

Forest Fields Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122733
Local Authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	359294
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Lynne Blakelock

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	482
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Batchelor
Headteacher	Sue Hoyland
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who observed 15 teachers in 24 lessons. Meetings were held with subject leaders, groups of pupils and representatives of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to pupils' achievement, their work, the school development plan and minutes of governing body meetings. They analysed staff and pupil questionnaires and the 301 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

It explored the quality of planning, co-ordination and delivery from the Early Years Stage onwards, in building pupils' speaking and listening skills.

- It investigated how effectively the school is matching tasks to pupils' needs to ensure that all groups can make good progress.
- It determined the extent to which the school uses the representation of cultures within the school to build a cohesive community.

Information about the school

This popular school is very large compared to others of its type. An above-average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. A very large proportion come from minority ethnic groups and 32 languages other than English are represented. Two thirds of the children are beginners to English when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage. A well-above-average proportion have special educational needs and/or disabilities, of which most are moderate learning difficulties or behavioural issues. A higher proportion of pupils than is usual join or leave the school at other than the expected times.

The school is based on a relatively small site. Due to increasing numbers, four temporary classrooms have been erected. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Gold Award, the International Schools Award and the Eco Bronze Award. It works in partnership with ten primary schools, one infant, one junior, one nursery and three secondary schools. This is in order to promote attainment, share expertise, resources and knowledge between staff, support families, broaden and enrich the curriculum, and promote attendance in all of the schools in the partnership.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The foundation for its continuing success is the effective and creative leadership and management of the headteacher and senior team. Their actions are based on a thorough understanding of pupils' needs, gained from comprehensive monitoring and accurate evaluation of the school's performance, the findings of which are addressed carefully. As a result, attainment of pupils shows a four-year rise. Just as importantly, the school promotes happy and secure pupils within an ethos that values them all and their contributions. Combined with its respect for the beliefs and practices represented in the school, staff broaden significantly pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of the world. Pupils develop their role and importance through a structured programme, resulting in their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through good communication and a wide range of partnerships, including with parents and carers, the school gains extensive knowledge on which to base its effective support for pupils' social, emotional and academic needs. In effect, the school is becoming integral to the local community as it widens its services to support parents' and carers' needs. It involves the locality in its celebrations, activities, and increasingly in its expectations.

It is the good teaching from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards that is resulting in the good progress of pupils from all groups and abilities and their average attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Careful planning to match the levels of needs at which they work is significant in this, together with an engaging curriculum that enables pupils to practise the skills they have learnt across a range of subjects. In particular, the school plans very carefully, and co-ordinates effectively, a range of activities to promote pupils' speaking and listening skills from the time that they join the Nursery. Regularly evaluated and built on through the school, they are the basis for pupils' improving performance in literacy. The main strength is the provision of very relevant communication skills across all activities, including careful organisation of the youngest children with more confident young speakers. Focused questioning is promoting well the progress of those pupils capable of reaching higher levels, which also shows an increase. Nevertheless, sometimes activities for more-able pupils do not enable them to develop higher level skills such as applying their knowledge. For those who find aspects of learning difficult, small group and individual support, based on joint planning with teachers, promotes good progress towards specific skills. All pupils have targets, which they know. Although some practice is excellent, there are inconsistencies in both the quality of marking and the importance given to pupils' targets in lessons, resulting in some uneven progress.

The headteachers' high expectations, constant reviewing of initiatives and the effective impact of leaders across all aspects of management point to the school's good capacity for further improvement. This is confirmed by the effectiveness of the governing body which

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is led strongly and challenges the school's performance regularly. Its overseeing of the school's strategies to raise and sustain attendance levels and to give pupils' ownership of their attendance, including recently introduced targets, is resulting in improved rates through the school. However, there is some way to go to embed the importance of good attendance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment through the school in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - tasks for more-able pupils match accurately their abilities
 - marking informs pupils regularly what they have achieved and how to move forward in their learning.
- Increase pupils' attendance to above average by ensuring that pupils', parents and carers understand fully the importance of good attendance in securing effective work-place skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Progress accelerates through the school from children's generally well-below-average skills on entry. Their skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy, are embedded through across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who join the school late achieve well due to prompt identification of their issues and carefully planned programmes of support. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, including those at an early stage of speaking English, are supported sensitively. This is aided by significant individual and group sessions which promote pupils' good progress in sounds and letters and in personal and inter-personal skills. Resources are chosen carefully to match pupils' interests and experiences, as was seen in a support lesson for four pupils in Year 2. The pupils broadened their learning through describing the textures in a book about wild animals, moving on from blending sounds to finding patterns in words and using a range of adjectives. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils took responsibility for their learning in a challenging task to create an ending for a story. Their good progress was based on structured planning derived from the teacher's clear exposition of expectations and techniques.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, encouraged by their involvement in making class rules and by the responsibilities that they are entrusted with, such as for the school council. They say they feel safe in the caring and secure environment and express confidence in the teachers, who they feel able to confide in if they have worries. The curriculum focuses them increasingly on the importance of living healthily. Pupils spoke confidently of how to keep fit, with many participating in the wide range of after-school sports activities and reflecting the school's award of healthy status. While satisfactory, pupils' work-place skills are still improving as their attainment in English, mathematics and computer skills increases. Attendance, adversely affected by pupils' absence for religious festivals through part of the year, is showing a rise as both pupils and parents and carers understand more the adverse effects of regular absence on the pace of progress. Cultural and spiritual development is at the heart of the school's work and woven into daily life, routines and celebrations, resulting in well-informed pupils who work and play harmoniously. They see the school as one community, displaying exceptional attitudes to

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diversity and differences. They display excellent social and moral development, which is seen in their respect for others' views and for their support for each other.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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

How effective is the provision?

Relationships between staff and pupils promote learning well. Pupils are keen to learn and settle quickly. Planning of lessons is thorough and activities at the beginning of lessons provide good reminders of previous learning. Teachers always make the purpose of learning clear and provide tasks that are interesting and engaging. The level of challenge is sometimes less accurate and demanding for pupils capable of achieving higher levels. Questioning by teachers encourages pupils to progress because it is specific to the tasks and makes them think. Pupils benefit most from the many opportunities to learn for themselves and discuss their ideas and findings with other pupils. The inconsistencies in both the quality of marking and the importance given to pupils' targets in lessons mean that progress can sometimes be uneven.

Careful planning of the curriculum ensures good coverage of subjects and skills in a creative learning environment. In particular, planning for literacy and numeracy, which is the school's basis of all learning, is practised regularly across subjects and themes. Pupils say that this makes learning really interesting. Pupils look forward to going on visits as part of each theme, which bring learning alive and extend their world beyond the confines of the immediate area. The school uses visits, visitors and after-school clubs to enrich

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learning on a regular basis and to add to pupils' skills, interests and personal development. Gifted and talented pupils are beginning to be provided for regularly within the school's partnership with other primary schools, as was evidenced in a writing workshop held at a neighbouring school. Pupils who find some aspects of learning difficult or who are learning English are provided for effectively through personalised learning plans and support. While provision for information and communication technology is good, opportunities to use computers in a range of activities are sometimes wasted.

Pupils are nurtured and encouraged through the school. Arrangements for those moving to secondary school promote pupils' confidence for the challenges ahead. The staff know pupils' individual needs and circumstances extremely well and support and guide them effectively, building up their confidence. Support is skilful and wide-ranging. For example, the learning mentors tailor support to meet behaviour management issues and to provide a calm and focused start to the day, often through one-to-one sessions. Guidance is reinforced by the school's effective partnerships with specialist agencies. It is the mutual respect between the school and parents and carers and the good initiatives, such as the weekly coffee morning, that have been the catalyst for the increasingly effective role that parents and carers play in their children's learning. It is extending to attendance, although this is work in progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, who is supported well by the deputy headteacher, provides a strong and very focused lead. Together with the senior team, they are excellent role models for the rest of the staff, who share their drive and ambition. Responsibilities and accountabilities are set out distinctly within a clear vision so that systems are well co-ordinated. As a result, not only does the school run smoothly, but the monitoring of its work is well established and wide ranging. Regular and specific evaluation by senior and middle leaders, including of teaching and learning, have led to challenging targets which, together with the creative curriculum, are resulting in pupils' steadily improving attainment and their good achievement. There is a strong focus on equality of opportunity and, as a result, different groups of students achieve equally well. The school's ethos and its daily practices result in instances of discrimination being rare; these are tackled effectively. A major factor in this is the school's good promotion of community cohesion within the local community and internationally. A wide range of other partnerships contribute to the school's growing effectiveness, including those with parents and carers, who trust the school, which helps them to support their children's learning. The governing body, through its comprehensive knowledge, is able to help to steer the school's direction effectively. It

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oversees safeguarding procedures thoroughly with regular reviews leading to policies and procedures being adapted as required.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The school prioritises relationships with parents and carers so that staff are able to plan effectively for children's needs and interests, encouraging a quick start to learning. The children make good progress, aided by extremely prompt and extensive group and individual support, particularly in communication skills, which are particularly weak on children's entry to the Nursery. Speaking and listening skills are the basis of all activities, incorporating the promotion of children's personal and emotional development. There is a good balance of teacher-directed and child-led activities. The range of activities has increased following the refurbishment of the outdoor area, which now provides a delightful learning environment. Teaching is good because it recognises children's individual needs and interests and motivates them to learn. The children play and learn enthusiastically because there is so much for them to discover. The quality of adults' questioning is variable in terms of accelerating children's progress because it is not regularly specific enough to extend learning.

Children's personal development is integral to all activities, incorporating learning about exercise, healthy eating, keeping safe, behaving sensibly and caringly. Staff's modelling of such practices is emulated by the children in a happy, secure and busy environment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well. Assessments and records of children's learning are on-going through each day and findings inform future planning which is strengthened by teachers' joint planning with support staff. By the end of the Stage, most children are working at levels that have risen from well-below to below average.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
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	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Of these, almost all said that they are happy with their children's experiences at the school, that the school keeps them safe and that they enjoy school. Most parents and carers who responded agreed with all of the other statements. Only a few added comments. Notable among them were parents and carers' appreciation of the school's celebrations of a range of festivals that 'provide different cultural experiences which blend in to create harmony.' There was recognition of the hard work and support of the headteacher and staff. The inspection team found no evidence to disagree with parents' and carers' sentiments. All comments have been shared with the headteacher while preserving the anonymity of the writer.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Forest Fields Primary and Nursery 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 301 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 482 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	181	60	112	37	1	0	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	170	56	125	42	1	0	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	146	49	141	47	11	4	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	131	44	159	53	6	2	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	158	52	134	45	4	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	146	49	138	46	10	3	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	123	41	143	48	22	7	1	0
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)	116	39	144	48	12	4	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	122	41	156	52	10	3	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	122	41	163	54	9	3	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	94	31	172	57	15	5	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	115	38	160	53	3	1	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	160	53	134	45	2	1	1	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 2010 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 2009/10 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.



7 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Forest Fields Primary and Nursery School, Nottingham, NG7 6HJ

Thank you for welcoming us into your school when we visited you recently. We enjoyed our visit very much. You made us so welcome. In particular, we liked listening to your views about your school and all of the activities that take place. Your school is a good school. Here are some of the other judgements that we made.

The levels you reach match those of pupils in other primary schools and they are increasing in English and mathematics.

You make good progress because teaching is good from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards.

You get extra help if you need to catch up with your learning.

The staff care for you well.

Lessons are interesting and help you to learn lots of new skills.

You behave well and have good relationships with each other.

You respect each others' beliefs.

The school is well led by the headteacher.

All of the staff work hard for you.

Your school can be even better. On behalf of the inspection team, I have asked the headteacher to make sure that marking always tells you the next steps in your learning and activities always challenge accurately those of you who are capable of reaching higher levels. We are pleased that you are trying hard to improve your attendance rates and that you understand the link between good attendance and progress. Well done to 3BL who won the trophy for the best attendance during the week that included our visit. We would like you to continue to attend as often as you possibly can so that you all reach your target of 95% and then try to exceed it.

I send you our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector

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