aware of any pupil at risk of underachieving so that they can take remedial action quickly. The tracking system is also beginning to give staff an indication of how far any extra support given to pupils is being effective. There are good systems in place to monitor and follow up absences.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher is appropriately focused on improvement. The leadership team has raised awareness of the benefit of analysing and using data to improve performance. This is work in progress and there has not been sufficient time to embed systems fully and consistently into practice across the school. However, there is clear evidence to show that this is having an impact in raising achievement in Key Stage 2. The school's systems for setting realistic and challenging targets are now grounded in detailed, regular analysis and tracking of pupils' attainment and progress. Senior managers and middle leaders regularly observe colleagues teaching and provide support to help those who need to improve. They have an overview of the effectiveness of teaching, but do not always focus rigorously enough how effectively pupils are learning. The leadership team has a reasonably accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses to inform strategic planning. The governing body fulfil their role as critical friend well; governance is good. Pupils benefit from the school's good partnership working with other schools and agencies.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

4 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fulbridge Primary School, Peterborough, PE1 3JQ

Earlier this week I visited your school for two days with three other inspectors. We met many of you and watched you learning in class. We also looked at your work and talked to your teachers. You were very polite and well mannered. Thank you so much.

You and your parents told us that you enjoy school and we are pleased that you all now come to school regularly unless you are ill. We agree that Fulbridge teachers and pupils are happy people. We have thought carefully about all that we saw and I would like to highlight the school's good features as well as those that need to be improved.

- Your school makes sure that you learn about and respect different cultures and traditions.
- You behave well in class and around the school. It was a pleasure watching you playing so happily outside and the kindness you show to one another.
- You know how to stay safe and be healthy.
- There is something for everyone to enjoy at Fulbridge with so many clubs and visits to look forward to.
- Your learning gets off to a flying start in Nursery and Reception.
- The governors make sure that the school provides you with all that you need to be successful learners.

To make the school even better we have asked the governors and your teachers to:

- make sure that when you move from Reception you continue to make good progress in literacy and numeracy
- plan your work carefully so that it is not too easy or too difficult
- check to see if new ways of working are helping you to learn even better.

The best thing about your school is you. Keep working hard to make sure that you learn all that you can before you leave Fulbridge.

Yours sincerely

Linda Killman

Her Majesty's Inspector