



Fairford Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115622
LEA Gloucestershire
Inspection number 279638
Inspection dates 6 February 2006 to 7 February 2006
Reporting inspector Lorna Brackstone AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Park
School category	Voluntary controlled		Fairford
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Gloucestershire GL7 4JQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01285 712543
Number on roll	250	Fax number	01285 712543
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Jo Williams
Date of previous inspection	27 September 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Jane Sparling

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 6 February 2006 - 7 February 2006	Inspection number 279638
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized school is situated on the outskirts of Fairford, a rural town about halfway between Cheltenham and Swindon. The socio-economic characteristics of the immediate area are very favourable. Most families are of White British origin, with a few from minority ethnic groups. A small number of pupils have learning disabilities and difficulties.

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.

The school does not provide an adequate education for its pupils and gives unsatisfactory value for money. The school sees itself as a good school but the inspection found that it is inadequate in some key areas.

Most children start school with skills that are above expectations. The quality and provision in the Reception class is sound. By the end of the Reception Year, standards in all areas of learning are above average.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2. However, as they move through Years 3 to 6, pupils do not make the progress that they should. By the time they leave the school, pupils have not attained high enough standards, given their capabilities, and overall achievement is inadequate. Although the curriculum on offer is satisfactory, the overall quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. This is because expectations are too low and pupils are not provided with enough guidance on how they can improve their work. This particularly affects the progress of higher-attaining pupils. Provision for personal development is good and pupils are well cared for within a welcoming ethos. Pupils benefit from links with organisations such as the local secondary school and local groups that promote environmental awareness.

School leadership and management are inadequate. There are no consistent systems or robust monitoring processes to evaluate teaching and track pupils' learning. The school's self-evaluation processes are inadequate and it does not have the capacity to improve without help from outside. Whilst governors are supportive of the school, they are not fully aware of its weaknesses. Overall, there has been a decline in the effectiveness of the school since the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that all pupils achieve as well as they should in Years 3 to 6
- Improve systems to check on the school's effectiveness and planning for improvements
- Implement rigorous procedures to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and track pupils' learning
- Raise teachers' expectations for the higher-attaining pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Overall achievement is inadequate. Children start school with good skills and knowledge for their age. They make satisfactory progress in their first year of school and most

exceed the standards expected by the start of Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 most pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and this is shown by pupils' strong performance in national tests. In Years 3 to 6 these good standards are not built on consistently and pupils do not achieve as well as they should because teaching provides insufficient challenge. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below average. This is reflected in the Year 6 national test results of 2005. The school does not set targets that reflect what pupils are capable of achieving. Standards have declined in the last 2 years.

The school has focused its attention well on the needs of the pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. They make satisfactory progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. However, insufficient attention is given to the needs of the higher-attaining pupils, who are not achieving as well as they could.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures through links with schools in Africa (including Madagascar) and India. This aspect of their personal development has improved since the last inspection. Art, music and assemblies play an important part in developing pupils' spiritual development. Pupils understand the importance of their own school rules. They develop good social skills through class councils and peer mediation programmes.

The majority of pupils enjoy school and attend regularly and punctually. They are particularly enthusiastic about their activities out of class. Most behaviour is good both in and around the school. However, a small number of older boys become distracted when they are not fully challenged.

Pupils know that they must eat healthily and most have responded well to the introduction of lunches freshly cooked in the school kitchen. The extensive programme of extra-curricular sporting activities makes a good contribution to their awareness of the need for regular exercise. Pupils enjoy positive relationships within the school community and feel that most staff are approachable. They benefit from the interactions with local residents who help with reading and gardening activities. Pupils develop an understanding of community life through involvement in the Fairford Christmas Market and by visiting local senior citizens. They develop good enterprise skills by growing their own vegetables and organising competitions for fund-raising events. However, the basic skills of some pupils in Year 6 are not as good as they should be and this limits the preparation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The overall quality of teaching and learning is inadequate and this represents a significant decline since the last inspection. During the inspection the more effective lessons were well paced and interesting teaching techniques were used. Learning was made exciting through challenge, which motivated pupils and helped them concentrate well. Interactive whiteboards were frequently used well in classrooms. However, pupils' work shows that this quality of teaching is not sustained over time.

In the less effective lessons, activities were not challenging and teachers' expectations were too low. For example, an examination of pupils' books showed that written work that was poorly presented or incomplete was accepted too readily. This means that the pupils are not sufficiently stretched or motivated in these lessons. Teachers do not always manage inattentive and restless behaviour in lessons sufficiently well, with the result that the progress of all pupils is slowed. As a consequence, not enough pupils in Year 6 are attaining the higher levels that they are capable of. Furthermore, marking and target setting are not consistent enough to be effective in raising standards and challenging the higher-attaining pupils. Assessment does not always give pupils sufficient information on what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is planned satisfactorily and includes a wide range of learning opportunities. The needs of those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are met well. Pupils' personal development is promoted well. Initiatives such as 'gardening for life' and caring for their environment as 'eco-warriors' bring enjoyment to learning. A programme of additional activities enriches the curriculum. These are particularly successful in promoting the pupils' awareness of good health and safe practice. Children in the Reception class enjoy an adequate range of practical learning experiences and staff have started to develop the outdoor area as part of the school day. The curriculum has been strengthened through improved information and communication technology (ICT) facilities but this has yet to have a positive effect on raising standards.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Pupils are well cared for and the school is a safe place. There are good arrangements to ensure effective child protection and any concerns are carefully followed up. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to help these pupils to make satisfactory progress.

Assessment of pupils' work is carried out but this is not rigorous. Pupils are tested frequently but results have only just started to be analysed to identify how well they are doing. Not all teachers use the information gathered to provide suitable work for the higher attainers. Teachers' marking and target setting are good in some classes, but weak in others. As a result, pupils are often unsure about what they have to do to improve their work and this affects how well they can achieve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Ineffective leadership and management result in significant shortcomings in key areas of provision. Whilst the personal development and well-being of the pupils are good and a major focus of the school, it has declined in other important areas since the last inspection.

The school's systems for checking on its effectiveness are weak. Even when weaknesses are identified they are not tackled systematically or with the necessary rigour and do not relate to a strategic plan for improvement. For example, the school has not identified why standards in Year 6 have been declining over the past three years. As a result, improvement planning does not include the need to address this underachievement. Whilst new systems for tracking the performance of pupils have been recently introduced, it is too soon to evaluate whether they are having a positive effect on standards. Some lesson observations are carried out for performance management of individual teachers. However, there is no rigorous programme in place to evaluate and improve the quality of teaching through the school. Members of the school community are consulted regularly but not all feel that their views are always fully considered.

The governing body, with many new members, is keen to establish a realistic understanding of the effectiveness of the school. However, governors are not always kept up to date with important information and this has meant that they have been unable to ask the questions that they should or challenge the decisions made by senior staff.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ 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	3	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	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	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?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	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	4	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	4	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	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
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

I am writing to thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for helping us with our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what we found out about you and the school.

What we liked most about your school:

- The school is welcoming and caring
- You attend regularly and particularly enjoy the activities that happen out of class such as gardening, choir, music tuition and chess
- Most of you behave sensibly and look after each other well
- You take on responsibilities well and provide sensible suggestions about how you can improve the environment
- Those of you who find learning difficult are supported well.

What we have asked the school to do:

- Make sure you all make the best progress you can in Years 3 to 6
- Improve the way the school is run
- Ask teachers to give you more guidance about improving your work
- Make sure those of you who find learning easy are given harder things to do
- Ensure all of you have clear targets to work to

We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

The inspection team