



Fair Furlong Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109130
Local Authority Bristol, City of
Inspection number 288289
Inspection dates 13–14 February 2007
Reporting inspector David Curtis

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Vowell Close
School category	Community		Withywood
Age range of pupils	3–11		Bristol BS13 9HX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0117 3772181
Number on roll (school)	295	Fax number	0117 3772182
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Michelle Webber
		Headteacher	Emma Drew
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	13–14 February 2007	288289

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves an area of significant social disadvantage. Children start school with standards that are significantly below expectations. Currently, nearly 50% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Six pupils from minority ethnic families have English as an additional language but are not at an early stage in this. The headteacher is currently seconded to another school in the local authority. The deputy headteacher, Miss Emma Drew, is acting headteacher during his secondment.

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 does not just teach our children English and mathematics; it also shows them how to be respectful to others, have good manners, take an interest in the area where they live and always strive to do better for themselves'. These comments by one parent reflect the positive views expressed by many in support of this good school. Central to the school's success are good leadership and management which are focused totally on raising standards and continuous school improvement. The outstanding improvement in standards from 2004 to 2006 at the end of Year 6 is testimony to the school's ability to improve and to sustain such improvement.

Teaching and learning are good and make a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement and to them reaching broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Although standards in English are at the level expected, standards in spelling are below. Pupils make good progress overall, but the rate of progress varies across the school. In Year 6, where teaching is outstanding, pupils make very good progress. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'Teachers challenge us to reach our own standards and personal limits'. The key factor in uneven progress is that in Years 3 to 5, teachers' planning does not always meet the different learning needs of pupils sufficiently well. Across the school, more-able pupils do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils value the feedback they get from teachers' marking and, together with having clear targets, they feel that they understand what they must do in order to improve their work. However, teachers do not always provide pupils with clear expectations as to what they should achieve in lessons.

Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to school are very much part of the school's success. As a result of outstanding care, guidance and support, particularly the highly effective pastoral care, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Attendance, whilst below average, is improving year on year. Despite its best efforts, the school has a minority of persistent absentees. Pupils are prepared well both academically and socially for their future lives and well-being.

The good curriculum contributes much to pupils' good achievement. Pupils benefit from an exciting range of visits and visitors to make learning more enjoyable. There are also a good number of extra-curricular activities which are enjoyed by pupils. Provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are good, enabling children to make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress, as do those with English as an additional language.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teachers' planning, particularly for more-able pupils, so that lessons consistently meet the learning needs of all pupils and ensure their good progress.
- Provide pupils with clear expectations of what they should achieve in all lessons.
- Improve standards in spelling across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and achieve well in relation to their starting points on entry to the school. By the end of Reception, children's gains are most significant in their personal, social and emotional development. Although their skills improve steadily in other areas, many are still working at a level below the goals expected for their age in communication, language, literacy and mathematics at the start of Year 1.

Good progress continues in Years 1 to 6, with progress in Year 6 being very good. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils have a good understanding of grammar and punctuation, but standards in spelling are weak. More-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons and therefore on occasions make insufficient progress.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of effective support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language receive similar strong support and make good progress and achieve as well as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is particularly strong in the social and moral elements. Assemblies are fun and lively, and make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' understanding of life in a culturally diverse society is less well developed and is an area the school is working on. Pupils have a reasonable awareness of healthy lifestyles but do not always put into practice healthy eating choices. Pupils enjoy coming to school. In lessons, around the school and at playtimes, they behave well. They have good attitudes to learning and work hard on their own in pairs and in groups. They say that they feel safe and valued and know that they can ask for help if it is needed. Pupils are respectful of each other and of adults. The school council provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their decision-making skills, for example, by launching and judging a competition to design the school's anti-bullying logo.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are carefully planned, are well organised and have a clear structure. However, the excellent information on pupils' progress is not always used effectively to plan for the range of abilities in each class. As a result, more-able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Good use is made of resources, particularly

interactive whiteboards, to demonstrate key teaching points and to engage pupils' interest. Teachers have excellent strategies for the management of pupils. Expectations of behaviour are clear. Pupils respond positively to well-established routines that mean that time is generally used productively.

Just occasionally, the pace of a lesson slows because too much time is spent on an introductory session and pupils struggle to concentrate for a lengthy period. Teachers do not consistently tell pupils what is expected of them in individual lessons. Equally, teachers are not rigorous enough in marking spelling mistakes and this is a key factor in pupils' weaknesses in this area. Teaching assistants are effective in supporting individual pupils to ensure that they participate fully in lessons. Such support helps those with learning difficulties or disabilities, together with those who have English as an additional language, to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The exciting and innovative curriculum enables most learners, including those with learning difficulties, to make good progress. Provision for literacy and numeracy is good and includes worthwhile opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across the curriculum. The school's recent focus on extending opportunities for writing is making a difference and pupils' skills in this area are improving. However, insufficient emphasis is given to the importance of good spelling.

A major strength of the curriculum is that it includes an effective programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) to support pupils' personal and emotional development. The curriculum is enriched well by a range of opportunities, such as theatre visits, film making, poetry workshops and sporting events. There is a good range of clubs that support and extend pupils' skills, especially in sport and information and communication technology (ICT).

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All staff know pupils exceptionally well. Excellent systems, including high quality support from teaching assistants, are in place to track the progress of individual pupils and to quickly respond to any in need of additional support. These high quality systems are used effectively to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities as well as those with English as an additional language. The school is particularly successful in ensuring that pupils with significant difficulties benefit from all that it offers. Effective links are made with outside agencies to provide very good additional support for these pupils. Pupils who find it difficult to cope at break times are kept busy through activities such as 'muddy football' games or the opportunity to spend time in the library.

Information from regular checks on pupils' progress is used very effectively to identify those who need an extra boost to their learning and help them to get back on track.

Clear targets and helpful feedback on their work help pupils to understand how well they are doing in relation to meeting their long-term targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are clearly focused on ensuring that pupils make good progress. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a detailed understanding of the ability of their pupils and use this effectively to monitor and support their progress. They, together with subject leaders, have accurately identified areas where improvements can be made and have taken effective action to achieve those ends. The improvements in the recent national test results are a credit to the school and reflect the success of action taken to drive up standards. Good leadership has resulted in positive relationships and behaviour and has created a safe, welcoming atmosphere for pupils and parents, who are increasingly involved in the life of the school. Parents value the way in which the school listens to and responds to their views. A good example of this is the termly newsletters that give parents information on the targets their children have been given.

Governance of the school is good. Governors know the school's main strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved in supporting the school and planning for the future.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you in lessons. In particular, we would like to thank the school council and the Year 6 pupils who gave up part of their lunchtime to share their views with us. I am very pleased to tell you that you go to a good school.

These are some of the things we think the school does well and you play an important part in these too.

- During your time at school you make good progress in your learning.
- Your behaviour is good and you get on really well with each other and all the staff who work with you.
- You enjoy your lessons and the way teachers help you learn.
- You are enthusiastic about the after-school clubs.
- You are cared for exceptionally well and know that there is always an adult to whom you can turn if you are worried or have a problem.
- Your school is led and managed well; all the adults want you to do your very best.

There are a few things we have asked teachers to do to make your school even better.

- Give you work which is not too easy or too hard.
- Tell you exactly what you should have done by the end of the lesson.
- Get you to work really hard at improving your spelling. Perhaps a 'Spelling Challenge' similar to your 'Maths Challenge' might be a good idea. You might think about raising this idea in the school council and with your teachers.

Thank you again for making us feel so welcome.