

Fowlmere Primary School

The Butts, Fowlmere, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 7SL

Inspection dates

1–2 November 2017

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

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say they are happy and safe. Pupils are enthusiastic and engaged in their learning.
- Many leaders are new to their posts. However, they have high aspirations and lead by example.
- The leadership team, including governors, has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school. Leaders have accurately identified areas of improvement and the effect of these can be seen around the school.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and plan learning that meets the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Pupils behave well. In class, they show respect towards each other, they follow instructions and let other pupils learn. At playtime, they enjoy playing together.
- The early years provision enables children to make good progress. The early years curriculum is well designed and ensures that children are ready for Year 1.
- In some lessons, teaching is not sufficiently focused on the intended learning to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Good practice in teaching in the school to improve pupil outcomes is not currently being shared with all teachers.
- Some children in the early years could be challenged more to enable more to attain at the highest level. The outdoor space could be developed further to enhance children's learning experience.
- The high standards as seen in mathematics and literacy are not yet applied across the whole curriculum.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils receive teaching that allows them to make the progress they are capable of, by:
 - sharing the strongest practice across the school with all staff
 - addressing any misconceptions quickly, so that pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve
 - carefully monitoring the performance of girls in mathematics and writing for higher attainers.
- Apply the same high standards as seen in mathematics and literacy, across the whole curriculum, by:
 - making sure that pupils are aware of the expectations required in all areas of learning
 - rigorous monitoring of learning, by leaders, in areas of the curriculum such as science, history and geography.
- Enable more children to achieve at a higher level in the early years, by:
 - challenging the children with age-appropriate problem-solving activities
 - developing the outdoor area to broaden the children's learning experiences.
- Continue to develop middle leaders across the school so that:
 - professional development of staff has an effect on outcomes for all pupils
 - all leaders are able to contribute to the development of the school
 - wider leadership is able to support the current leadership team.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The newly formed leadership team has set high expectations for all pupils and staff. It is clear about how to bring about the best outcomes for all pupils, and has set about this with great determination.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher have developed very positive working relationships between staff, which has resulted in a shared culture of responsibility. All staff want the pupils to do well. They are incredibly supportive of each other and share a 'can do' attitude.
- The monitoring of pupils' achievement is accurate and effective in reading, writing and mathematics. The headteacher has a clear understanding of what steps need to be taken across the school to improve outcomes in these areas.
- Teachers and teaching assistants talk about how professional development has helped them to improve. Training in areas such as reading, phonics, writing and 'after-school club' strategies have benefited staff and pupils. The effect of this training is demonstrated through the good progress that is seen in books over time.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively in the school. Identified children are supported with additional provision where required. The school monitors carefully how these pupils are performing. Achievement data and evidence in books show good progress for disadvantaged pupils.
- The sports premium funding that the school receives is used effectively. For example, teachers work alongside a specialist physical education (PE) coach during the week and use this opportunity to develop their own PE teaching skills. Staff also receive swimming coaching to improve the quality of swimming instruction provided for pupils.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is effectively used. For example, voice-activated software is used to support pupils with their writing, with positive results.
- The school has recently implemented its broad 'Cornerstones curriculum', which helps pupils to learn new skills and develop their wider knowledge. This cross-curricular approach to learning is still new, but early signs indicate that the pupils are benefiting from its creative design. Pupils say they enjoy the art and music opportunities provided, with Years 3/4 pupils saying 'we loved using the spray cans for graffiti' during a lesson based on graffiti.
- Pupils talk fondly about their learning opportunities and understand how important it is to learn about other cultures and beliefs. One pupil commented how 'it makes us more tolerant of others' when discussing why religious education is taught at school.
- The school has five core values, which underpin its vision and ethos: confidence, ambition, caring, teamwork and determination. All staff model these values well, which supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The development of pupils' well-being is threaded throughout the school. Assemblies, the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum, trips to museums and forest schools all contribute towards building good relationships and developing resilience in pupils.

- The school is successful in promoting British values. For example, pupils took part in a mock general election campaign last year where they learned about democracy, political structures and voting. The pupils also take part in film festival events in Cambridge and they support local and national charities. Years 1/2 pupils were learning about the Royal family, including a visit from the 'Queen' and a royal tea party.
- The school runs an after-school club. This is well organised and offers pupils a range of art and craft activities, plus games and a snack. The staff have created a warm, friendly atmosphere where pupils behave well and enjoy being with their friends. The children talk about how much they enjoy this provision.
- The role of middle leadership is developing in school. The pupils and current leadership team will benefit from the additional support that new leaders will bring.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly effective. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are committed to the highest standards for all pupils and should take credit for highly effective recruitment decisions plus incisive actions that have supported whole-school development.
- Governors hold senior leaders to account; they ask challenging questions and are sharply focused on the best outcomes for all pupils.
- Governors have taken an active role in ensuring that staff performance management is implemented and monitored effectively. This has resulted in more challenging targets and improved outcomes for pupils.
- They are clear about how pupil premium and sports funding is used. They are aware of the effect this funding has and have been instrumental in monitoring how pupil premium funding has supported pupils who are part of the 'Achievement for All' project.
- There is a named safeguarding governor who works closely with the headteacher to ensure that safeguarding practice is effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff know how to keep pupils safe at school and know what to look for if pupils present any signs that are concerning. Pupils say they feel safe and 92% of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say their children are safe at school.
- Safeguarding procedures and checks on staff meet statutory requirements. Governors have been trained in safer recruitment. Staff are up to date with all government training requirements. Members of staff are clear about all school safeguarding procedures.
- School files for pupils who are more vulnerable are well organised. Record-keeping is effective, and the designated safeguarding lead has clear systems in place if referrals or additional support are required.

- The school, in consultation with the local authority, has carefully risk assessed playtime provision so that pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers know what pupils are capable of and learning is very often well matched to their abilities. For example, pupils in Years 5/6 responded effectively to marking by using editing skills to improve their writing by inserting additional punctuation. They were proud to use their 'purple polishing pens' to develop the quality of their writing and improve their spelling. In Years 3/4, pupils could represent arrays with number calculations and were challenged to partition to simplify the problem. Although some were slower to understand exactly what to do, there were appropriate resources and support from adults to address misconceptions.
- Teachers make good use of their strong subject knowledge to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the early years class, the teacher's skilful questioning enabled children to apply their phonic skills to their writing. In the early years outdoor area, the children were well supported and challenged by staff to develop their learning. For example, when they were finding 'longer' and 'shorter' objects, staff made sure that the children were shown how to measure accurately.
- Writing is taught well. Teachers are confident in teaching the skills pupils need to become accomplished writers. For example, pupils in upper key stage 2 were developing their proofreading skills in a task using a text that interested them and enhanced their range of vocabulary. Pupils explained how they routinely use these skills to improve their writing. Work in key stage 1 books shows pupils with very basic sentence formation at the start of the year to pupils now writing in paragraphs.
- Reading is taught well across the school. In the early years and key stage 1, children receive accurate phonics teaching and have access to motivating reading books. Pupils talk about how they use their phonics skills and picture clues to help them with their reading. In Year 6, children understand inference and deduction and can identify subtle humour in reading books.
- Teachers and teaching assistants typically model the behaviour they expect of pupils in the classroom. Pupils respond well and as a result, classrooms are calm, industrious places in which pupils develop confidence in their learning.
- Teaching assistants comment upon how training has helped to develop their skill set. They are more aware of when to step back and let children 'have a go', and how to support with questioning and observations.
- Although there is evidence of misconceptions being addressed swiftly in some classes, this is not consistent across the school.
- The school's approach to homework encourages pupils to think about how they might present their work and gives pupils the opportunity to be more creative. Initial outcomes suggest this model is having a positive effect on home learning. More pupils are completing homework tasks independently and to a higher standard.
- 90% of parents responding to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say that they receive valuable information about their child's progress from the school. Parents comment that communication is good and that they feel engaged in the life of the

school.

- Evidence seen in pupils' books indicates that in some classes, teachers' high expectations evident in English and mathematics is not replicated in each subject across the curriculum. For example, not all work in science books matches the high standard of that in English books.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are well cared for. In the survey, which was completed by 28 pupils, only two felt they could not speak to someone if they were worried. Pupils say they feel they are listened to by staff.
- Pupils know about bullying, they can say what it is, and they say there is very little in the school. Records of incidents show that bullying is rare. Pupils talk positively about the work the school does to prevent bullying, for example through assemblies. Pupils say that they feel confident to report incidents to staff and that if anything happens, it is dealt with quickly.
- Pupils feel safe and they know how to stay safe. For example, children in the early years know that high visibility jackets can be worn as a safety measure. Pupils across the school are aware of how to stay safe online. If something appeared that was a worry to them, they would 'log off and tell an adult'. One child talked about how staying safe online is more about 'what we can look at' rather than 'what we can't look at'.
- Playtime offers the opportunity for pupils to exercise their own risk management as well as following school rules. The pupils do this in a safe, sensible manner. Play leaders talk about the skills they have learned and how they enjoy working with the younger children.
- There is a strong PSHE curriculum in place that supports children with their emotional development and teaches them how to cooperate and get on with others. Children show respect for each other.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school, they attend regularly, take pride in their work and value others.
- Pupils' attitudes towards learning are very positive. In lessons, they are enthusiastic, work hard and are keen to help others. This consistent attitude helps pupils to make good progress. In the early years, children learn and play with one another in a supportive way. Across the school, pupils are polite, well-mannered and respectful of each other.
- Pupils are always ready for lessons. They are well prepared and value their education.

- Attendance for the last three years has been above national average, with no groups disadvantaged by low attendance. Where attendance is lower for individuals, the school is quick to put measures in place to bring about improvements.
- There is no disruption to learning in school through inappropriate behaviour. The school is a calm, orderly place where pupils are expected to follow rules but also to think carefully about how their own behaviour can affect others.
- The school has decided that pupils must learn to be independent and understand that their own choices and actions are important. This decision helps children to manage their own behaviours and there is a reduced need for frequent adult intervention.
- The school has an effective behaviour management tracking system in place, where all staff are kept aware of incidents and how they are being dealt with.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Across the school, in English and mathematics, current pupils are demonstrating at least good progress. Work in books shows children are responding to feedback effectively. They are editing their work and developing their skills and knowledge.
- Year 1 pupils have achieved above the national average for the last three years in the phonics screening check. This is because teachers skilfully teach pupils to articulate sounds accurately and give pupils opportunities to practise their skills regularly.
- Key stage 1 attainment of at least the expected standard in all subjects for all early years development groups was close to, or above, national figures. This represents good progress from the early years.
- Key stage 2 combined reading, writing and mathematics attainment has been broadly in line with national attainment data for the last two years.
- Pupils' progress scores for reading have been above average and for mathematics and writing broadly in line with the average for the last two years.
- Across a range of subjects, disadvantaged pupils or pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make at least good progress. This is because the school uses additional funding effectively to identify needs and put in place appropriate provision. Work in books demonstrates good progress from different starting points.
- In-year data for current year groups and work in books show good progress. For example, there is evidence of high-quality writing in Years 3/4 and appropriate levels of challenge are evident across the school. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 read fluently and could talk confidently about their books.
- Most-able pupils make good progress. However, the school has rightly identified that progress for girls in mathematics and the writing progress for higher attainers are areas to monitor closely.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is very well led. The early years leader shares the headteacher's passion to provide the highest quality education for the children in her

care. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. She has made very good use of information to bring about improvements. As a result, the early years foundation stage is good and improving.

- Children enter Reception with skills and abilities typical of those expected for their age. The proportion achieving a good level of development has been rising since the previous inspection and is above the national average. In 2017, almost all children achieved a good level of development, which represents good progress from their individual starting points. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders quickly gain an accurate understanding of what each child can and is capable of achieving. Adults put in place specific support for children who need it. As a result, children in receipt of this support catch up quickly and make good and sometimes better progress.
- Children are confident, inquisitive learners. They work well together, taking turns and working collaboratively. Children form good relationships with their classmates, and this contributes to a harmonious learning atmosphere in the Reception classroom.
- Adults place great emphasis on children's safety and well-being. Adults have established rules and routines that they communicate clearly to children. Consequently, children are developing an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe. For example, during forest school outdoor sessions, the children were aware of how to climb trees safely. On a recent trip to the woods as a part of a woodland topic a child said he was wearing a safety jacket 'to keep me safe'.
- Adults have developed a rich and balanced curriculum that interests and engages children. As a result of enthusiastic and skilful teaching, children quickly acquire skills and understanding in reading, writing and number. Adults plan visits to enrich the curriculum and provide memorable learning opportunities for children. For example, through visits to a local supermarket, local museum and botanic gardens children not only learn about nature, history and commerce but also develop an awareness of how to behave and learn in different environments and settings.
- Staff in the early years use assessment tools that enable them to monitor what the children need to do next to progress. Observations of children are accurate, and information is shared between staff, so that the planning of next steps meets the needs of children.
- Staff respond to children's interests. For example, the children recently expressed an interest in fire engines and a trip to the local fire station has been organised.
- Parents are very positive about the early years setting and say their children are happy at school. The school's use of an online learning journey enables parents to contribute to their child's assessments. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and encouraged to support their learning at home through appropriate learning suggestions.
- The learning environment outside is well organised but more could be done to develop wider skills across the curriculum, including creating more challenge for physical development.
- As the school generally has children who enter the early years with skills appropriate to their age, more could be done to ensure that more children are exceeding age-related

expectations by the end of the year.

School details

Unique reference number	110607
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10036257

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Sarah Burge
Headteacher	Philip Atkin
Telephone number	01763 208 203
Website	www.fowlmere.cambs.sch.uk
Email address	head@fowlmere.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 November 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Fowlmere Primary School is much smaller than the average primary school.
- Children in the early years attend one Reception class full time.
- There are three other mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils supported through pupil premium funding is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average.
- The proportion of children whose first language is not English is well below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited lessons in all classes, with school leaders.
- The inspector, together with school leaders, looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector heard pupils read and talked to the school council about their enjoyment of school, their progress and their opinions about behaviour, welfare and safety. Additionally, the inspector talked to pupils while visiting classrooms and during breaktimes.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Views of 50 parents who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments, emails and letters, as well as discussions with parents, were looked at.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documentation, including the school's standards information, development plan, safeguarding documents, school policies, behaviour and attendance records, personnel checks, school assessment information and governing body documents.
- The school's website was checked for compliance.

Inspection team

David Milligan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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