

Fladbury CofE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116879
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	358047
Inspection dates	28–29 March 2011
Reporting inspector	John Eadie

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Holah
Headteacher	Tessa Richardson
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2007
School address	Church Street Fladbury, Pershore Worcestershire, WR10 2QB
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons were visited and four teachers observed. Inspectors held meetings with leaders and managers, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation, including the school's improvement plan, policies and procedures, particularly those concerning safeguarding, data showing the progress that pupils are making and evidence from the school's own monitoring as well as that of the local authority. Questionnaires returned by 45 parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by pupils in Years 3 and 4 and staff.

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

- Whether pupils are now making sufficient progress.
- Whether pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better progress than their classmates, as suggested by the school.
- The reasons for the decline in attainment in the national assessments for Year 2 in recent years, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Whether children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making good progress, as suggested by the school.

Information about the school

A very large majority of pupils at this smaller-than-average-sized school are White British. Few speak English as an additional language, and none of these are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has increased significantly in the last few years and is now broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and most of these have specific learning difficulties or speech, language and communication needs. The headteacher took up her post at the beginning of March 2011, having spent a term as acting headteacher in the summer of 2010. The headteacher who was appointed for September 2010 left the school at the end of February 2011.

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

Fladbury First is providing a satisfactory education for its pupils. Data from last year suggested that pupils were not making sufficient progress at that time. However, improvements have been made and pupils are now making satisfactory progress and their attainment is broadly average by the time they leave. However, both attainment and progress are better in reading and writing than in mathematics. Although pupils' progress is satisfactory in all three of these subject areas, it is significantly weaker in mathematics.

The school has a number of strengths. The quality of care, guidance and support is good and this results in pupils feeling very safe. As a parent put it, 'All teachers and staff are always willing to go that extra mile.' This support often extends to families, and external agencies are used well when necessary to support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The school has worked hard and very successfully to improve attendance: it has been improving in recent years and is now high.

Pupils are developing well into sensible young people, who are very aware of their place in society and their responsibilities towards it. They make a particularly strong contribution to the smooth running of the school community and are involved well in the life of the village and its church. For example, they contribute to a weekday Eucharist service in the church every week during term-time and are involved in the Fladbury Walkabout and the local Bellboat Regatta. Pupils have a very good knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and they put this into practice in their daily lives, taking plenty of exercise for instance.

At present, one of the key factors holding back pupils' faster progress is that there is not enough teaching which is good or better. Teaching has a number of general strengths, for instance the good relationships between adults and pupils and the interesting range of activities provided. However, on too many occasions work is not matched well to the needs and abilities of the pupils and they spend too long listening rather than getting on with worthwhile learning activities. Part of the reason for the lack of match to abilities is that assessment procedures are in their early stages. Teachers are not always aware of what pupils have already learnt, so are unable to plan accurately for their next steps in learning. In their questionnaires, around a third of the pupils said that do not know how well they are doing. They are also not made sufficiently aware of what they need to do to improve.

Good links have been established with parents and carers, who are very supportive of the school. However, they do not always receive good information about how well their children are doing. For instance, although pupils have targets, these are not routinely shared with parents and carers. A new initiative of a weekly newsletter published every Monday is ensuring that parents and carers are receiving good information about activities and events. There are also profitable partnerships with other organisations which add to

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pupils' experiences, such as the opportunity to take part in an annual music event with pupils from other local schools.

There has been considerable disturbance to leadership over the last year or more and this led to a slip in pupils' attainment and progress, most noticeable in the national assessments at the end of Year 2 last year. However, the corner has been turned, the decline halted and there is a determination to move forward, shared by all staff and the governing body. A clear picture has been built of what needs to be done and a manageable action plan exists to address weaknesses. However, at this stage it is too early to see any significant impact of this programme, so the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and improve their progress in mathematics by:
 - putting in place a programme to improve their skills of rapid recall of number facts
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to talk about and develop their mathematical thinking.
- Increase pupils' involvement in their learning by:
 - giving them a clearer understanding of how well they are doing
 - setting precise goals for their next steps in learning that accurately match each pupil's abilities and needs
 - ensuring that teachers use these next steps when they are feeding back to pupils on the success of their learning and give time for them to respond to this feedback
 - sharing these next steps consistently with pupils and their parents and carers.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to be engaged in tasks and learning activities, rather than sitting and listening
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their independence in lessons through open-ended questioning and activities which enable them to use their initiative in choosing how they record their work
 - ensuring that all pupils, particularly the more able, are routinely given sufficiently high levels of challenge.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Children join the school with levels of skills and knowledge broadly in line with those expected for their age. Those currently in Year 4 are working at expected levels and pupils are making satisfactory progress through the school. The small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and are enabled to make

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the same satisfactory progress as their classmates. However, there are times when the work they are given does not match their needs, so holding back their progress. Those for whom English is an additional language are integrated rapidly and also make the same progress as their peers. Progress in mathematics is not improving as well as that in reading and writing and leaders have recognised the need to improve pupils' skills in rapidly recalling number facts. Pupils are also not given sufficient opportunities to talk about their mathematical reasoning and, therefore, do not develop and embed their reasoning and thinking skills sufficiently.

Pupils enjoy their learning as there is usually a good range of interesting activities provided for them. For instance, a group of older pupils were enjoying checking and correcting a fictitious child's mathematics homework on the topic they were covering. Similarly, a class of younger pupils were thoroughly involved in estimating and measuring while designing their garden centres. Their resulting plans, carefully constructed in a variety of styles, showed good learning. There are times in lessons when pupils are less engaged and become bored, for instance when they are sitting and listening without being actively involved.

Close links with the local church enhance pupils' spiritual development well and links with schools in countries such as Zambia and the United States of America add well to their cultural awareness. Links with a school with a much greater ethnic mix were established but have fallen away and there is a recognition that such a link is needed to make pupils more aware of the diversity of British culture. Pupils are developing a good work ethic that will prepare them well for their future and they are developing good skills in information and communication technology. However, their development of the vital basic skills of literacy and numeracy is currently satisfactory.

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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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Although teaching is resulting in satisfactory progress for pupils and it is improving, there are key areas still for development. For instance, partly because assessment is in its early stages, teachers do not always know what skills pupils have already mastered. This means that work is not sufficiently well matched to their needs and abilities. This particularly affects the more able pupils who do not have suitably challenging tasks which enable them to make the progress of which they are capable. As a pupil put it, 'The work in maths is sometimes not hard enough.' Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution, especially in supporting those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but there are times when their use is not planned and they are inactive for parts of lessons.

A start has been made at establishing pupils' next steps in learning, but at present these goals are not sufficiently well matched to individual needs. Teachers are beginning to adapt their planning, as a result of pupils' learning in previous lessons, and pupils are assessed three times a year. These assessments are used well to identify any who are in danger of falling behind and effective strategies are put in place to help them catch up. Teachers' marking is positive and encouraging but does not give indicators of how pupils can improve their work often enough and pupils are rarely given time to respond to teachers' marking.

The curriculum is suitably balanced and broad and is enhanced well by a good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. Pupils particularly enjoy the trips out. For

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instance, older pupils talked enthusiastically of their trip to a safari park and their work linked to this visit demonstrated its effectiveness.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The number of changes in leadership over the last year has significantly limited the effectiveness of leadership and management. However, there is a renewed purpose and drive with a new permanent headteacher who already knows the school from her time as acting headteacher last year. Several staff who completed questionnaires commented positively about the new regime and there is a shared sense of purpose about the school. This includes members of the governing body, who recognise the need to establish routines to discover the effectiveness of the school for themselves rather than relying on what they are told.

Safeguarding procedures are all in place, though the changes in leadership mean that the school has not instituted consistent systems for recording and reviewing these procedures. For instance, the recording of fire practices is held in three different documents. Although there is a good general commitment to equality of opportunity, at present some groups, the more able for example, do not always receive the educational diet that they need. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school is a very cohesive community, has very good knowledge of the local area and is involved well and highly regarded within it. Pupils are also very aware of the global community and the school has worked hard to enhance this knowledge. However, their knowledge of the range of cultures represented in the United Kingdom is not as good.

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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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are taught in two classes with children in Year 1 and this allows good flexibility in allowing those who are ready for greater challenge to work with Year 1 pupils. Children are happy and settled and enjoy the range of activities, particularly working in the attractive outside area, although they are sometimes not guided to appropriate activities and wander from one to another. There are also times when activities provided do not have a sufficiently precise objective for children's learning.

Children are making good progress in developing their early reading and writing skills due to a commercial programme to develop their phonics. For instance, some were observed enjoying building simple sentences using the sound blend learnt that day. Number work is also developed well and children were enjoying counting the segments on their egg box 'caterpillars'. Children's well-being is nurtured well and they are kept safe and grow in confidence. However, there are occasions when one or two are allowed to dominate an activity rather than being expected to wait their turn.

Children's gains in learning are recorded well and they enjoy contributing to their 'learning adventures', which are shared with parents and carers. Nevertheless, the relative strengths and weaknesses of children's progress in different areas of learning are not analysed effectively to enable the leader to focus on weaker areas of learning.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a high return rate of the questionnaire for parents and carers and the response was very positive. Respondents are particularly pleased with the fact that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. They also appreciate the way their children are prepared for the future and encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle. A few, quite naturally, expressed some anxiety over the changes in leadership in recent times, but most are happy that a permanent appointment has now been made. Some concern was also expressed about the quality of information that parents and carers receive about the progress that their children are making. Inspectors endorse this view and the school has plans to improve this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fladbury CofE First 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 76 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	73	11	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	76	10	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	53	14	31	6	13	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	53	18	40	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	23	51	17	38	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	47	19	42	4	9	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	58	19	42	0	0	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)	17	38	25	56	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	49	18	40	3	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	44	19	42	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	42	19	42	4	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	31	24	53	3	7	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	64	13	29	2	4	0	0

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	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.



30 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fladbury CofE First School, Pershore, WR10 2QB

Thank you so much for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and hearing how much you enjoy school. Your school has been through difficult times recently, with a number of changes of headteacher, but is now giving you a satisfactory education. Some of you were not making enough progress last year, but you are now making satisfactory progress.

These are the best things we found.

You behave well and are developing well into responsible and thoughtful young people. You are very rarely absent from school because you enjoy it so much.

You feel safe in school because all adults look after you well.

You are adopting healthy lifestyles well, make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school and are involved well in the local community.

The school has developed good links with your parents and carers and there are also good links with other organisations. These enable you to have experiences that you would not otherwise have, for example, music concerts and sporting fixtures with other schools.

These are the things your school needs to improve.

Your progress in mathematics is not as good as your progress in reading and writing because you cannot give sufficiently quick answers to additions and multiplications. You also do not have enough opportunities to talk about your mathematical thinking.

In your questionnaires, several of you said you do not know how well you are doing. We agree and you need to be told exactly how to improve your work so that you can judge how well you are doing. Your teachers can then use this when they mark your work.

We found that more of your lessons need to be good or better. In too many lessons, you spend too long listening rather than getting on with a task. Some of you told us that you are not always given sufficiently difficult work and it is important that all of you are given work that you find challenging.

I am sure you will help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

John Eadie

Lead inspector

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