

# Four Acres Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109128
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol, City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	301211
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mo Roberts HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	247
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vacant Position
<b>Headteacher</b>	Wendy Marriott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 January 2006
<b>School address</b>	Four Acres Withywood Bristol BS13 8RB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 9030474
<b>Fax number</b>	0117 9030475

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Four Acres is an average sized primary school serving a socially disadvantaged area of Bristol. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. Nearly all pupils come from a White British background. The proportion who have learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than average. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average and many pupils have limited language skills. At its last inspection, the school was made subject to special measures due to leadership issues and the quality of teaching and learning, and poor standards. The school is currently led by an advisory headteacher and a permanent headteacher has been appointed for September 2007. A deputy headteacher is being seconded from the local authority in September.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Four Acres Primary School has made substantial improvements since its last inspection and is now a satisfactory school. The school's leaders and the governing body have worked diligently to tackle the weaknesses identified in the last report. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The senior leadership team has worked successfully with the astute advisory headteacher to promote better quality teaching and learning right across the school. This work has also substantially developed leadership at other levels. Pupils' achievement has been raised. Teaching is at least satisfactory, is good in the Foundation Stage and outstanding in Year 6. Whilst standards remain well below the national average the trend is upwards and pupils make steady progress from their individual starting points. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities make especially good progress due to well devised programmes and exceptionally strong support from the inclusion coordinator. Better teaching also ensures pupils build up skills sequentially. In Key Stage 1, pupils have made real strides in their reading and writing but there is still work to be done across the school in improving spelling, handwriting and presentation of work. Teachers quickly identify those pupils who need additional help to keep up. The school's system for tracking progress is good and ensures staff and governors are fully aware of exactly where support is required to raise standards further.

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. Staff have begun to adjust it to capture pupils' imaginations and to fully stimulate their desire to work. Substantial improvements have been made in information and communication technology (ICT), helped by the provision of a new computer suite. Pupils' skills in this area are dramatically better and pupils are consequently more prepared for their future lives.

Pupils' behaviour is usually good. Pupils respond well to the staff's good guidance, are proud of their improved achievements, and enjoy their education. However, there remains a persistent problem with poor attendance and lateness, which has an adverse effect on pupils' progress. The school is taking a suitably tough line to deal with this, although more remains to be done. The school's self-evaluation is excellent and highlights areas for further development. In the light of this and the improvements which have already been made, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase attendance and punctuality so all pupils have a full chance to learn.
- Enrich the curriculum further to ensure standards continue to rise, in particular in spelling, presentation and handwriting. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. The school's assessments show that most are on track to reach the goals for their learning by the end of the Reception year. Across the school, pupils are making at least steady progress and those who have learning difficulties and disabilities are making especially good progress. Standards have begun to rise, although

they are still well below what is expected for the pupils' ages except in mathematics at Key Stage 2 where they are better. The legacy of underachievement is steadily being tackled and pupils in Key Stage 2 now exceed their targets. Many pupils have caught up substantially this year in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The school keeps a detailed record of each pupil's level of attainment and rigorously plots progress each half term. Intervention for pupils who begin to fall behind is well targeted to support their changing needs. Gaps in pupils' learning have been identified and efforts to remedy them have been effective, particularly for the pupils in Year 6. Standards in writing were a cause for concern at the last inspection but have improved, although there is more to be done. Stimulating experiences, such as visits to ships in Bristol's docks, have enthused pupils to write more fluently.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' development and well-being are satisfactory. The school is a happy and calm community. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and say that 'school is good, it is a fun place'. They speak positively about things they enjoy such as sport, technology and trips in the mini buses. They feel protected from problems such as loneliness and bullying. Pupils' behaviour is generally good. Pupils are polite, well mannered and friendly to visitors. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of different cultures in our society and recalled well how they had studied the Chinese New Year. Most are caring of each other and mindful in their actions, showing that they are successfully learning about keeping safe. They are beginning to be aware of healthy lifestyles and most love sport. The school seeks pupils' views and listens to the concerns and ideas raised by the active school council. Responsibility is readily accepted and, in their role as 'Zone Parc' leaders, pupils contribute to the school and community by learning to resolve difficulties themselves. Pupils participate satisfactorily in the local community through playing in the band, contributing items at harvest, and raising money to help people in international difficulties. Attendance remains poor and punctuality is also a cause of concern. The school has rigorous procedures in place to deal with pupils who are regularly late and does not tolerate unauthorised absence. Parents are left in no doubt that they must accept responsibility for ensuring that their children attend regularly and punctually. The school has detailed data to show parents how poor attendance contributes significantly to slower progress.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in the Foundation stage units where Nursery and Reception children work and play together. Key Stage 1 teachers work well as a team to meet the very wide range of pupils' needs. Teaching in Year 6 is consistently outstanding. Most lessons are interesting with the result that pupils are keen and work hard. In lessons where teaching is good, questioning is brisk and pupils participate enthusiastically. However, where the pace is slower or when the introduction takes too long pupils become distracted and lose interest. Older pupils are enthused and energised by their lessons and they have developed into sensible, mature and keen learners. There is a buzz to learning in the final year. Teachers manage pupils well and there is a good emphasis on the social and emotional aspects of learning. Pupils respond to the respect teachers have for them as individuals and show a desire to do well in their work. They also like the opportunities they

are given to share ideas with each other. There are very good intervention programmes for pupils who have difficulty learning which ensure that pupils often make substantial gains in their learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly and the teachers' comments clearly inform the pupils how they can improve. Notes on the teachers' plans give good guidance to support staff about their role in lessons.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Successful changes have been made in order to raise standards, including new programmes to help pupils learn the sounds of letters and how to build up words. The approach to teaching writing has been improved and new resources support this work well. Planning for numeracy and literacy is secure. Good links are made between ICT and other subjects which lead to some good quality work. Provision for music has improved. After school clubs, such as dance, often lead to qualifications and participation in Bristol-wide events. This helps raise pupils' expectations of what they can achieve. Pupils are enthused by opportunities for practical work in science, for example by tending the flower and vegetable garden, but the school acknowledges planning for science still requires more work. The careful choice of themes for assembly and the strong promotion of pupils' personal, social and emotional well-being and community spirit have a very positive impact on the school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are good. Staff know the pupils very well and they develop warm relationships with them. Procedures to ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure, including those relating to child protection, are well established and all staff are conversant with them. Pupils are confident that adults look after them and support them well. The school provides very good personal support and guidance for pupils who have behavioural and learning difficulties. It works closely with parents to provide the most effective help for their children. There are clear procedures for dealing with any incidents of bullying that occur and pupils say that they feel safe and know who to turn to if necessary. Pupils say, 'The teachers listen to us and they sort things out.'

Assessment procedures are good. The school has worked hard and successfully on this key issue. Pupils' overall progress is consistently tracked and pupils are well supported in their learning. Targets are set for pupils so they know how to improve. Pupils are proud of how well they are working towards them and how they assess their own progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The advisory headteacher has led the school well and has determinedly raised expectations of what pupils and staff can achieve. Supported by the good work of the deputy headteacher, she pinpointed exactly where the weaknesses were in each year group's performance. In the light of this, the curriculum was adapted to ensure that pupils began to catch up. Additional support programmes are well targeted and their impact is evaluated effectively. The senior team and subject coordinators have gathered and analysed the data for their key stage or area of responsibility. They are well prepared to inform and support the new headteacher in

September. Middle managers have contributed to the revision of the school's self evaluation document and have sensible further plans to develop and monitor their subjects.

The staff group is stable for the first time in recent years. New performance management procedures ensure that members of staff are accountable for the standards achieved by the pupils. Governors support the school well. They have specific areas of responsibility and are effective in challenging staff to improve, as well as helping celebrate the school's recent successes. Due to much hard work and tough but effective decisions, the budget deficit has been eradicated. The school's self evaluation is exemplary and clearly and accurately identifies what still needs to be done.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	3
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	4
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

8 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Four Acres Primary School, Withywood, Bristol.

Thank you very much for making us so welcome at your school. We were very interested to see you at work and play and enjoyed talking to many of you.

Your school has improved a lot and is now giving you a satisfactory education. Mrs Marriot and Mr Lunn have worked hard to help your teachers sort out the problems the inspectors noticed last time they came. Your school no longer needs to be in special measures because of all the improvements that have been made.

We were pleased to see that your behaviour is better and that you think about how other people feel and how to make your school a nice, happy place. It was good to hear you say how much you enjoy coming to school now.

Teachers are better at marking your work and they give you good advice on how to improve. If you need extra help they arrange it and then check that it really is helping. The literacy groups in Key Stage 1 have helped you to improve your reading and writing. In all year groups you write more now but there is still room to improve your handwriting, presentation and spelling. I have asked your teachers to work with you on this. You know what you are learning and try hard to meet your targets. However, I am worried about those of you who get to school late or don't come at all. This is very serious because you miss important things and 'catching up' is hard for you.

Please do your best to come to school on time every day. I hope your parents will support you in this so the school can help everyone to learn as much as possible.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mo Roberts Her Majesty's Inspector