

# Fordbridge Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	104121
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	377017
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Clive Kempton HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	491
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brian Castle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Fletcher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Yorklea Croft Birmingham B37 5EG
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 7798040
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 7707518
<b>Email address</b>	office@fordbridge.solihull.sch.uk

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<b>Registered childcare provision</b>	Fordbridge Full Day Care Centre
<b>Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision</b>	47
<b>Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision</b>	27 October 2005

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	18–19 January 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	377017



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Clive Kempton HMI

Her Majesty's Inspector

Cheryl Jackson

Additional inspector

Edgar Hastings

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. All 18 teachers were observed jointly by an inspector and a member of the senior management team. A total of 11 hours were spent in 18 lessons, including the full day-care provision. Six meetings were held with children of all ages and inspectors listened to 11 children read from Years 1, 2 and 6. Further meetings were held with senior staff, middle managers, governors, a group of parents, external professionals associated with the school, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's self-evaluation of its own effectiveness, development planning, and other documentation provided by the school. Inspectors also took account of the 129 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 57 staff and 99 pupil questionnaires returned as part of this inspection.

## Information about the school

Fordbridge Community Primary School, formerly known as Hatchford Community Primary School, was amalgamated with Bennetts Well Primary School in September 2010 and renamed as Fordbridge. At that time it also became part of a federation formed of three local schools with the same governing body. The federation was dissolved in December 2011.

Fordbridge is larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, while the proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is below average.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of extended services before and after normal school hours, as well as childcare for 0-4 year olds throughout the day. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2011. In 2011 the school just met government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>4</b>

## Key findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Fordbridge Community Primary School has the following strengths:

- the good progress pupils make from their low starting points up to the age of seven, when their attainment is broadly average
- the good relationships established between pupils and adults throughout the school and an improving trend in pupils' behaviour and safety
- the improvement the school has made in pupils' attendance, rising from below average to average
- the good pastoral support provided for those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

However, the school has too many weaknesses, which is why it needs extra support and more regular visits from inspectors to make sure it improves quickly.

- Although last year's Year 6 pupils just reached the minimum standard set by the government, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 is now below the national average, especially in reading. Higher attaining pupils underperform, reflecting the lack of challenge presented in lessons.
- The quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are not good enough across the school, and particularly in Key Stage 2. Here too much teaching is dull and lessons are dominated by

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teachers. Weaknesses in questioning techniques mean that teachers fail to consolidate and assess pupils' learning.

- Leaders and managers at all levels are not able to demonstrate sufficient impact of actions they have taken to raise standards. Lines of accountability are unclear and insufficiently systematic monitoring means that weaknesses are not being identified swiftly and remedied.
- The learning needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are not clearly identified and pupils do not have incisive or measurable targets that will help them to improve.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a high proportion is good or better by:
  - ensuring that all lessons have clear and measurable objectives and that activities contain more learning opportunities
  - devising a questioning strategy to be used consistently by adults to ensure that all pupils respond to an appropriately challenging question in each lesson
  - ensuring that teachers check carefully during and at the end of all lessons that pupils have understood the work and this feedback is used to plan subsequent learning.
- Raise Key Stage 2 attainment in English and mathematics so that Year 6 pupils exceed the national average, especially in reading.
- Improve leadership and management throughout the school by:
  - ensuring that action planning at all levels has a few key priorities with measurable success criteria that are focused on improving outcomes for pupils
  - review the management structure to ensure that all post holders are held to account for raising standards
  - improve the leadership of special education needs provision to ensure that all pupils on the special educational needs register have clear targets and appropriate support to achieve them.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Children start the Nursery with skills and abilities below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress so that by the end of the Early Years Foundation

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Stage some children, but not all, have achieved age-related expectations. They make good progress in Key Stage 1, so that by the end of Year 2 attainment is broadly average. All Year 2 children are able to read and work out unfamiliar words by sounding them out. The weaker readers, especially boys, try hard but take too long to finish reading simple books. Able Year 2 pupils read with impressive fluency and expression and manage to complete a new, sometimes lengthy, book each day.

However, attainment declines in Key Stage 2, and by Year 6 pupils' attainment is below the national average and has been so for a considerable number of years. There is no pattern to the achievement of different groups, although generally boys attain lower standards than girls, especially in English and girls attain lower standards than boys in mathematics. The reading standards of Year 6 pupils are weak. Many are not able to read fluently, with expression, understanding or enjoyment. They are not sufficiently supported in selecting or reading appropriate books that match their reading ability. As a result, many older pupils are not sufficiently motivated to read for pleasure.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make variable progress. This is because their individual education plan targets are not sufficiently clear; nor do these provide information on how improvements can be made to enable the pupils to make better progress. Pupils receiving higher levels of support because of their additional learning needs make slightly better progress than others.

The older children make slower progress because teaching is often weak and uninspiring. The curriculum is not lively or engaging and pupils are not sufficiently challenged. As identified in the last inspection report, higher attaining pupils still find the work too easy. Time is wasted in lessons when the teacher talks too much and pupils do not engage quickly enough with learning activities. Pupils are not challenged to find out things for themselves.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is better in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 than it is in Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned for younger pupils and frequent cross-curricular links are made between subjects. For example in Reception, children read *The Bear Hunt* story book and then enacted the story, chanting as they marched round the room. They extended their learning by drawing some of the characters and writing single word captions or sentences under each picture. Pupils remained engrossed in the task, collaborating well with each other. Frequent good use is made of teaching assistants and interactive white boards: regular summary sessions are built in to the lessons to check that pupils understand the work. Counting and calculating are areas where pupils achieve well because staff exploit every opportunity to enable them to develop these skills on a daily basis.

With Key Stage 2 the reverse is true. The quality of teaching is far more variable and questioning is far less probing. Pupils do not learn enough in lessons. Teachers tend to direct activities and pupils do not have enough opportunities to find things out for

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themselves. A few teachers plan carefully to include opportunities for pupils to be inspired, amazed, excited and engaged, such as the start of a Year 4 lesson on 'cracking codes' where children saw a short film of a large boat in distress at sea, which led on to the introduction of the morse code SOS. These types of activities contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, they are too infrequent and not always a consideration in teachers' planning.

In the 129 questionnaires returned as part of this inspection, 124 parents and carers considered their children were well taught. Inspectors' findings do not agree with this view. All teachers were observed teaching a lesson as part of this inspection; only a quarter of these lessons were judged to be good or better and none were judged to be outstanding. Hence, three quarters were judged to be satisfactory or inadequate.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Evidence shows that pupils' behaviour is improving in both key stages, and particularly in Key Stage 2. The standard of pupils' behaviour was one of the biggest areas of concern in the questionnaire returned by parents and carers, particularly regarding Key Stage 2. Inspectors took note of their concerns and followed them up. There are a few pupils in the school who have challenging behaviour and these pupils are receiving additional support to learn how to cope with their anger. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, the school has worked hard to improve behaviour. A traffic light warning system is now used consistently by all staff to give verbal and visual warnings to pupils before further sanctions are followed through. All pupils understand these sanctions and what happens when they finally receive a red card. All cards are recorded, so the school is able to monitor the effectiveness of the system. However, pupils exhibiting poor behaviour are given too many chances before they have to see the headteacher and their parents are notified.

The behaviour in lessons is satisfactory. Occasionally, where provision is dull, for example the teacher talks for too long, pupils lose focus and although compliant, they sometimes drift into low-level chatting. Behaviour sometimes deteriorates at playtime because there is not enough for pupils to do. Pupils reported that there is little physical bullying and any that occurs is quickly sorted out. Lunchtime supervisors walk around with groups of pupils or supervise football games to make sure pupils are safe. They make sure any incidents or accidents are recorded daily. Even so, behaviour becomes loud and boisterous, particularly in the ball court in the Key Stage 2 playground, and this sometimes leads to name calling, with pupils evidently unaware of the impact this has on their peers.

### **Leadership and management**

The new headteacher is highly regarded by staff, parents and carers and in a short period of time has identified the key areas for improvement required by the school. It is too early to judge the impact of many of his actions and this, combined with the absence of a clear management structure or lines of accountability, means that the school's capacity to improve is inadequate. Important management systems, such as

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monitoring and recording the quality of teaching, have yet to be established. The school has no system for identifying the key strengths of individual teachers or providing support for those who need help to improve aspects of their teaching. A start has been made on improving the quality and range of the curriculum, but it remains inadequate and lacking in variety, excitement or sufficient practical activities. For example, some pupils reported that they only have the opportunity to use a computer every two weeks. While there are some planned visits locally and residential opportunities, limited planning for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes outcomes in this respect inadequate.

The quality of leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Staff review provision to ensure that the quality of experiences is maintained. Resources are used and organised effectively. The outside environment is satisfactory but currently under-equipped to enhance learning through outdoor activities.

Across the school, the headteacher has led a drive to ensure that subject leaders are more accountable. They have all now written an action plan. However these plans, and the whole school development plan, are not sharply enough focused on the few key issues that will improve pupil outcomes. The plan lacks measurable targets that would help the governing body to hold the headteacher to account for the rate of school improvement. Leaders and managers work hard to include all pupils and ensure that they promote equality and tackle discrimination, although some still exists. For example, not all the children are allowed to take part in the Year 6 residential trip due to limited places and a deficit school budget that can not adequately support families requiring financial subsidy.

As part of this inspection, the procedures for safeguarding children were checked and found to meet requirements. The governors make appropriate arrangements to ensure pupils are safe. Parents and carers, as well as external professionals, are very positive about the school and the care it provides, especially for the younger children. One parent commented, 'the staff are very approachable and hugely positive', and inspectors agree.



## The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The outcomes arising from the provision in the Fordbridge Day Care Centre are good and have been so for a number of years. The centre is exceptionally well managed and highly regarded as a valued community resource. There is a wide range of support for babies and young children up to the age of 4 in three settings: the Baby Room, Tweenies, and Busy Bees.

In the Baby Room, for babies 0-18 months, high quality provision ensures that the specific needs of every child are taken into account. Staff ensure that parents' requests, for example food and sleep patterns, are closely followed. Important developments and activities are conscientiously recorded in an individual book for each child so that parents can be kept informed of daily activities. Babies settle quickly and are clearly happy, an endorsement of the quality of the care they receive.

In the Tweenies for children aged 18 months to two-and-a-half years, the good provision ensures that the secure start made in the baby room is built on effectively. The record keeping is good, although not quite as thorough as in the Baby Room. Staff form good relationships with the children and play activities extend to simple construction. For example, staff develop the children's skills by helping them to make play cars from cardboard boxes. Children use tape to stick steering wheels on the boxes and enjoy the ensuing play activities, devising imaginary travel games well with other children and staff. Gross motor skills are also developed in the outside area where there is an appropriate range of play equipment.

In the Busy Bees, for children from two-and-a-half years up to nursery age, satisfactory provision ensures that transition is smooth. This setting has a different way of recording children's achievements which misses opportunities to build fully on the achievements of younger children. While there is a range of inside and outside activities including gardening, the environment is not as stimulating as in the other settings.

In all settings, the centre manager places a strong emphasis on staff training and qualifications. All adults are well trained and enthuse and engage children well. Children settle quickly and develop independence and social skills which prepare them well for their next stage of learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the registered provision	2

## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**

20 January 2012

Dear Pupils



### **Inspection of Fordbridge Community Primary School, Birmingham B37 5EG**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school at the start of the Spring Term. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. I thought you would like to know the outcome of the inspection and what you could all do to help improve the school.

I was impressed with some things in your school, such as how your attendance and your behaviour have improved. However, there are a lot of things that need to get better. By the time the older pupils leave the school, their test results in English and mathematics are below those of children in other schools, especially in reading. These low standards have been the same for a number of years. This is not good enough to help you get good jobs in the future. Some of the teaching is not good enough either.

The school needs more help to improve quickly so I have judged that the school needs special measures. This means it will get more support and an inspector will come back each term to check that things are improving. Everyone has a part to play in improving the school including the headteacher, the teachers, you, and your parents and carers. Your new headteacher has already made a good start.

I have been quite specific about what improvements need to be made and these are the things inspectors will check up on when they return.

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially by making sure that teachers' explanations are clearer and that they check more carefully on what you have learned. I have asked teachers to ask you more challenging questions too.
- Raise standards in English, especially in reading, and in mathematics.
- Improve all the plans that the school writes to raise standards so that the targets are clearer and can be measured.

Work hard, come to school every day and do your best to behave properly. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

**Clive Kempton HMI**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

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