



Field Court Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115599
LEA Gloucestershire
Inspection number 279633
Inspection dates 14 September 2005 to 15 September 2005
Reporting inspector Neville Grenyer HMI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Courtfield Road
School category	Maintained		Quedgeley
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL2 4UF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01452 720066
Number on roll	350	Fax number	01452 723417
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Jane Barrett

Age group 7 to 11	Inspection dates 14 September 2005 - 15 September 2005	Inspection number 279633
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The school serves Quedgeley, an outer suburb of Gloucester. The majority of pupils come from the local area having attended the neighbouring infant school. A significant number of pupils join the school during the year. The increase in numbers has led to the enlargement of the school buildings last year. The number of children entitled to free school meals is low. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is about average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Field Court Junior School is an effective school which gives sound value for money. It has a clear view of its effectiveness, and knows its strengths and where it needs to improve further.

Teaching is good throughout the school and the children do an appropriately wide range of interesting work. Behaviour in the school is good and the pupils have good attitudes to learning; their personal development is good. Pupils have good opportunity to contribute to the work of the school community and towards improving the environment. Pupils make good progress towards the standards that most children reach by the age of 11, but the less able make slower progress, especially in mathematics. Pupils with special needs, however, are well supported and helped to attain their targets for improvement, and the school has good methods to ascertain when they are making the required progress. Marking and assessment of work for other pupils, however, is not consistently of this standard.

Inspectors agree with the school that leadership and management are good. The school has put in place good management procedures that help it know how well it is doing, and effective performance management is well linked to professional development with an aim to continuous improvement and the raising of standards. Staff use a system of personal target setting for pupils in mathematics and English and the school is rightly planning to extend this throughout the curriculum and the pupils' personal development.

The school has a good capacity to improve, and since the last inspection it has addressed all three key issues on the previous report. Improved attainment in information and communication technology has been achieved and the teachers' expertise has increased with the provision of up-to-date technology in the classrooms. Investigative learning skills are well taught in science, which has become a strong subject in this school. The school now meets all statutory requirements including a daily act of corporate worship in the enlarged school hall, and swimming is part of the school curriculum in Year 4.

What the school should do to improve further

The school should:

- continue to raise standards, especially of the less able in mathematics
- improve the quality of marking and assessment so that it is consistently good
- develop further the use of individual target setting for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school assessed achievements and standards as satisfactory and inspectors agree with this view. The standards reached in 2004 by children at the age of 11 were in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In 2005, English showed a strong improvement, and science remained strong, while mathematics experienced

a dip in performance. The relative performance of boys and girls has varied over the past two years: in 2004 boys outperformed girls but in 2005, the girls obtained the better results. The school continues to work to obtain greater consistency and balance here.

Children make good progress in this school. Most pupils' standards in lessons seen during this inspection were average in mathematics and English, and did not match the results in Key Stage 1. About a third of their level of written English was poor, and was seen to be having adverse effects on the level of their work in other subjects, including science. Generally, the pupils make better progress as they move further up the school in all their subjects, and the more able pupils make more rapid progress, particularly in mathematics, where less able pupils make only limited progress. In mathematics and in English, pupils are now given individual targets to follow in order to assist their learning.

Children with special educational needs make good progress and the school has in place measures that demonstrate when pupils make significant progress. Teachers know their pupils and their needs very well and their plans show that they provide appropriate support. The classroom assistants work well with the teachers to help children achieve their targets.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Although attendance has fallen in recent years, it is better than the national average; the pupils enjoy coming to school because they say it is fun. Behaviour in all situations is good, and the pupils are friendly, polite and courteous. The school fosters excellent relationships between and amongst staff and pupils; pupils are not afraid to seek comfort and help if the need arises. Pupils who have special needs are made to feel welcome in the strong caring ethos the school promotes. As a result, all pupils feel valued, grow in confidence and develop a keenness to learn and do their best. They enjoy achieving success and prize the praise and encouragement they receive for their efforts. Pupils speak highly of the kindness and help they receive from teachers and other staff. They appreciate the very many interesting visits and special events teachers organise, such as the music workshops and the Indian day, which enrich their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development so effectively. Pupils take a pride in their new school buildings and feel privileged to work in such attractive surroundings. They feel fairly treated, recognising the need to follow the school rules they have helped devise. The school council is an active body that is instrumental in making decisions on behalf of the pupils and has been instrumental in designing the new uniform and making improvements in the playground facilities. In science and in physical education lessons, pupils were enabled to make their own assessments of risk and safety, for example, when using thermometers to measure temperature, or when preparing to do gymnastic exercises on the mats. Through such actions, pupils gain a sense of responsibility towards, and respect for, the needs of others and the way they conduct themselves around the school. For

example, playground mediators are trained to resolve sensitive issues that might arise in the playground and this increases their maturity as they progress through the school. There are many examples of pupils undertaking purposeful work in teams, which develops skills that prepare them for the world of work. While pupils have a good sense of their role as young citizens within the school, opportunities to develop this role in the wider community are being considered to broaden pupils' horizons and prepare them even more effectively for the future.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. All lessons are conscientiously planned, prepared and organised. A good variety of suitable activities is included to ensure that the pupils are fully involved in the lessons. The challenge of the work is usually carefully matched to the previous attainment of the pupils. Most of the talk from teachers was interesting, stimulating the interest of the pupils and developing their enthusiasm for learning. In most lessons the teachers used effective strategies to help the pupils maintain their attentiveness, for example, by discussing problems in pairs or using mini-whiteboards so that all could answer the teacher's questions. The presentation of many lessons is enhanced by the skilled use of interactive whiteboards. The teachers know their subjects well and usually make them interesting. Management of the pupils' behaviour is generally very good; praise is frequently used skilfully to reinforce good work or behaviour, but sanctions are also used in the rare occasions when it is necessary. The pupils' work is marked regularly in all classes, but the quality varies; most gives helpful comment to help pupils to improve their work further. All of the teachers gave guidance orally during lessons; much of this was well structured and rigorous, helping the pupils to make sound progress.

The quality of learning, including the progress made by the pupils, is good overall. However, it varies widely from very good to broadly satisfactory. They use their opportunities to discuss problems in small groups well and many answer questions with enthusiasm and confidence. They use their time well when asked to work independently. Many take pride in their work and are keen to discuss it. The pupils' progress and the pace of learning in lessons was usually good, but was reduced when teachers spoke for too long or the learning task did not capture the interest of the pupils.

There is a suitable system for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress. Data from national tests is analysed thoroughly and used very well to identify strengths and weaknesses in the standard of the pupils' work. Teacher assessment is used well in day-to-day lessons, but does not contribute adequately to the analysis of each year groups progress. On entry to the school, each pupil is set a target for attainment at the end of Key Stage 2; short term targets are set regularly in English, mathematics

and for some pupils with special educational needs, but in other subjects the setting of such targets is too reliant on the initiative of individual teachers. Pupils make good progress to reach standards that match the national average at the age of 11, but the less able progress more slowly in mathematics. Reports to parents are well structured and informative.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and sufficiently balanced. It is well organised into themes to ensure the pupils learn about the Foundation subjects in sufficient depth. English and mathematics are integrated well into the thematic approach. This recent structure has been evaluated through the improved enthusiasm and response of the pupils, but assessments of the standards attained have not been used adequately to monitor the extent of improvement. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visitors, such as actors and a resident artist, and trips to places of interest, such as a scientific activity centre. The school achieved the National Artsmark Silver award. There is a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities involving sports, languages, art, design and technology, music and information and communication technology. Spanish is taught as part of the curriculum in Year 6.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Due regard is paid to the pupils' safety, health and well-being. There are very good arrangements for welcoming pupils who are new to the school and making them feel settled and confident. Relationships between adults and pupils are mostly very good so that the pupils feel confident in securing adult help when they need it for academic, medical or emotional reasons. At playtime, there is a suitable range of equipment and benching to help the pupils socialise. Appropriate risk assessments are made before visits or journeys are made out of school and in relevant lessons, for example physical education or science.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a clear idea of what the school should be doing and how it should achieve its aims. She has worked effectively to produce a school that is both effective and inclusive, with a management structure that encourages continuous improvement. For example, improvements in the standard of teaching mean that the children are interested and enjoy their learning. The behaviour policy is effectively implemented so that children are well behaved at this school and have appropriate attitudes to learning. There is a successful range of other policies that set a positive ethos for

learning and personal development. Performance management, with continuous professional development, is thoroughly integrated in the school's improvement plan. The school obtained Investors in People Status in 1999 and successfully renewed this in 2004.

The school's new senior management team has started on the process of performance management, combining lesson observations with the scrutiny of children's work to monitor the pupils' progress. The subject coordinators are appropriately involved with monitoring the quality of provision within their curriculum areas. The curriculum co-ordinator's portfolio provides an effective record of the development of good practice in the school's curriculum. These initiatives combine well to work towards the raising of standards.

The governors support the school well and monitor developments effectively; they have had a significant impact on improving their school. They have been heavily involved in the planning leading to the opening of the enlarged building. They have a good oversight of the school's finances, and contribute well to plans for improvement. They make frequent, well logged and purposeful visits to the school, focus properly on quality assurance, and are well placed to help the school develop further.

There are very good levels of teaching and support staff. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide very good help to pupils. The school makes good use of its accommodation and grounds. Resources are satisfactory.

Grade: 2

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Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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	NA
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

16th September 2005

Dear Children,

You may remember that we came to visit your school recently to find out how good it was and how well you were doing. Thank you for being so friendly and for talking to us and telling us so many interesting things. Our visit was also to see if there are ways in which everyone can work to make things even better. We are writing to tell you what we found out.

You told us how much you liked school, and described many interesting things that happen there. We think that you are very lucky to be at a school where the teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and fun.

We think that the work that you do in your lessons is mostly up to the right level for people of your age.

We know that people in the school take good care of you and that you can go to your teachers if you are worried about anything.

You have a beautiful school with new buildings and lovely grounds, and we know that you help to look after everything for others to enjoy.

We were so pleased to see how well you play together, look after each other and make friends with children who are new to the school. The playground mediators work very well and this shows us that you really do care for each other.

It was good to see how well most of you behave and how well you listen to each other and to your teachers so sensibly and politely.

We think that you must have a very good time in the many clubs and special events that you can join in. The Indian Day looked really good fun and the trips to the Isle of Wight and to Wales are a good way to learn about other parts of the world.

It was good to see you working so hard and sensibly in lessons. We know that you understand why it is important to do your best. Your teachers are planning to help you more by giving you special targets in all your work so that you know what you need to do to improve your work and do as well as you can. They will try to make sure that all their marking helps you know how well you are doing and what you could do to do better. In this way, we think that everyone can raise the standard of their work and do really well.

Yours truly,

Neville Grenyer Her Majesty's Inspector of schools