



Forest Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124532
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281742
Inspection dates 31 October 2005 to 1 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. John Messer LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bury Road
School category	Community		IP27 0FP
Age range of pupils	3 to 9		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01842810309
Number on roll	220	Fax number	01842810309
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Paul Brooks
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Ms. Maria Curry

Age group 3 to 9	Inspection dates 31 October 2005 - 1 November 2005	Inspection number 281742
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This first school has a nursery and six other classes. Children enter the nursery at the age of three and attend either the morning or afternoon sessions. They transfer to the reception class at the beginning of the term in which their fifth birthday falls. Attainment on entry to the school is below average, particularly in the development of communication, language and literacy skills. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds and a few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number speak English as an additional language and, of these, a few are at an early stage of learning to speak English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school has analysed its performance exceptionally well. It has concluded that its overall effectiveness is good. Inspection findings confirm that this is a good school. The exceptionally good leadership given by the new headteacher is a major strength. Staff, governors and parents agree that in less than a year she has managed to make many important improvements. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and most are likely to attain the learning goals that they are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are improving and are much higher than at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching is good and the climate for learning has greatly improved. Governors report that the ethos of the school is very good and that there is a business-like approach to teaching and learning. The school has recognised that there has been considerable emphasis on supporting pupils with learning difficulties, but not always enough support for the faster learners. Consequently the standards that the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain are not as high as they could be, especially in reading and writing. Pupils' understanding of different cultures and beliefs is not sufficiently well developed. The school manages its finances well and provides good value for money. Taking into account the good improvement since the last inspection and the particularly good improvements since the new headteacher took over, the school has strong capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain higher standards in literacy
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop a deeper understanding of other cultures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The stages of development that children have reached on entry to the school are generally below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress in the nursery and reception classes. By the end of the reception year most will have attained the early learning goals that children are expected to attain and the faster learners will have exceeded them. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. This is reflected in national test results, which are broadly average. However, the proportion of pupils who exceed Level 2 and reach the higher Level 3 standard is below average, particularly in reading and writing. This shows that the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 have not made as much progress as they should. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 and 4 and standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 4. Standards across the school have risen and there is clear evidence that they are set to rise further as the stronger focus on raising standards begins to have more impact. Teachers now set challenging targets for all

groups. Pupils, including the more able and those with learning difficulties, are increasingly successful at reaching their targets. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and rise to the challenges set.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good behaviour and an enthusiasm for learning help pupils enjoy school and do well. They say 'Forest School is the best! It's a great place!' They are courteous. They know they are treated fairly and feel safe. Pupils are happy to take any problem to adults. They like the 'buddy stop' where they can go to find a friend. They contribute well to the community, raising sums of money for charities, locally and further afield. They know their views are taken seriously. The school council asked for more playground equipment and now they have it. They choose healthy snacks, speaking enthusiastically about the salads and vegetables available at lunchtime. There are good opportunities for exercise and sport. They work and play happily together. The strong emphasis on reading, writing, mathematics and the use of computers provides a sound basis for their future economic well-being. The school knows that it needs to improve pupils' skills in literacy to help them to have mastery of key skills when they leave school. As a result of the good opportunities for spiritual, moral and social development, pupils value others in their community. However, pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society is not sufficiently developed. Attendance is satisfactory and the school has worked hard to improve this recently.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan work carefully so that tasks are accurately matched to pupils' varying stages of development. This helps to make sure that all pupils can complete their work and enjoy success. Pupils have clear targets in literacy and numeracy. These help them to understand how to reach the next steps in their learning. The school has rightly identified the need to set more challenging work for the faster learners in reading and writing, especially in Years 1 and 2, in order to raise the standards they attain in literacy. Teachers have good relationships with pupils. This helps pupils to feel comfortable about asking questions, or requesting help if they are unsure about what to do next. Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to succeed. Staff eagerly grasp opportunities to extend children's language. Classroom assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. They are particularly good at helping the slower learners and those with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is well planned and covers all the subjects that it should. There is a suitable range of activities outside lessons such as sports, recorders and gardening. Pupils enjoy 'Golden Time' each week as a reward for hard work. It includes French and other interesting things that are not covered in lessons. The school has accurately identified the need to develop a more creative and exciting curriculum. Plans to make it more enriching and relevant for pupils are well advanced. There are appropriate opportunities to extend pupils' experiences through visits and visitors. However, there are few visitors from other cultural backgrounds and pupils do not develop a thorough understanding of other cultures. Provision for health education, including drugs awareness, is built into the curriculum well. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for those who speak English as an additional language. They make good progress because of the sensitive support they receive. The school has recently identified pupils who are gifted and talented and they are encouraged to develop their skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a caring and safe place in which pupils feel happy and secure. They say they know where to turn for help. Health and safety matters are taken seriously and child protection arrangements are good. Teachers know the pupils well. They provide activities that meet their needs to help them make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties are swiftly identified and their progress is very closely monitored. The school works successfully with other agencies to make sure that pupils get all the help they need. The school has worked hard on setting challenging targets for pupils and now pupils understand the goals they are working towards and know when they have achieved success. The school has begun to help pupils to become more involved in evaluating their learning. Pupils appreciate the way that teachers mark their work and look forward to receiving 'merit marks' for working hard. Parents and carers feel welcome in school and are encouraged to be involved in their children's education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher has been leading the school for two and a half terms and already there have been major improvements on many fronts. Standards have risen in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils are now making much better progress. The quality of teaching and learning has improved. Staff and governors report that the ethos of the school has improved out of all recognition. The headteacher gives strong leadership based on a wealth of experience gained in supporting schools that need to improve. She completed a thorough analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses and clearly identified exactly where the most urgent improvements were needed. The high quality of this self evaluation gave teachers a renewed confidence because they were

given clear guidance on exactly what was needed to improve standards. The headteacher worked closely with staff and governors to create an excellent 'Corporate Development Plan' designed to focus energy and resources on raising standards. Governors are closely associated with the school and give good support. The roles of subject leaders are developing well and they have a good understanding of standards in their subjects and where improvements are needed. The school has conducted surveys of parents' views and the results show that there is now an exceptionally high degree of satisfaction with the education provided for their children. The improvements that have been made in such a short time demonstrate that the school has a strong capacity to improve further.

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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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	2	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	3	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?	2	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?	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	2	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	2	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

Thank you for letting us visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and watching you learn. This is what we thought about your school. What we liked best: - You all work hard and behave well around the school. You play nicely with your friends and you are polite to teachers and visitors. - Your headteacher knows what to do to make the school even better. She runs it very well and we were impressed by all the things she has done since she came to help you learn better. - Most of you are learning well because the teachers give you the right things to do in lessons. - All the adults take good care of you and keep you safe. - You and your parents are right in thinking that you go to a good school. - You all look very smart in your school uniforms. What we have asked your school to do now to make it even better: - We have asked the teachers to give those of you who are faster learners in Years 1 and 2 harder work to help you do even better in reading and writing. - We have asked the teachers to help you understand more about people who have different customs and beliefs from most people who live in Brandon.