

Forsbrook CofE Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132260
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	360421
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Pritchard
Headteacher	Natasha Richards
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed eight members of staff and sampled 16 lessons. The headteacher joined the lead inspector for several lesson observations. Meetings were held with the school's leaders, members of the governing body and different groups of children. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of policies, planning documents, minutes of governing body meetings and data about children's performance. They examined documentation and arrangements associated with how the school keeps children safe. Inspectors scrutinised 107 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 118 by pupils and 13 by staff.

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

- Inspectors considered whether all groups of pupils make equal progress, especially the boys, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those of higher ability, particularly in writing.
- The team evaluated the extent to which pupils have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Inspectors judged whether curriculum planning is effective enough to provide work that matches the different needs and abilities of the pupils.
- The team also considered whether the monitoring of the work of the school is rigorously evaluative and identifies areas for improvement accurately enough.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school near Stoke-on-Trent. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. A below average proportion has special educational needs and/or disabilities, including moderate learning difficulties. The school's extended services include nursery provision and out-of-school care before and after school. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2010. The school holds Healthy School and Eco-Schools Green Flag status.

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. Key to the considerable improvements made during this year has been the new headteacher's excellent grasp of what works well and where improvements were needed. The resulting action taken has reversed a recent decline in standards. Parents and carers are pleased with the quality of education and care provided, with one noting that the new headteacher 'has breathed fresh air into the school.' Pupils' behaviour is excellent, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are enthusiastic learners, developing as well-rounded young citizens who are sensitive to others. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe, get on well together and say they really enjoy school. Care, guidance and support are outstanding and this ensures that pupils receive the individual, tailored support they may need.

Pupils make good progress overall, although this is better in Key Stage 2 than for the younger pupils. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and a good proportion of pupils are achieving the higher levels in their work in Years 5 and 6. Pupils do well in mathematics and many are able to solve problems confidently. While most pupils read well, the progress made in writing, especially by those in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, is no more than satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are good overall, but inconsistent. In Key Stage 2 boys and girls of all abilities make equally good progress because teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. Therefore, pupils in Years 3 to 6 make significant gains in their learning. Curriculum planning is good with links between subjects developing well. Environmental work and extra-curricular activities enrich learning effectively. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. Staff have strong relationships with pupils and praise their efforts, which builds their confidence and self-esteem, but at times pupils have to listen to adults for too long at the expense of practising their skills. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory but activities are not always matched closely to their different ability levels. The school's data show that younger boys do not make as much progress as girls in some key areas, and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are not taught how to build on their writing skills consistently. The school has identified the need to improve the curriculum and the learning environment for the Early Years Foundation Stage as a priority, but measures to tackle this are not yet fully effective.

Leadership and management are good; the headteacher drives improvements with the clear vision and determination that the school will be even better. Under her guidance almost all senior leaders are developing their roles well, although they are not yet fully effective in monitoring and checking the outcome of new developments. The much improved tracking of pupils' progress is ensuring that all staff are quick to recognise where support is needed. Governance is satisfactory; the governing body is supportive and

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determined to improve its own effectiveness in holding the school to account. All of these developments are ensuring that the school has good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress, especially in writing, by:
 - ensuring that teaching across the school, and particularly for the younger pupils, supports the progressive development of writing skills
 - checking that time is used well in lessons in Key Stage 1 in order for pupils to practise what they have learnt
 - extending the role of senior leaders in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of recent initiatives.
- Develop provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - improving planning, teaching and learning, by providing imaginative and challenging activities that meet the needs of all children
 - setting clear priorities for curriculum development and the acquisition of key skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the nursery with skills that are in line with expectations for their age. Throughout the school, pupils have good speaking and listening skills. Many read well because they have a good understanding of letter sounds and have secure mathematical understanding. However, skills in writing are less well developed. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and samples of recent work demonstrate that pupils in Year 2 were doing well at the beginning of the year, but during a period of disruption in staffing, progress dipped. The rate of progress is considerably faster in Key Stage 2. Achievement is good in all subjects and the oldest pupils often make outstanding progress. Data and pupils' current work show that the dip in standards evident in 2009 and 2010 has been addressed very well in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the small number who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates. This helps all pupils prepare well for their future. Learning is most effective when there is a practical element to the task to raise pupils' interest. For example, excellent progress was seen in Year 5 when pupils showed great enthusiasm in planning cooperatively how to spend a budget of £2,000 on school resources. They solved problems to identify how much they had spent, how much money they had left, and therefore what else they could afford.

Because pupils' behaviour is exceptional, the school is an orderly community. They show a real interest in their learning, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe and they enjoy environmental activities. Their spiritual awareness is enhanced by high-quality assemblies, and their social and moral skills are underpinned by the almost tangible ethos of the school as a caring place to be. Pupils' cultural awareness is supported very effectively by international links and the teaching of modern foreign languages. Pupils have a very positive attitude to exercise, reflected in the Healthy School status. Many enjoy really active play and a good

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range of sporting opportunities. School lunches are of good quality but some packed lunches or the choices pupils make, such as only eating pudding, do not reflect an awareness of the importance of healthy eating. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in and around school with the older ones taking pride in being prefects and team leaders. Attendance is good.

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	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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?

Teaching in all Key Stage 2 classes has some outstanding elements because staff link subjects together very well and provide activities that really interest the pupils. For example, those in Year 4 improved their writing in the past tense after looking at artefacts they had collected and by tape-recording their ideas. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 made excellent progress in their descriptive writing on the topic of islands by adding a twist or flashback to their stories. Staff use interactive whiteboards well, as illustrated in Year 3 where the use of visual images supported pupils' writing about the rainforest. By contrast, in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage sometimes pupils spend too long listening to adults.

Because the school is a very caring community, older pupils know they have a responsibility to help look after those who are younger. The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator has considerably improved the work done to support the pupils whose circumstances may make them most vulnerable. An effective programme of

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intervention activities ensures that pupils receive additional help when they require it. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs and those in the process of being assessed are very well supported through the use of the school's additional resources. Teaching assistants with specific responsibility to support children with the most pressing needs are very effective. They ensure that these pupils are fully included and active members of their class. Transition to secondary school is managed well.

The breakfast and after-school activities meet the needs of the children well. There are lots of opportunities for them to make choices in the type of activity undertaken. Themes such as 'Pirates' are enjoyed by the whole age range. Staff keep a close eye on football games to ensure that the youngest children are kept safe.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Parents and carers recognise the strong impact the new headteacher has made in driving improvement. This is illustrated in a comment that the headteacher, 'has made a considerable positive input to the school which I feel will make the school even stronger and reach all its aims.' Early work with staff and the governing body focused on the recent decline in standards and identified many of the means by which this would be addressed. This was a testing period for staff, who have risen to the challenge well and are seeing the fruits of their efforts, especially in Key Stage 2. Assessment procedures have been considerably improved so that all staff know exactly what each child is doing. A start has been made in extending the involvement of senior staff in monitoring and evaluating provision in areas for which they hold responsibility, but this has not yet had a marked impact, particularly in English and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some governors are active in supporting the school but recognise that 'we didn't know what we didn't know'. They are working to develop their role in holding the school more to account for the standards achieved.

The school has good links with parents and carers and partnerships with a range of agencies and other schools that help support learning and well-being. The school promotes equality of opportunity successfully and is working with determination to address gaps in progress between groups, including to ensure boys do as well as they can. Safeguarding procedures are good and there are very careful checks of those who work with the children to ensure their suitability. The site is well managed and secure, and staff recognise the importance of ensuring that all policies such as e-safety are reviewed and updated regularly. The school promotes community cohesion well; there are strong links with the Comenius project, which develops international links.

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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	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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The school provides for nursery children in Jigsaws, which complies with the requirements for registered childcare. It is government funded, with extra sessions paid for by parents and carers. Some of these children also attend the before- and after-school sessions too. Children settle well in the separate nursery and reception class and make satisfactory overall progress. The learning environment of the nursery is attractive and stimulating. Good use is made of the adjoining play area and there are plans to develop another adjacent area. The learning environment in the reception class is satisfactory but not especially stimulating for this age group.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All staff have good relationships with the children and praise their efforts well. Assessment information indicates that initially the skills of boys and girls are similar, with a notable strength in their speaking skills, but then girls usually make better progress than boys. This was illustrated when some of the boys really struggled to maintain their concentration when sitting on the carpet for lengthy periods. At times, the expectations of the staff are not closely matched to the children's ability. In the nursery, for example, too much was expected of their knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes such as hexagons, ovals and rectangles. In reception, some work was too easy for children who were already able to double numbers unaided. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the nursery, are satisfactory. However, while staff have the vision to improve provision, the rate of progress has not been rapid enough.

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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

Around 43% of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The large majority of responses were positive and some note 'good values'; that 'the teaching staff care about their students' and 'the school is approachable and helpful when needed.' All of those who responded think that their children are kept safe and encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. A small minority think their children do not make enough progress, and that the school does not meet their child's needs particularly effectively or inform them of progress well enough. Inspectors judge that the progress made by most pupils is good overall, but there is some variability and it is slower for younger pupils. A small number of parents and carers also have concerns about how well challenging behaviour is handled but inspectors found that behaviour is excellent and managed very well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Forsbrook CofE Controlled 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 107 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 249 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	62	38	36	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	72	67	33	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	50	47	49	46	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	49	45	42	8	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	64	60	40	37	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	50	46	43	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	44	60	56	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)	59	55	41	38	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	57	53	43	40	6	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	40	54	50	5	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	36	57	53	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	57	53	43	40	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	61	39	36	2	2	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	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).

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">■ 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.



17 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Forsbrook CofE Controlled Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent ST11 9PW

Thank you very much for making the inspectors welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you, especially those who told us about the things you all do. I know my colleague particularly enjoyed the assembly about 'The Parting of the Red Sea'. I saw how hard those of you in Year 5 were working when you had to decide how to spend your budget of £2,000 buying things for the school. I also enjoyed having lunch with several of you and was interested that there are few things that you think need changing at school. Thank you also for the questionnaires that many of you filled in for the inspection.

We think that your school is good and that your new headteacher has helped to make many improvements in how things are organised. We believe that you make good progress, and those of you in Key Stage 2 do particularly well because there are lots of interesting things for you to do. We were delighted to see that your behaviour is excellent and that you become such nice young people. Your understanding of how to keep safe is extremely good and you get on together really well. The way the staff look after you is excellent and they make sure that if you need a bit of extra help that this is provided for you.

The headteacher, the governing body (who are the people who check on the work of the school) and the staff have agreed to work on some important areas to improve things even more. We have asked them to:

- help you improve your writing by making sure that you are taught how to improve your skills, especially in Key Stage 1
- improve how things are organised in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that learning is more exciting and the youngest children can make more progress.

You could also help by making sure that you think even more carefully about how what you eat helps to make you healthy.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector

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