

New Fosseway School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109393
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	377914
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Redpath HMI

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Button
Headteacher	Shan Wynne-Jones
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2009
School address	The Bridge Learning Campus Teyfant Road Bristol BS13 0RG
Telephone number	01179 030220
Fax number	01179 834288
Email address	www.bridgelearningcampus.org.uk/new-fosseway

Age group	7–19
Inspection date(s)	7–8 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Redpath

Her Majesty's Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 12 lessons, and eight teachers were seen teaching. In addition, they visited an assembly, heard a few pupils read and observed the behaviour of pupils at break and lunchtime. Inspectors met formally with a group of pupils and spoke to others informally during the inspection. Meetings were held with two members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence including data on pupils' progress, pupils' work, teachers' planning, curriculum documents, school improvement plans and minutes of meetings. Inspectors took account of 21 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, as well as questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

New Fosseway School provides education for pupils with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with needs on the autistic spectrum. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The majority are boys and are of White British heritage. The proportion that speak English as an additional language is in line with the national average. A higher than average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Pupils are drawn mainly from the south of Bristol and the surrounding area. The school provides extended services, which include a breakfast club, after-school clubs, holiday activities, parent workshops and support for families. The school moved into its present, purpose-built accommodation in September 2009. Together with an all-through mainstream school and a learning support centre, it forms the Bridge Learning Campus. The headteacher joined the school in September 2011.

The school has gained several awards in recognition of its work including Healthy School, Activemark, Sportsmark and Eco-Schools.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It provides a caring environment where all groups of pupils are made to feel welcome. Parents and carers hold extremely positive views about the school, as demonstrated by their responses in questionnaires. The sixth form is satisfactory.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress. A few pupils, particularly those who are more capable, make satisfactory rather than good progress because lessons do not always provide enough challenge. Opportunities to support learning with the use of sensory resources, practical activities, and information and communication technology (ICT) are sometimes missed.
- The satisfactory teaching ensures that there is a positive climate for learning in lessons and that pupils settle quickly to work. Strategies for teaching literacy, numeracy and ICT are underdeveloped and do not always take close account of pupils' individual learning needs. While there are good examples of pupils discussing their work and progress, particularly at the annual reviews, there is inconsistency across the school in the use of marking to provide pupils with feedback on their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe in school, grow in confidence and develop social skills which enable them to work in groups. Occasionally, a few pupils display anxious behaviour, but any incidents are managed well by staff in a calm and reassuring manner. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The headteacher and governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, although they lack detailed information on the quality of teaching because current monitoring does not focus enough on pupils' learning. Initiatives have been introduced which are beginning to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, middle leaders are not sufficiently involved in monitoring and developing their subjects across the school to ensure consistent improvement.

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?

- Raise attainment and improve progress, relative to pupils' starting points, by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to plan lessons which are suitably challenging, particularly for the more capable pupils
 - making better use of sensory resources, practical activities and ICT to support learning.
- Improve teaching by:
 - developing more detailed policies to support the teaching of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, which outline strategies to be used across the school and which take account of pupils' individual learning needs
 - introducing a marking policy which enables pupils to have a clearer understanding of the progress they are making
 - monitoring lessons more thoroughly, with a sharper focus on the pace of pupils' learning and the quality of work produced
 - developing the roles of middle leaders so that they are better able to monitor, evaluate and plan for their subjects across the school.
- Strengthen the governing body's ability to challenge the school's performance by providing governors with more detailed information on the quality of teaching and learning and on the impact of initiatives introduced to secure improvement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below the standards expected for their age. Over the past three years, school data show that pupils' progress in relation to their starting points has varied between satisfactory and good. Almost all parents and carers feel their children are making good progress at school. However, observation of learning and performance in the classroom, the scrutiny of pupils' work and the examination of progress against learning targets show current progress is satisfactory across all key stages and in the sixth form. Several pupils learn to write short sentences and to use the computer independently, while those with more profound needs express their views through the use of signing, pictures and symbols. Pupils are developing greater self-confidence and improving their social and independence skills. Some make slower than expected progress in literacy and numeracy because assessment information is not used to match tasks closely to pupils' existing knowledge and understanding. Also, practical activities, sensory resources and ICT are not always used to best effect to extend the learning of some pupils.

An analysis of the school's data shows that most groups make similar progress. Senior leaders have identified progress in mathematics as being slower for pupils of secondary age and that a few more-capable pupils make slower than expected

progress generally, a view supported by inspection evidence. Strategies have been introduced to improve learning in mathematics and to accelerate progress in reading. It is too soon to evaluate the full impact of these initiatives.

The school makes good use of links with a mainstream school on the campus to enable a few pupils to gain AQA Unit Awards in art and for one pupil to study a GCSE course in photography. In September 2011, the school introduced a recognised curriculum for students aged between 14 and 19 years, which has a strong focus on developing independence and basic skills in numeracy, literacy and ICT. This is enabling students to gain suitable accreditation as they acquire the skills that prepare them for life beyond school.

Quality of teaching

Teachers and support assistants establish good relationships with pupils and are sensitive to their individual needs. The curriculum contains a broad range of planned activities which are appropriately matched to pupils' various special educational needs. Staff use pictures, symbols and signing effectively to ensure that pupils understand the timetable for the school day and that they can contribute in lessons. Parents and carers feel their children are taught well and, while this is the case in some lessons, the quality of teaching is too variable across the school to be good. In the best lessons, questioning is used skilfully to check pupils' understanding and support assistants contribute by taking responsibility for running small groups, promoting pupils' independence or by giving additional explanation to aid pupils' understanding. Good examples of practical activities being used to reinforce learning occur, for example in mathematics when pupils estimate the price of groceries or buy items from a class 'shop'. In less successful lessons, while pupils might find activities engaging, tasks are not linked closely to the development of new skills and learning. Teachers are adept at organising pupils to work in groups or with a partner, and they teach pupils about various religions and cultures, which effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers' knowledge of strategies to further academic learning is less secure. In particular, teachers have variable knowledge of the teaching of phonics (the linking of sounds and letters) to improve reading, sensory activities to extend language and ICT to develop writing skills.

There are satisfactory systems for assessing pupils' attainment and recording their progress, which include attainment data, photographs and samples of work. Teachers often keep running notes to record pupils' daily progress against their targets. Arrangements for marking pupils' work and giving them feedback on their learning are underdeveloped.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Typical behaviour over time and the safety of pupils are good. Almost all pupils and parents and carers feel there is a good standard of behaviour in school and that any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Pupils report either verbally or through the use of symbols, that they feel safe, a view endorsed by their parents and carers. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning and work hard. Pupils with more profound needs develop

a greater awareness of their own senses and of others in the group. Occasional incidents of challenging behaviour do occur, usually linked to an individual pupil's special educational needs and to their anxiety about change. However, incidents are managed well by staff and are recorded appropriately. The school has invested in comprehensive training for staff in non-confrontational behaviour management techniques. As a result, it has not needed to resort to the exclusion of pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel valued. Their attendance is well above the national average for pupils attending special schools.

Leadership and management

The new headteacher and governing body have a clear vision for the school, which is shared by a committed staff team. Changes have been introduced which are improving pupils' achievement, for example the adoption of a more appropriate course for older students, the closer involvement of pupils in their annual reviews and the strengthening of procedures for behaviour management. These improvements demonstrate that the school has a clear capacity to improve further. Staff have benefited from a programme of training to raise the quality of teaching, and initiatives have been introduced which are beginning to improve the teaching of numeracy and literacy. However, teaching is not monitored with sufficient rigour to gauge the full impact of the changes on pupils' learning. Inconsistency exists between classes since middle leaders are not involved fully in developing and monitoring their subjects across the school. Staff have benefited from appropriate training in, for example, keeping pupils safe, managing anxious behaviour, manual handling, and meeting pupils' intimate care needs. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and all the appropriate checks are completed for adults who work with children.

The curriculum provides an appropriate balance between core education activities and therapy. A wide range of therapies ensures that pupils' individual needs are met. This includes speech and language therapy, music therapy, occupational therapy, and hydrotherapy. Occasionally, too much learning time is lost when pupils move between different timetabled activities. The school has established positive links with its partners on the campus and with the local community. These links enable pupils to work alongside their peers from the neighbouring school and for post-16 students to attend a local college for one day each week. The curriculum is enriched by the popular after-school clubs, regular outings in the local community and residential trips and visits, for example to Devon and to holiday activity centres. It makes a considerable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Pupils gain a better understanding of different cultural traditions, for example through an enrichment week, the celebration of different religious festivals, and through art and design and technology topics. They learn to take responsibility and become more confident, for example through serving on the school council and taking part in recycling projects. Pupils' self-esteem is promoted when their successes are celebrated and the pupils receive certificates in assembly.

School leaders, the governing body and staff at all levels promote equality and tackle any discrimination effectively. Staff ensure that all pupils participate fully in the life of the school, for example playground equipment is organised on a rota basis to enable

all groups to have access. Parents and carers report that they are well informed about the school's work and value the support they receive. In the words of one parent, 'It's a great environment and staff are helpful and supportive.' Parents and carers benefit from the support of a parent link worker; monthly meetings are held to discuss topics such as transition beyond school and holiday arrangements, and a useful website provides up-to-date information about forthcoming events.

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).

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.



9 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Fosseway School, Bristol BS13 0RG

Recently I visited your school with another inspector. We enjoyed our visit very much and thought it was a happy school. Thanks to those of you who took time to talk to us about your work and life at the school.

Here are the main points.

- Your school is satisfactory.
- You enjoy coming to school, your behaviour is good and you learn to do more things on your own.
- You especially enjoy the after-school clubs and outings.
- You settle to work quickly in lessons and make satisfactory progress.
- Adults make sure you receive the right level of support to make you feel safe and happy.
- The school works very closely with your parents and carers who are extremely pleased with how the school helps you.

I have asked the school to do a few things to help it get better.

- Check that the work you are given in lessons is always at the right level to help some of you learn more quickly.
- Plan more closely how some of you are taught to read and write and how you can use computers and practical activities to help with your learning.
- Mark your work in more detail to help you know how you are getting along.
- Make sure that the adults who are responsible for running the school get a clearer picture of how well you are learning in classes.

You can help by always trying your hardest and talking to your teachers about your work.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath
Her Majesty's Inspector

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