

Four Lanes Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116247
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	379220
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Liz Bowes

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	317
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Barry Thorn
Headteacher	Mr Martyn Gamble
Date of previous school inspection	27 Jan 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who visited 14 lessons or part lessons taught by 14 different teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, including its vice chair, staff and groups of pupils. They also observed the school's work and looked at policies, planning documentation, assessment data and pupils' work. They analysed the questionnaires returned by 114 parents and carers, 28 members of staff and 116 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of learning and progress of all groups of pupils, including those who were higher attaining, and the extent to which they were consistent and likely to sustain rising attainment.
- The use of assessment and its effect on pupils' attainment, including the performance of potentially higher-attaining pupils.
- The impact of the school's leaders and managers at all levels in improving teaching and learning and evaluating the extent of progress since the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Four Lanes Community School is a larger-than-average junior school. The large majority of pupils are of White British origin, with a small minority from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. Their needs are mainly related to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and some also have moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average, and none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils who arrive or leave at times other than the beginning of the school year is above the national average. Before- and after-school care is provided on site and managed by the governing body; this provision was also inspected. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, the Naace ICT mark and the Eco Schools bronze and silver awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Four Lanes Community School is a satisfactory school. Pupils' attainment is above average and new initiatives, including those that closely monitor pupils' progress and provide tailored support, are beginning to have an impact on increasing pupils' progress. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and these good links contribute to pupils' high levels of attendance and reflect most pupils' clear enjoyment of their learning.

The school places considerable emphasis on pastoral care and pupils feel safe and secure. There is a pleasant, welcoming atmosphere and pupils behave well towards other adults and each other. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy through exercise and eating sensibly. They often choose the healthy options available at lunchtime.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and beginning to improve steadily. In the most successful lessons, work is well matched to pupils' abilities. However, where teaching is less effective, not enough is always expected of pupils and they are not sufficiently challenged. Over time, this has had the impact of reducing rates of progress for some pupils, particularly the more able. As one Year 6 pupil stated, 'I would like a higher level of work in all subjects.' Although pupils have targets to improve, many are unclear about them and they are not referred to enough in lessons to help pupils remember to apply them in their work.

Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve, although improvement strategies are not always focused clearly enough on outcomes. A key improvement, however, is that leaders now hold frequent meetings with all class teachers to track how well pupils are performing. They clearly identify those at risk of underachievement and give them additional support which enables them to make better progress. These relatively new initiatives are proving to be successful and there are isolated examples of outstanding progress particularly for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Although the pace of progress since the previous inspection has been too variable, the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and appropriate systems are now in place to enable the quality of education provided to improve further over time. The governing body is also steadily developing its capacity to both challenge and support school leaders and provide better strategic direction.

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Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress for all pupils, and especially the more able by:
 - matching work more closely to pupils' different ability levels
 - providing greater intellectual challenge for more-able pupils, including through making adaptations to the curriculum.

- Improve the proportion of good or better teaching by:
 - raising the expectations of all pupils
 - ensuring more lessons are well paced and that pupils do not have to wait too long before being actively involved in learning
 - providing more opportunities for independent and collaborative learning
 - making better use of pupils' targets within lessons so that they apply these more thoroughly in their work.

- Accelerate the overall rate of school improvement by:
 - ensuring that improvement strategies put a greater emphasis on outcomes
 - ensuring that information about the performance of different groups is presented more clearly to enable the governing body to strengthen its monitoring role.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children start school with skills and abilities that are above the levels expected nationally and their attainment when measured at the end of Year 6 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics as reflected in results in the national tests for the last three years. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully involved in all activities and make progress at a comparable rate to their peers. Pupils' progress throughout the school is satisfactory overall, although a small minority of pupils, particularly the more able, do not consistently progress fast enough.

In a lesson seen during the inspection where progress is typical, pupils completed a mathematical measuring activity adequately, but then waited for a short while before they were given an additional activity. However in one of the more successful lessons seen, the teacher used a timed mathematical game to ensure that maximum opportunities were provided for pupils to move forward with their learning; progress, in this case, was notably more rapid.

All aspects of pupils' personal development are good. They report strongly that they feel safe in school and know that they can talk through any problems they may have with an adult. Throughout the school, pupils display good behaviour, only

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occasionally becoming distracted when they are not fully engaged in lessons. They enjoy physical activity and have a good understanding of its importance together with the need for healthy eating. This clear appreciation of healthy lifestyles is reflected in Four Lane’s Healthy Schools award. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility and they make a good contribution to the school and wider community, for example by raising funds for both local and international charities. The school council is active in supporting improvements in the school such as ‘switch off fortnight’ and they are very keen on creating a more ecologically friendly environment as shown by the Eco School awards.

Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. Their spiritual understanding is strong and they have a good understanding of a variety of religions. They are notably curious about the world around them and show a keen interest in new experiences. They talk about other cultures’ values in a mature way, and through music, art and drama appreciate cultural differences outside their immediate area. Pupils’ good interpersonal skills, together with well-developed basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) mean that they are well prepared for their move to secondary school.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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How effective is the provision?

Overall, teaching is satisfactory and most pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Lessons are characterised by productive relationships between staff and pupils. Well-informed teaching assistants provide sensitive support, particularly, but not exclusively, to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Marking is increasingly effective throughout the school and provides a guide for how pupils can improve. However, although pupils have targets for improvement, teachers do not refer to these enough in lessons and this limits their impact. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and this is improving, particularly in literacy. The pace of learning is variable and is often excessively determined by teachers who tend to spend too much time talking to learners who at those times are mostly passive. As a consequence of this, pupils do not regularly have enough opportunities to develop fully their ability to work independently and collaboratively with their peers.

The curriculum supports the satisfactory progress of pupils adequately and is improving. For example, it now provides more imaginative experiences such as during 'book week' where there is an effective partnership with a local book shop. Sound work has begun on mapping the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum, although this has yet to have a clear impact upon pupils' achievement. Moreover, there are too few curricular opportunities to challenge more-able learners, especially in subjects such as science. Pupils have the opportunity to extend learning by joining in a range of school clubs. They enthusiastically sing in the choir and play musical instruments and greatly enjoy participating in local charity concerts. Productive partnerships, including with local secondary schools, enable enriched opportunities in activities such as sport and the arts.

Effective care, support and guidance are clearly evident as a central focus for the school and support pupils' good personal development. The school is rightly proud of the care it provides for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and this has resulted in these pupils making good improvements in their behaviour, confidence and attitudes to work. Transition arrangements for pupils joining the school and moving to secondary school are good and improving. Both after-school and breakfast clubs provide a useful service to parents and carers. The provision is well supervised and enables pupils to socialise with a range of others. There is a broad selection of creative and enjoyable activities on offer overall, although one or two pupils felt there could be more variety on a day-to-day basis.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders and governors satisfactorily communicate ambition and drive improvement. Responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were positive showing that the leadership team has a very supportive school staff. The senior leadership team is beginning to drive improvements in tracking pupils’ progress more rapidly, although the impact on pupils’ achievement is yet to be seen fully. Subject leaders are taking appropriate responsibility for improving standards in their areas, including exploring opportunities for more peer- and self-assessment. However, improvement strategies tend to focus too much on processes rather than outcomes; this restricts the overall rate at which the school is moving forward.

The school is good at engaging parents and carers in supporting their children’s learning at home. One parent stated, ‘We are extremely happy with Four Lanes Junior School. The teachers have always been very approachable and listen to their students and us as parents.’ The local community is very much part of the school and these effective partnerships make a sound contribution to promoting pupils’ learning and well-being.

The governing body works hard on behalf of the school and governors’ growing understanding of information about the school’s performance means they are starting to challenge school leaders more effectively. However, while the school is fully committed to equal opportunities and tackling discrimination, there are differences in pupils’ rates of progress, notably in the case of the more able and, although it is improving, the governing body does not yet have an entirely clear view of how different groups achieve.

Safeguarding is given high priority. Child protection procedures fully meet current safeguarding requirements, and are robust and regularly updated. The checks that the school makes on the suitability of adults to work with pupils in school and in the out-of-hours care facility are rigorous. Lessons on safety and safeguarding provide pupils with a very strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

The school has focused its efforts on promoting cohesion within its own and the local community and this has been very successful. However, pupils’ understanding of community cohesion in the national and international context is not so well developed and the school’s evaluation of its planned actions is not yet well developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the	3

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school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are pleased with what the school does for them and their children and they express confidence in the school’s leaders and other staff. Inspectors found that the school regularly seeks the views of parents and carers and does its best to respond to their suggestions and concerns.

A few parents and carers who returned the questionnaires raised issues about the progress of their children, the behaviour in school and a lack of healthy eating options. The inspection team found that the school has very clear systems for dealing with any unacceptable behaviour and it observed healthy eating being encouraged and undertaken in school. The progress of pupils is judged to be satisfactory overall, but could be better for some groups, notably the more able.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Four Lanes Community School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 317 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	63	36	32	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	76	67	38	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	42	37	65	57	5	4	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	48	49	43	9	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	57	50	53	46	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	54	47	49	43	8	7	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	43	61	54	3	3	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	54	47	51	45	4	4	2	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	52	46	54	47	7	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	36	62	54	5	4	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	32	66	58	6	5	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	59	52	52	46	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	67	59	45	39	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Four Lanes Community School, Basingstoke, RG24 8PQ

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school recently.

Overall, we have judged that your school provides a satisfactory standard of education. We have found that attainment in English and mathematics by the time you leave at the end of Year 6 is above average and that you make satisfactory progress. In addition: your attendance is high; most of you feel very safe; you have good knowledge and understanding about how to lead a healthy lifestyle and you make a good contribution to the school and local communities. Teaching and the curriculum are both satisfactory and you are well cared for, guided and supported by staff. We feel that the school has improved since the last time it was visited by inspectors, but not as quickly in all areas as we would have liked.

In order to speed up the rate of school improvement, we have asked the senior leaders and governors to do the following.

- Increase the rate at which you make progress by making sure that you have the right work for your ability, especially for more-able pupils.
- Make sure that you are more actively involved in lessons. We discovered that some of you do not know exactly how best to improve your work and so we have asked teachers to give you more information on your targets. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to find out things on your own or with classmates.
- Make some changes to the way in which your progress is monitored and how the plans to improve the school are coordinated.

All of you can play your part by trying as hard as possible in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Liz Bowes
Lead inspector

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