

# Forres Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117284
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358118
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Canham

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	293
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Charlotte Marson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Camp
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Stanstead Road Hoddesdon EN11 0RW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01992 467821
<b>Fax number</b>	01992 904311
<b>Email address</b>	admin@forres.herts.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons, observed 11 teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, a group of pupils, and talked with pupils in lessons. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment and attendance information, lesson plans, safeguarding arrangements, school development planning, minutes of governing body meetings and pupils' work. Inspectors scrutinised the 136 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from staff and a sample of pupils.

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

- The extent to which higher expectations are increasing the level of challenge in Years 3 to 6.
- How much improvements to assessment procedures have strengthened monitoring and extended the accountability of staff and the governing body.
- The extent to which the new senior leadership team and the governing body influence the school's direction and performance.

## Information about the school

Forres is larger than most other primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are from families of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is average. Pupils' special educational needs include speech, language and communication and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage into one of two Reception classes. Throughout the school, pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes. Since the last inspection there have been a substantial number of changes to staffing, including the headteacher.

The school has achieved the Activemark award, Healthy Schools status, Investors in People status, the Information and Communication Technology award, and gained the Travel Plan (Gold) 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

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has a number of good features which include the care and support it provides within a cohesive community. The tenacity of the headteacher is a key factor in driving improvement. As a consequence, the school is successful in enhancing pupils' self esteem, developing their confidence and strengthening their personal qualities. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe, and have a keen interest in learning about others. Their enjoyment of learning is reflected in the enthusiastic response to stimulating activities and sporting opportunities. This picture is reflected in the questionnaires completed by pupils and in discussions when they indicated that they really enjoy school. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school.

Monitoring and tracking systems have been introduced and school leaders have a clear understanding of where the school is now and what needs improving. This has already had a positive impact on performance levels, especially in writing. However, leaders recognise that monitoring procedures lack precision and are not sufficiently rigorous. Detailed assessment information is not used consistently by staff to check on academic progress. Nevertheless, the school's awareness and vision are informed by an increasingly accurate self-evaluation and the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

Progress is satisfactory throughout the school, although children get a good start in Reception. Attainment is rising and the push for consistently good teaching is evident in the review of classroom practice. However, the quality of teaching, which is satisfactory overall, varies and is reflected in pupils' progress. Pupils are progressing well in lessons that hold their attention and where good relationships between teachers and pupils are used to lift academic expectations. However, information from assessment is not always used as well as it could be to help match activities to pupils' differing needs and to ensure that the pace of learning is always rapid enough, particularly for those who learn quickly. The level of challenge varies within Years 3 to 6. Intervention work is appropriately supporting individual and/or different groups of pupils.

The wide range of learning opportunities, including after-school activities, provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their creative and performance skills. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils show much interest and respect for different people's feelings, and are keenly involved in community projects and in fund-raising activities. However, pupils have a limited knowledge of communities in other countries. Opportunities for developing this aspect of community cohesion are missed when linking learning together across different parts of the curriculum.

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.

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

- Improve teaching so that at least 80 per cent is good or better by February 2012 by ensuring that staff always:
  - use assessment information to adapt lesson content in response to pupils' differing needs
  - provide challenging tasks that are well paced and pitched at the right level, especially for the more able.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - making better use of the information regarding pupils' progress
  - ensuring that staff are accountable for attainment and improving outcomes for all pupils.
- Extend the strategy for promoting community cohesion by:
  - creating more opportunities for pupils to appreciate and value people from communities around the world
  - ensuring that these are included in planning when linking subjects.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils' enjoyment of learning, as seen in their eagerness to become involved in engaging and well-paced activities in English, mathematics and information and communication technology, is a characteristic of most lessons. They work well in small groups and readily share information, showing a determination to complete the tasks and get them right. Pupils work well independently of the teachers, for example, when working in pairs and small groups in preparation for showing empathy towards different characters in their writing. Pupils were also fully engaged when looking at pictures showing the catastrophic impact of pollution on the natural environment. Pupils showed great satisfaction in making an accurate drawing of a clock face and calculating the degrees that are represented by each minute, for example, during mathematics. In music and physical education, pupils participated enthusiastically and with confidence.

Children enter the Reception year at below age-expected levels and when they enter Year 1 their skills are below average. Nevertheless, this represents good progress from their starting points, particularly in relation to their skills within mathematical development and in communication, language and literacy. Attainment is broadly average throughout the school and all groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily. School data shows that levels of attainment and the rate of progress vary, although they are improving securely, especially in Years 3 and 4 where the school has paid close attention to giving pupils additional support at an early stage. There are no significant variations in the rates of progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or by the very small number of pupils from different minority ethnic heritages.

Pupils say they like coming to school because they enjoy making friends, learn lots of interesting things and enjoy participating in the sporting activities, including swimming. Attendance is average but improving at a steady rate. Pupils show much interest and respect for different people's feelings and wellbeing in their role as mentors and

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involvement in community projects. Pupils' good understanding of living healthily is reflected in the school's nationally recognised qualification. It is also evident in the way they talk confidently about the importance of eating different kinds of food, and the need for regular exercise and its impact on the body. The majority of pupils take part in regular exercise, including travelling safely to school, and participate in sports events. Behaviour is good and pupils are respectful. The school council provides good opportunities for pupils to represent the views of others and to arrange charity events and projects to support the local community. Supported by the school's projects to encourage enterprise, such as carrying out market research and developing products with a breakdown of costs, pupils' personal skills are developing into important qualities for when they leave school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Good relationships and questioning that probes pupils' understanding are particular strengths of teaching and learning. Topics, such as those that encourage creative writing and make links between different subjects, such as English, geography and science, successfully capture pupils' interest and hold their attention. Consequently, pupils willingly become interested in their learning and want to find out more for themselves. However, the pace of learning is not always as rapid as it could be and some activities do not expect enough from pupils, especially the more able. Assessment is not used consistently to guide

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planning which means that tasks are not always matched well enough to the needs of different abilities. As a result, the pupils do not always learn as well as they should.

Attractive and informative classrooms displays give an insight into the range of pupils' learning experiences. The curriculum provides a considered balance between basic skills in English and mathematics and the enhancement of pupils' creative and performance skills, including music. The school has rightly identified the need to improve pupils' skills in mathematics, building on the improvements already made in writing. Planning links different subjects and pupils are given opportunities to reinforce their learning and develop their skills through topics which they choose for themselves. Skills, including the ability to work collaboratively and those related to independent study, are encouraged. The curriculum is underpinned by the effective use of information and communication technology. It is also well supported by a programme for personal, social and health education. Pupils' learning experiences are further enriched by a number of popular clubs, residential trips, visits to places of local interest, and the use of outside specialists.

The school's good care, guidance and support have a positive impact on improving outcomes for pupils. The quality of pastoral care is recognised and valued by parents and carers. One parent's comments sum up the views of others: 'All of the children seem happy and look out for each other. My child has come on leaps and bounds since joining Forres.' The close attention to pupils' health and well-being is reflected in the many opportunities for physical activity which are reflected in the award of the Activemark and the provision of healthy school meals. Individualised programmes of support are successfully compiled for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. These include an early morning club that pays attention to literacy skills and discrete rooms where pupils' behavioural and emotional needs can be addressed individually. Close liaison with parents and carers, outside agencies and tailored individual attention enables those with the greatest needs to gain confidence and self-esteem, and successfully develop their literacy and numeracy skills.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The leadership and management of the school is satisfactorily embedding ambition and driving improvement. The headteacher is passionate about gaining the best outcomes for pupils and parents and carers. Since her appointment, she has successfully created a culture that is committed to strengthening each pupil's self esteem. The new leadership team, with support from committed staff, is sharpening its focus on key priorities for raising academic achievement and sustaining improvement. However, the school does not

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consistently analyse the information regarding pupils' progress in sufficient depth to check pupils' progress. Staff do not have a sufficiently secure understanding of the achievement and attainment levels of pupils. The school has a planned approach to monitoring and a greater awareness of the path the school needs to follow to increase the pace of learning. Secure systems have been established to ensure that this ethos is maintained even through staff changes. The promotion of equality and approaches to tackling any form of discrimination are satisfactory. As a result, groups of pupils make similar progress, although some pupils, especially the higher attainers, could make faster progress in some classes.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. It has strengthened its monitoring role and readily challenges the school's work. However, it has yet to hold senior leaders to account for fully tackling weaknesses and improving academic outcomes for all pupils. Detailed and well-organised procedures ensure that safeguarding arrangements are carefully followed. The school uses embedded and reliable quality assurance and risk assessment systems. Local services and agencies are used well to enhance the safety and well-being of pupils experiencing difficult circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Community cohesion is strongly promoted within the school and in the local area. The school provides a number of opportunities for pupils to gain a good understanding about people's backgrounds and communities in this country. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop community cohesion at the international level. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and play an active part in school events, including fund-raising projects and workshops to help them understand their children's different learning experiences.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Effective leadership and management make certain that planning takes good account of children's starting points. Effective assessment procedures are beginning to ensure that staff have accurate and reliable information about children's progress. Good links have been established with parents and carers so that children settle quickly and are eager to learn.

Children benefit from a nurturing learning environment where well-planned topics ensure all areas of learning are covered with a particular focus on reading, speaking, listening, writing, and number skills. Staff give closely targeted support to both teacher-initiated activities and those which children choose for themselves. Questioning is often used well to probe children's understanding and capture their interest. Adults respond skilfully and sensitively, and good support is given to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children listen attentively, play together well and enjoy participating in a wide range of stimulating activities. Children happily move from one activity to another. They are keen to explore activities and find things out for themselves while chattering to each other. New experiences, both indoors and outdoors, captivate and engage children so they make good progress overall.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

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

## Views of parents and carers

An above-average proportion of the school's parents and carers returned the questionnaires. The very large majority of the responses were positive. A number of parents and carers made written comments and some of these expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. These included positive remarks about the caring and supportive community and the quality of the staff. However, some questionnaires recorded reservations over a small number of issues. These included the amount of progress their children are making, standards of behaviour and changes in staffing. The inspection team looked at these concerns during the course of the inspection. They judged that pupils are making more rapid progress than they did before, although those who learn quickly could be challenged more. Behaviour was good and almost all pupils respond well. Staffing is now more stable than it has been in the past.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Forres 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 136 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 293 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	32	81	60	7	5	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	61	45	69	51	4	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	26	86	63	13	10	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	30	79	58	13	10	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	42	31	86	63	5	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	22	87	64	15	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	29	96	71	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)	36	26	88	65	7	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	26	86	63	10	7	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	21	75	55	23	17	5	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	18	90	66	14	10	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	26	19	95	70	9	7	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	25	92	68	5	4	3	2

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



9 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Forres Primary School, Hoddesdon EN11 0RW**

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school - thank you for making us feel so welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found while we were with you. Forres is a satisfactory school where you behave well, feel safe and benefit from good care and support. You told us it is also a place where you want to be, make friends, and enjoy taking part in the many exciting activities, trips and interesting clubs. The very large majority of your parents and carers who returned the questionnaire expressed considerable satisfaction with the school.

Here are some other important things about your school.

You make satisfactory progress in lessons.

You respond enthusiastically to activities that encourage you to work creatively.

You make a positive contribution to the smooth running of the school and contribute successfully to local events.

You have a good understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle.

To make things even better for you, your school has been asked to:

- help you to make faster progress, especially those of you who learn quickly, by giving you more challenging activities throughout the lessons
- ensure that those in charge of the school keep an even closer eye on how you are doing
- help you to understand more about people's backgrounds and communities in other countries.

We wish each one of you every success in your future education and hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now. You can all help the school by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Paul Canham

Lead inspector

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