



# Four Acres Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109128  
**LEA** Bristol, City of  
**Inspection number** 278133  
**Inspection dates** 10 January 2006 to 11 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Andrew Harrett HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Four Acres
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bristol
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		BS13 8RB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 9030474
<b>Number on roll</b>	233	<b>Fax number</b>	0117 9030475
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Rev Judith Carpenter
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Wendy Marriott

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Four Acres is an average-sized primary school with fairly equal numbers of boys and girls. The proportion of the pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well above average. Nearly all the pupils come from a white British background. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than average. Attainment on entry to the school is below average.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Inspection evidence does not support the school's view that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory and the inspection team judges it to be inadequate. Standards and achievement are exceptionally low and have remained so since the time of the last inspection, except in mathematics where there has recently been an improvement and achievement is now satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate overall with particular weaknesses in Years 3, 4 and 5 and in the teaching of writing. Assessment and target setting are not used consistently well enough to support progress. In Year 6, teaching and learning are good.

The school had a long period of temporary arrangements in leadership and management which has impaired the school's effectiveness. Leadership and management are inadequate and the school does not provide value for money.

Pupils enter the school with standards that are below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. The quality of leadership and management and the provision for the children's education is good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception. The care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory with some good features, particularly in the arrangements for protecting children and the links established with families.

The leadership and management of the temporary headteacher have resulted in some improvements, notably in the behaviour and attendance of the pupils, the quality of the curriculum and links with parents. However, in the crucial areas of teaching and learning and the pupils' standards and achievement in science and English, the leadership and management of the school have failed to have sufficient impact. The areas for improvement noted in the last inspection report have not been tackled adequately.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- Adopt appropriate strategies to improve writing.
- Ensure that assessment and target setting are used consistently.
- Develop the capacity for leadership and management across the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2005, pupils attained standards that were well below average in reading and writing but were average in mathematics. Boys performed significantly less well than girls. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2005, the results improved in English and mathematics, but they remained well below average in English compared with results nationally and results in writing were significantly lower than those in reading. In science, results were well below average in 2005 and have declined over recent years. The pupils made inadequate progress in English and science and satisfactory progress in mathematics. Results at Key Stage 2 for the last three years show that pupils have made unsatisfactory progress overall for the whole of this period. The pupils do not meet the challenging targets set by the school. During the inspection, pupils were observed making satisfactory progress in lessons in Year 6, but this was not sufficient to counter the unsatisfactory progress made in Years 3, 4 and 5. Inspection evidence confirmed that standards were below average in those year groups in literacy and numeracy, with particular weaknesses in writing.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy coming to school. While attendance has improved over the last two years, it remains too low, partly because too many families take their holidays during term time. The pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards their work are satisfactory overall. They are good when the teaching fully involves pupils in their learning, but deteriorate when teaching is inadequate. Some pupils were concerned about behaviour in the playground, but they also reported that problems are swiftly and effectively dealt with. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school promotes good behaviour, tolerance and respect for one another. The school council is beginning to take the initiative in planning events such as a book and cake sale, but as yet does not play a large part in making school decisions. The school encourages a healthy lifestyle and the pupils report that lunches have recently improved. Water is readily available and the school successfully encourages the eating of fruit as a healthy snack. Bristol City Football Club makes a positive contribution to the sound physical education programme. The pupils' progress in gaining essential skills in literacy is too slow. However, the school has undertaken other initiatives which will aid pupils' future economic well-being, such as a programme with a local company which teaches the children how to develop sound habits in financial management.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall, with particular weaknesses in Years 3, 4 and 5. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 6 is consistently good.

The good teaching seen was characterised by clear explanations, good questioning skills and tasks which were well matched to pupils' needs. These, together with good marking, clear feedback and appropriately challenging target setting, ensured that the pupils made sound progress in their lessons. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory, the purpose of the lessons was unclear. Activities were not well timed and the lessons lost momentum and pace. The work was not appropriately matched to the pupils' needs so that some finished early and wasted time and others struggled to complete tasks with inadequate support. This had an adverse impact on their behaviour and attitudes to learning. There were particular weaknesses in the teaching of writing with insufficient opportunities for the pupils to work together to develop their basic skills and too few examples of extended writing. In Years 3, 4 and 5, marking is inconsistent. It does not always give sufficient guidance to pupils about how to improve their work and sometimes work is marked irregularly or not at all.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum has improved and is now satisfactory. The strengths of recent changes are seen particularly in the school's responsiveness to the local community and the creative elements which have been introduced. Links with local businesses enable the pupils to develop an understanding of the economy and involvement in a range of arts projects provides breadth and enrichment. The school's involvement in national initiatives, such as the Intensifying Support Programme, has improved the quality of planning in literacy and numeracy. Curriculum planning for the needs of different pupils has improved, but this is not consistently applied in lesson planning and is having less impact in Years 3, 4 and 5 than in the rest of the school. There is a reasonable range of after school clubs and activities, which are popular and well attended, and an annual residential trip for the older pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory with some good features. The school protects and promotes the health and welfare of the pupils and statutory requirements are in place. The arrangements for ensuring the safety and protection of the pupils are very effective and staff have received appropriate training. The school has good relationships with parents and works well with outside agencies to support learners. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory.

However, the pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 do not make adequate progress in their work, which is hindered by inconsistencies in target setting and assessment.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

The school has had a period of turbulence and uncertainty in leadership and management which has had an adverse impact on morale, standards and achievement. Consequently, the school has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement has remained poor and the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection have not been tackled.

Since September 2004, the position of headteacher has been filled temporarily by a member of the local education authority (LEA) school improvement team. This acting headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher who also provides sound leadership in mathematics, in which standards are now average and achievement is now satisfactory. After a period in which the governance of the school lacked direction and did not provide adequate support or challenge, it has recently improved and is now satisfactory.

Strategic planning has improved and is generally well conceived, but much of it has yet to be implemented or has not had sufficient impact on standards, achievement, teaching or learning, all of which remain inadequate. The instability of the middle leadership of the school is unsatisfactory. Subject leadership in science and literacy is insecure and presently rests with the acting headteacher. Leadership in the school is not sufficiently distributed to ensure that there is adequate and sustainable improvement.

The acting headteacher has provided good leadership in that she has brought about improvements in behaviour, attendance, links with parents and the curriculum. Her monitoring of the school's work has been rigorous and provided an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Parents have been appropriately involved in the process. However, although monitoring and evaluation have been accurate, subsequent action has not been sufficiently effective. In the most crucial aspects of the school's work, improvement has been inadequate. Teaching and learning are inadequate overall, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils' achievement and progress remain poor, particularly in science and in English. The school has made unsatisfactory progress since its last inspection and the areas identified for improvement have not been dealt with. Consequently, leadership and management are unsatisfactory and have not demonstrated the capacity to improve the school.





## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for welcoming us when we visited your school. Your willingness to help and your politeness to visitors are a credit to you, your families and the school.

These are the things that we liked best about your school.

- Everyone who works at the school makes sure that you feel safe and happy.
- If you need help, there are people in the school who will listen to you.
- You behave well and enjoy your lessons.
- You know how important it is to eat healthily and to take exercise.

However, there were other things that the school needs to do to make sure that you make really good progress. Because we were so concerned, we have said that the school needs special help from other people to make sure that this happens.

- We think some teaching needs to improve, particularly in writing and in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- We want your teachers to make sure that they mark your work carefully and regularly