

Inspection of Fowlmere Primary School

The Butts, Fowlmere, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 7SL

Inspection dates:	23 and 24 April 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Fowlmere Primary School is an inviting and friendly school. Staff welcome pupils into school each day. Pupils enjoy attending and they feel safe. This is because staff have established positive relationships with them. Pupils appreciate and trust the adults to look after them.

Pupils learn an engaging curriculum. This curriculum reflects the school's expectations that pupils will achieve well. However, there is a variance in pupils' experiences. For example, in some subjects, pupils lack opportunities to revisit their previous learning and deepen their understanding. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as the school intends.

Pupils behave well and are polite to one another. Staff ensure that children in the Reception Year quickly learn how to respect each other and their surroundings. Pupils listen carefully in class and are keen to learn. Pupils say that bullying is rare. When it does happen, adults take it seriously and deal with incidents fairly and straight away.

Pupils develop their character through the school's core values of care, ambition, determination, teamwork and confidence. Learning about these helps to develop pupils' independence and social skills. House captains and deputy house captains play a role during sports day. They are positive role models for younger pupils.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The reading, writing and mathematics curriculums are well established. They are well planned and sequenced. Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. Pupils are given appropriate time and opportunities to revisit and, therefore, recall previous learning. This helps them to remember the knowledge and skills that they have been taught. However, in other subjects, this is not always the case. Teachers do not routinely provide pupils with sufficient opportunities or strategies to help them recall previously taught content. This limits pupils' progress in these subjects.

The school ably supports pupils to develop a love of reading. Reading activities in the Reception Year prepare children well for their phonics learning. Staff are experts in teaching pupils how to read. They regularly check pupils' understanding and provide further effective support when required. This helps pupils quickly develop into fluent and confident readers. Pupils have access to a wealth of books and speak enthusiastically about how much they enjoy hearing their teachers read to them.

The school does not have an accurate enough overview of pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff do not always identify pupils' specific needs precisely enough. Staff use some adaptations to cater for pupils' needs, such as help with writing and mathematics. However, at times, these adaptations are not effective enough to ensure that pupils with SEND learn as well as they should.

The school ensures that children get off to a positive start in the early years. Children start to learn to read as soon as they join the school. Staff design appropriate activities that spark curiosity and build children's knowledge and skills over time. Children engage well in rich and meaningful activities both indoors and outdoors. Staff model language clearly. This approach extends children's vocabulary and communication skills. Staff use accurate assessment to inform next steps in learning. For example, targeted support for handwriting successfully supports children's letter formation.

The school is typically calm and orderly. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. This is because the school has clear systems and procedures which staff consistently follow. Pupils attend the school frequently. This is because the school monitors attendance closely and acts quickly when concerns arise. For example, when pupils have low attendance rates, the school investigates the underlying reasons and puts appropriate support in place. The school works closely with families to overcome any barriers to pupils' regular attendance.

The school's personal development programme supports pupils to learn about relationships and various cultures and faiths. Pupils also learn how to stay mentally and physically healthy. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. To develop pupils' responsibility, the school offers a range of opportunities such as joining the school council or being a junior play leader. Additionally, theme days and assemblies help pupils to learn more about the wider world around them.

Governors are committed to the school. Additional expertise has been added to the governing body in recent weeks. Governors draw on extra training and guidance to support them in their role. However, sometimes, the challenge and support that they provide is not as rigorous as it could be. For example, governors have not had a clear oversight of how the school supports pupils with SEND.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff have not had sufficient support and guidance to help them understand the specific needs of pupils with SEND. This has resulted in some pupils with SEND not having their needs correctly identified and therefore not being appropriately supported during lessons. The school should ensure that there are clear systems and procedures in place to provide useful and accurate information to staff so that pupils with SEND receive effective support and, therefore, achieve the best that they can.
- The school's approaches to helping pupils recall and retain knowledge are not consistently effective. This means that pupils do not remember their prior learning well enough in some subjects, limiting their progress through the curriculum. The school

should support staff to use effective strategies to help pupils retain the knowledge that they have learned over time.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	110607
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10323601
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	77
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Phil Butterworth (co-chair) Hayley Wood (co-chair)
Headteacher	Kym Rouse (interim headteacher)
Website	www.fowlmere.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The headteacher commenced the interim role in January 2024.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first graded inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the co-chairs of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with the interim headteacher, school leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys. They also considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Benjamin Axon, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michael Thomas

Ofsted Inspector

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