

Fordley Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108611
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	356393
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Arlene Ainsley
Headteacher	Mr Tony Rigg
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons and observed 17 teachers. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's improvement plan, assessment and tracking data, teachers' planning, and safeguarding policies and procedures. The responses in 91 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those returned by staff and Key Stage 2 pupils were analysed.

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

- The impact of improvements to assessment and teachers' planning on pupils' progress and attainment.
- The impact of changes to the curriculum, especially in engaging pupils' enthusiasm and improving their basic skills.
- The impact of far-reaching changes to raise attainment.
- The extent to which staff and governors contribute to school improvement.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary school. It serves a predominantly White British community. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs.

The school holds numerous awards including the Artsmark, Activemark, the Creative Partnerships award, the Healthy School status and the International Schools award.

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

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The quality of provision is improving quickly, as is pupils' progress. The declining trend in pupils' attainment has been reversed. Attainment is now broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to meet their challenging targets in national tests, which will continue the trend of improvement begun in 2010. Nevertheless, the school recognises the need to improve some aspects of attainment further and rightly has improving pupils' use of mathematical skills and problem solving, in both mathematics lessons and in topic work, as priorities for this year. Personal outcomes for pupils are good. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and they work well in lessons. They follow a healthy lifestyle and make a good contribution to the community. For example, they recently produced leaflets as part of a campaign featured in a newspaper, give time to entertain the community and are generous fund-raisers.

Teaching is satisfactory and improving quickly as teachers make better use of knowledge about pupils' learning. In the best lessons, pupils are given practical activities from which to learn and they are encouraged to work together and learn from each other. This develops their confidence and independence and accelerates their learning. There are not yet enough lessons of this quality to ensure that pupils' learning is maximised, because the best practice is not captured and shared with all staff. The good curriculum fires pupils with enthusiasm for learning and staff ensure that basic skills are used and consolidated in the wider curriculum. All aspects of provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. They ensure children have a very positive start to their education and are well prepared for work in Year 1. Good care, guidance and support make pupils feel safe and secure in school and they are well supported to learn.

Senior leaders have worked well with all partners to improve provision and raise standards. This has paid off with sharply-focused and rigorous monitoring of activities which gives the school an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for improvement. Given these improvements, the school is demonstrating a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. While morale is good and staff support recent changes, leadership and the responsibility for improvement are not well enough distributed amongst staff. This limits the progress the school is able to make towards rapidly improving its overall effectiveness to good.

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards, especially in mathematics, by supporting pupils in using and applying mathematical skills in problem-solving activities, both in mathematics lessons and in topic work.
- Improve the proportion of good and better teaching by capturing and sharing the best practice in those lessons where pupils have plenty of scope for active and independent learning.
- Review the roles and responsibilities of leaders and managers to achieve a good balance of delegation between senior and middle leaders, so that staff expertise and enthusiasm are effectively used to accelerate improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement and their enjoyment of learning are satisfactory and improving. Pupils are keen to learn and they work diligently to succeed because teachers expect them to make a good effort in lessons. Their good behaviour and positive relationships support their learning well. They enjoy lessons best when they are given opportunities to work together solving problems and sharing ideas. A good example was a Year 2 mathematics lesson where pupils worked extremely quickly to compare height and foot size. Their excitement and pleasure, when presenting their results, confirmed how proud they were of what they had achieved by themselves. Learning is less enjoyable when pupils listen to the teacher for too long and have little time for active learning. From starting points which are below those usually expected when they join the Nursery, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, now make satisfactory progress as a result of recent improvements. School data for the last year and inspection evidence show that the decline in attainment and progress has been halted, and that the majority of pupils are now working close to the level expected for their age, except in mathematics where they are less confident in applying their knowledge to solve problems.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that adults will sort out any problems. They say that bullying is not tolerated, which contributes to their sense of safety and well-being. They show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and enjoy healthy snacks and plenty of exercise in the playground and the many after-school clubs. Pupils make a good contribution to their own and the wider community by taking on responsibility for improvements through the school council. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of learning with sound basic skills and good personal qualities, which enable them to be confident learners, who know the value of hard work.

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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	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is improving well in response to recent initiatives and effective support from the local authority. The proportion of good teaching is increasing and some teaching is outstanding. A good feature in nearly all lessons is the high expectation teachers have of effort from pupils. This is reflected in the amount of recorded work in books in all classes. Recent improvements to assessment are helping staff to identify previous underachievement and gaps in pupils' learning. Careful marking and feedback are also contributing well to improving attainment. Not enough teachers consistently provide opportunities for pupils to learn independently and at a good rate through interesting activities or by allowing them to take the lead in learning.

The topic-based curriculum is planned so that cross-curricular links are firmly embedded and basic skills are continually reinforced. The success of this approach is most clearly seen in the extensive and confident writing of pupils of all ages. The introduction of mathematical skills to topics is more recent, so pupils do not yet have as much confidence or skill in applying their mathematical knowledge to tasks. The response of both pupils and staff to the new curriculum is extremely positive. Pupils find the topics exciting because they are allowed to follow their own lines of enquiry, while staff are delighted that pupils, 'don't even know they are doing it (practising their basic skills)'. There is a good range of visitors to the school to extend pupils' knowledge of the wider world and

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the extensive range of visits includes a residential trip to an outdoor activity centre and bi-annual trips to France.

Staff know pupils and their families well. They have increased their skills effectively and improved their knowledge of how well pupils are learning. This has helped them to identify pupils who need additional support more quickly and intervention programmes are now more responsive to pupils' needs. Teaching assistants are well trained to supplement this support, both in and out of the classroom, which ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to access the same curriculum and make similar progress to their peers. Constructive links with external providers give the school prompt access to expert advice and support to meet pupils' various needs.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

A prompt response by senior leaders and the governing body to the school's weaker performance in national tests in 2009, has led to a number of effective improvements which are helping to raise attainment and improve provision. The school has worked well with local authority consultants to improve the quality of the monitoring and evaluation, and of teaching and learning. Currently, the senior leadership team undertakes most of the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work. However, it does not fully exploit the expertise and enthusiasm of middle leaders by widening accountability for school improvement. The best practice in teaching and learning is not being fully captured and shared for the benefit of all pupils. Morale is good and the staff willingly acknowledge that the difficult task of sustained innovation has been worth the effort. They are committed to further development and their confidence is fired by the improvements they see to pupils' attainment and progress as a result of their efforts.

Members of the governing body are supporting the school effectively by monitoring its actions for improvement and undertaking training to improve their own effectiveness. The recently formed 'raising-attainment panel' regularly visits the school to ensure that targets for improvement are being met. The governing body ensures that good safeguarding procedures keep pupils and staff safe on this large site. Good promotion of equal opportunities eliminates discrimination so that all pupils have access to a curriculum that enables them to succeed. Good links with parents and carers keep them well informed about and involved in their children's learning. Good community cohesion is supported by a thorough knowledge of school and local needs, and effective links nationally and internationally broaden pupils' understanding of differences in communities. Partnerships

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with other schools and external services contribute well to enriching and supporting pupils' learning.

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 school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good links with parents and carers help children settle quickly when they join the Nursery. They are very well cared for and feel safe and secure. This helps them to develop good levels of confidence and independence. They soon learn to direct their own activities and explore things that interest them. Children achieve well and make good progress from below the expected starting points for their age. By the time they leave at the end of Reception, the majority reach the goals expected and each year some children exceed them. Children quickly learn to share and be kind and helpful with each other. Direct teaching is good, especially in mathematics and writing, because staff have good knowledge of children's needs through careful observations of them at work and play. Significant improvements to the outdoor provision have opened up many new learning opportunities for children. Staff have seized the opportunity to plan a good match of activities indoors and out, so that children have access to good learning in both settings. Parents and carers welcome the learning journeys which record their children's development and give them helpful insights into their children's learning. Good leadership and management sees responsibilities well delegated amongst staff so all contribute to improving provision.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	2

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned a questionnaire hold positive views of the school. They are happy with how well their children are cared for and the progress that they make. Some parents and carers have noticed improvements to the information they receive about their children's learning, which is reflected in comments like, 'Over the past two years the school has been more informative about my child's learning.' Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are pleased with the communication they receive about their children's learning and the arrangements made to support their needs. One comment is typical, 'The skill and patience of all staff at Fordley have helped my child want to achieve results and he is eager to please his teachers.'

A few parents and carers raised concerns about some aspects of the school's work, such as behaviour, but there was no strong pattern of concerns. The inspection found evidence to support parents' and carers' views about care and support and the improvements to the information they receive about their children's learning. Behaviour was judged to be good and no disruption to learning was seen during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fordley Community Primary 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 91 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 319 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	46	46	51	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	44	48	42	46	3	3	2	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	45	49	42	46	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	49	40	44	6	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	49	42	46	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	47	44	48	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	41	47	52	7	8	0	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)	29	32	50	55	10	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	40	46	51	8	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	25	53	58	11	12	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	32	50	55	9	10	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	43	47	43	47	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	53	37	41	5	5	1	1

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.



March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fordley Community Primary School, Cramlington, NE23 7AL

Thank you for the warm, friendly welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. Your good behaviour and caring attitudes make your school a very nice place to visit. We found that teaching in your school is satisfactory and your school gives you a satisfactory education. You are making the expected progress and this is improving; in some classes it is good. This is because your teachers have worked well to find ways of seeing how much you are learning so they can plan the next challenges to help you improve more. You make a big contribution by working so hard. We were delighted to see that some of you are on to your second or third books for writing and mathematics. Well done and keep it up!

You told us you enjoy the topics in the curriculum, and the chance to have a say in what you would like to find out. We agree that your curriculum is good because it makes you want to learn. We could see that you make the best progress when you have interesting activities and work together to help each other learn. We have asked the school to help teachers provide more of these for you, so you learn even faster. We have also suggested you have more activities where you have to use your mathematical skills so that you better understand how the subject works and are able to solve problems easily.

We agree that your teachers care for you well and keep you safe and happy in school. We also found out that they help you improve your work by carefully marking those books you keep on filling up! Your headteacher, staff and governors want the best for you and plan to improve your school even more. We have suggested they might move more quickly if more teachers were involved in helping with different improvements.

You can help by working as hard as you do now and by continuing to make your school such a happy place for learning. Our best wishes to all at Fordley Primary for a successful year.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick

Lead inspector

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