

Field Court Junior School

Courtfield Road, Quedgeley, Gloucester, GL2 4UF

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. They achieve exceptionally well, making very rapid progress in all year groups in English and mathematics.
- Pupils use their excellent reading, writing and mathematics skills to very good effect to support their learning in different subjects.
- Outstanding teaching helps pupils to learn extremely rapidly. Teachers inspire pupils to do well. They ensure that they fulfil their potential and develop a genuine love of learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are polite and well mannered and take on responsibilities very sensibly. They feel very safe and get on very well together.
- Pupils who receive extra support through additional government funding make exceptionally rapid progress and the gap between their attainment and that of others closes very quickly.
- Pupils greatly enjoy school because learning is enriched by many memorable activities both in and out of lessons. These contribute extremely successfully to pupils' excellent personal development. They ensure that they leave school as well-adjusted, happy and very confident individuals.
- Extremely strong leadership and management are instrumental in the school's success. Leaders have secured very rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement over the last three years.
- Planning for improvement is based on a very clear picture of the remaining priorities. Leaders at all levels play an excellent part in ensuring priorities are tackled quickly.
- The delightful atmosphere in school reflects the way that leaders value and respect all members of the school community so that all feel part of the push for continued excellence.
- Leaders make excellent use of information on pupils' progress to ensure that they are all doing well enough. Any dips in performance are tackled quickly and to very good effect.
- The governing body supports other leaders extremely well in their determination to ensure that all pupils get the best possible education.
- The school works very closely with parents. They are very pleased with the work of the school, especially the way that adults care for their children.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, of which around half were jointly observed with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made some short visits to lessons.
- Discussions were held with pupils, members of the governing body and members of staff.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 17 parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors also analysed the school’s own surveys of parental views and talked to some at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, heard some pupils read, and looked at a number of documents, including: the school’s own information about pupils’ learning and progress; planning and monitoring documents; the school development plan; records relating to behaviour and attendance; safeguarding information; and health and safety documentation.
- The inspectors analysed 29 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector

Marcia Headon

Additional inspector

Robert Arnold

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds but a small number speak English as an additional language. Very few pupils are in the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs on the school roll is about 20%. This is similar to the proportion found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is similar to that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Field Court Junior School converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2011. When its predecessor school, with the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Give new subject leaders more frequent opportunities to visit lessons so that they can play an even bigger part in driving improvement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- This is a school that has not stood still since becoming an academy. The school's drive for improvement is relentless and uncompromising. It is so successful because leaders at all levels will not accept second best for pupils. Leaders have achieved this great success without losing their focus on ensuring that pupils flourish socially and develop a love of learning.
- Leaders know each pupil as an individual. Their academic progress and social development are monitored extremely closely and the use of data on pupils' performance is exceptionally strong. The school responds immediately to any concerns that they may identify and any pupil who is in danger of falling behind is very quickly helped to get back on track. Leaders ensure that school assessments are accurate by comparing information across year groups and with other local schools.
- The school has an excellent track record for improving teaching and supporting new teachers. As one teacher wrote, 'Leaders invest in me and my future.' There are excellent systems for checking what still needs improving in teaching, and any weaknesses, even when minor, are tackled decisively.
- Middle leaders such as teachers in charge of subjects are excellent role models in their own work. Their work on preparing for the introduction of the new National Curriculum (topics and the subjects taught) has been exemplary, especially in English and mathematics. They mainly provide high-quality support to colleagues, although a small number are new to their roles and have had limited opportunity to look in detail at the quality of teaching so that they can play an even bigger part in driving improvement.
- The curriculum complies with current legislation and provides pupils with many memorable experiences. An exciting range of activities both in and out of lessons contributes extremely well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils leave school very well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life. They develop good tolerance and respect for others and are prepared very well for life in multicultural Britain. For example, one pupil commented after a recent school visit to London that she had learnt that 'although we may look different, really we are all the same'.
- Leaders make good use of external consultants to ensure that their evaluations are accurate and to support the school where necessary.
- The school focuses well on improving pupils' healthy lifestyles and their physical well-being. Leaders check carefully the use of sports funding to ensure that it is helping to introduce pupils to new sports and to improve the skills of teachers. The resulting improvement in participation rates was shown to good effect during the inspection by the very high number of boys and girls taking part in a cross-country race.
- Leaders have established strong partnerships with other schools. As they grow in confidence in their own success, they are playing an increasingly strong part in improving the wider education system by, for example, sharing examples of excellent practice with other establishments.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Innovative systems such as the school's colour-coded visitor badges are very well established and greatly increase the safety of pupils.
- The school has a very strong partnership with parents. They are very happy with the work of the school and feel it meets the needs of their children extremely well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is highly effective. Governors are very well trained and provide extremely strong levels of challenge. They are very knowledgeable about how well the school is performing in comparison with others because they have strong systems for checking provision. They are kept very well informed by the headteacher but also analyse data in detail for themselves so that they can get a clear picture of what still needs improving. They know where teaching is especially strong and how the school continues to improve it. Their systems for rewarding good teaching through performance management are very thorough and are very well understood by teachers. Financial management is extremely rigorous. Governors ensure that all spending is focused sharply on improving provision for pupils. They monitor very closely the use of additional funding to ensure that it is used extremely well to improve the attainment of eligible pupils or to provide them with access to activities which would not otherwise be available.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Inspectors agree with parents and staff in their view that pupils' behaviour is unfailingly exemplary. The extremely positive attitude of pupils to their work is one of the key reasons why they do so well at school. Pupils develop a thirst for knowledge because they know that their successes are valued. As one said, 'Everyone is made to feel a star here.'
- Pupils greatly enjoy school, as can be seen by their above-average rates of attendance. They are very polite and courteous and have excellent manners. School logs confirm that poor behaviour is extremely rare and is tackled very quickly.
- The pupils are proud of their school and present their work very neatly. They work unflinchingly in lessons, tackling tasks with enormous determination and persevering well if they are finding it difficult. They take very good account of the views of others when, for example, reading the manifestos of pupils who are seeking election to the school council.
- The school has highly effective procedures for promoting good behaviour. Pupils are very clear about school rules because they help write them. Activities in 'The Treehouse', where pupils learn to interact with each other or are given extra support, are very effective in helping those with behavioural difficulties to improve very quickly in their social skills.
- The school promotes extremely good relationships and tackles discrimination very robustly. There is a delightful atmosphere on the playground, with pupils from differing backgrounds playing together very happily. Pupils are especially positive about the way that the playground is zoned into areas for different activities. Pupils stick to the zones impeccably.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare but they are very confident that any 'falling out' is tackled very quickly by any adult they speak to. They like the 'worry box' because they know that it is regularly checked so a problem will be sorted out almost immediately.
- Pupils are very clear that bullying can take many forms. They explain the potential dangers they may face when using social media and know what they should do if they have a concern.
- Activities such as cycling proficiency training, 'Be Safe, Don't Be Sorry' assemblies and work in class about making sensible choices ensure that pupils are extremely clear about how to avoid potential dangers in later life.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Leaders have improved teaching over the last three years. Across the school, teaching inspires and motivates pupils extremely well. Pupils work hard and without fear of failure because they know mistakes will be handled sensitively and misconceptions corrected quickly.
- There is a very purposeful and happy atmosphere when a class is working. Adults and pupils get on very well together and this, along with the highly effective way that teachers manage behaviour, means that time is never wasted. Skilled teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning both in and out of lessons.
- Across the school, pupils' books show that reading, writing and mathematics are taught extremely well, with skills improving very quickly. Teachers have exceptionally high expectations of pupils. These are based on a very secure understanding of what they already know. They give pupils frequent feedback on what they are doing well, and this helps them to improve their work.
- When pupils are working, teachers constantly check their understanding so that they can adjust work if need be. Consequently, work provides good challenge for pupils, including the most able.
- Teachers ensure that pupils who need additional help are given it quickly. Support outside lessons for pupils such as the disabled or those who have special educational needs is very well targeted and helps to improve basic skills very rapidly.
- Teachers meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language well and help them to improve their speaking skills quickly. For example, they ensure that they understand new vocabulary so that they can play a full part in activities.
- Parents are unanimously pleased with the quality of teaching in the school. They support teachers well by helping their children with homework and by hearing them read. Homework is enjoyable and is appreciated by most pupils because, as one said, 'It is not just worksheets.'

The achievement of pupils**is outstanding**

- Pupils' attainment has risen since the school became an academy and is now consistently significantly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. In the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 in 2013, results were the best ever and were maintained at around this level in 2014. Across the school pupils make exceptionally rapid progress in all subjects from their above-average starting points at the start of Year 3.
- By Year 6, pupils very confidently use their excellent literacy and numeracy skills to good effect in different subjects. They read very skilfully from a very wide range of texts. They write enthusiastically and spell and punctuate accurately, using exciting vocabulary to engage the reader. In mathematics, younger pupils quickly learn different ways to add and subtract without needing to use resources such as counting blocks or their fingers. As they get older, pupils carry out increasingly complex calculations and use this knowledge extremely well to solve problems.
- The school very successfully promotes equality of opportunity by ensuring that all groups do extremely well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive very high quality support, enabling them to learn very quickly.
- The most able also achieve very well. They make extremely rapid progress in all year groups. They are helped to fulfil their potential through a high level of challenge in lessons and the school's relentless focus on teaching them that if they work hard, 'the sky is the limit'.
- Pupils who are supported through additional government funding make excellent progress across the school. In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2013 they were working at the same level as their classmates in mathematics and were about a term behind them in reading and writing. However, they were outperforming all pupils nationally by around a year in mathematics and a term in reading and writing, reflecting the school's highly successful approach to improving their attainment. This is achieved through the exemplary use of individual and small-group support that is very well focused on individual needs.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress in improving their speaking skills and their attainment in English and mathematics is as high as others' by the end of Year 6.

WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	137432
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	448610

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	338
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Morris
Headteacher	Kelly Armstrong
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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