

Foresters Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102986
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	308184
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gary Kirkwood
Headteacher	Mr Havard Spring
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Redford Avenue Wallington SM6 9DP
Telephone number	020 8669 6910
Fax number	020 8647 9272

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Foresters is an average sized primary school that has a nursery attached. In addition, the school has a unit for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders known as the Foresters Opportunity Base (FOB). In total, the school serves 50 pupils that have statements of educational need. Of these, 12 are for pupils that are not part of the FOB. This amounts to five times the national average. The school serves a community that includes some areas with high levels of social deprivation. About half the pupils are of White British heritage, and there are pupils from 14 other ethnic backgrounds. There are 12 pupils at an early stage of learning English.

The headteacher resigned from September 2006 and the governors appointed an interim headteacher for the past school year. From September 2007, a permanent headteacher has been in post. The school has the following awards: Healthy Schools and Sports Activemark (Gold).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Foresters is a satisfactory school that has some good features. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Parents of children in the FOB are particularly positive. One of these parents wrote, 'The day my son started school was the day he found his place in life'. Achievement is satisfactory although it is good in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in the FOB. National test results in both Years 2 and 6 need to be treated with some caution because they include the exceptionally high proportion of pupils that have statements of special educational needs. Standards in Year 6 tests are therefore exceptionally low, particularly in English. However, the attainment of pupils that do not have statements is just below average. This is the case in English, mathematics and science. Standards in writing are lower than reading because there has been a strong emphasis on raising standards in reading.

An important contributory factor to the school's effectiveness is the good standard of pupils' personal development. This stems from the caring attitude of all adults. Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to school and each other are positive. They take pride in helping pupils in the FOB and they are tolerant of their occasionally erratic behaviour.

Teaching is satisfactory and there are some strengths. Relationships are good and pupils are managed well by staff. However, senior staff acknowledge that there is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching overall. Not all teachers plan work that matches pupils' needs. Sometimes work is much too hard and sometimes it is too easy. This slows the pace of learning and limits progress. In addition, not all teachers make good use of the recently revised arrangements for tracking pupils' progress. In consequence, in some classes, pupils are not clear about their targets for improvement and this too slows their progress.

The new headteacher has made a good start. He is very clear and determined and he has already made a positive impact on the school. In the past, insufficient attention has been paid to the checking of pupils' progress and the school's provision. As a result, the school's self-evaluation procedures have not been accurate because these have not been underpinned by a broad range of evidence. Furthermore, subject leaders have not been sufficiently involved in the process. The new headteacher has already strengthened these arrangements, and has successfully built on the work commenced by the interim headteacher in the last year. In consequence, senior leaders and subject leaders are taking more responsibility for this work. As a result, school self-evaluation has improved and the newly arranged development plan is addressing the right issues in a rigorous and sensitive manner.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision is good. The effective teaching is characterised by strong relationships and particularly good provision to develop the children's personal and social skills. As a result, children are confident and secure and they enjoy lessons. On entry to the Nursery, children's skills are very much below those typically found for children of their age. Although they make good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional skills, attainment is below average when they leave Reception. This is because only about one third of children achieve the expected goals in all six areas of learning. Activities are planned with purpose and ensure that the children build firm foundations in their learning. Children have many opportunities to make choices for themselves from the rich range of resources available. Outdoor provision in

the Reception class, as at the time of the previous inspection, is inadequate, and this hinders provision. However, there are clear plans in place to address this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing.
- Develop more consistency in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Strengthen the role and responsibilities of subject leaders.
- Embed the new arrangements for tracking pupils' progress and ensure that pupils are clear about their targets.

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good for Foundation Stage children and for pupils in the FOB and those that have learning difficulties and disabilities in the mainstream classes. The school sets targets that provide challenge and usually comes close to meeting them. It is successful in ensuring that most pupils move from low starting points to attain standards that are below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. In fact, current Year 6 pupils are on track to attain average standards. Those that speak English as an additional language also achieve well. This is because the provision for these pupils is well-targeted and effective.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good and this contributes strongly to the good climate for learning within the school. Pupils enjoy school and learning and talk confidently about the things they like. Their attendance has improved since the last inspection and is average. Pupils feel safe as they know that if they are troubled in any way they can approach an adult who will seek to resolve their problems. Pupils in the FOB respond very well to the individual attention and care they receive. Behaviour is consistently good. Older pupils help younger ones around the school, for example at dinnertime in the hall. Pupils elected to the school council display mature attitudes when collecting the views of their classmates. They are rightly proud of the way they have contributed to the development of facilities in the playground and of their contributions to the appointment of the current headteacher. The pupils particularly enjoy the good range of sporting competitions and activities. They have a good understanding why healthy lifestyles are important. Pupils are prepared appropriately for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in the FOB. This is because in these classes, teachers ensure that the work set matches pupils' needs well and it challenges them. In all classes teachers' good

relationships with their pupils ensures a positive learning environment. This is helped by the effective team of learning support staff who provide good quality help for pupils. Teachers use resources well, including the interactive white boards, to introduce tasks and to engage pupils' interest. However, in too many lessons teachers have inappropriate expectations of what pupils can achieve because they do not use information from assessments well enough to inform their planning. However, in the best lessons this is not the case. Here, teachers question pupils well to assess how much they have learned and they use assessments to ensure that future work is adapted well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The range of learning experiences provided for the pupils is satisfactory with some good features. Links made between subjects consolidate pupils' learning. For example, when pupils in Year 4 study habitats in science, they also study rainforests in geography, rainforest animals in art, and their personal and social development is enhanced by learning about caring for the environment. Several of the topics studied are linked well with visits to places connected with the topics, such as that on aspects of London. Care is taken to ensure that curricular opportunities for pupils that speak English as an additional language are suitably adapted to enable them to learn well. However, teachers' planning is not sufficiently well matched to meet pupils wide learning needs. Pupils benefit from a wide range of sporting activities which they enjoy. At present, however, there are no clubs to cater for pupils with other interests.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school's good provision for pastoral care helps ensure that pupils feel safe and happy in school. Staff enjoy valuable links with outside agencies to provide effective support for pupils' differing needs. The systems to identify and support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are good. Procedures to protect and safeguard pupils have improved since the previous inspection. They meet statutory requirements. However, there is a weakness in the arrangements for pupils' academic guidance. Although the deputy head teacher has been responsible for introducing good quality tracking arrangements to ensure that pupils' progress is checked, this information is not being used sufficiently well enough in lessons to ensure that pupils' progress is quickened. In consequence, pupils do not have a clear idea of their own targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The new headteacher has made a positive start and is already providing good leadership. He has built on the strengths found at the time of the previous inspection such as continuing to develop a positive atmosphere and the strong teamwork of the committed staff. The school has improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection because the new headteacher has carried forward the work of the interim headteacher to bring improvements in the areas identified in the report. He has commenced the process of developing the role and responsibilities of the senior leadership team and has changed subject responsibilities for some staff. This has had a positive impact because all these staff now have responsibility for checking provision and progress. Senior

leaders and subject leaders have relished these new tasks and the school is developing a much more robust view of itself. This demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and are committed to its future development. However, they are not in a position to question aspects of the school's performance because they have not been sufficiently involved in gathering information.

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Annex A

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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	3
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

18 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Foresters Primary School, Wallington, SM6 9DP

We enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you very much for the friendly way you welcomed us and for your help in finding out about the school.

Both you and your parents told us that you like school and that you feel safe and well cared for. Yours is a satisfactory school and there are some good things about it. Your teachers make sure that you behave well in lessons and that your classrooms are quiet and pleasant places to be. You also enjoy taking responsibility and you know about staying healthy. We think that your new headteacher has done a good job to help everyone to build on the improvements made last year. You generally work hard in lessons and your progress is good in the Base and in the Nursery and Reception.

We have asked your headteacher and all staff to do four things:

- make sure that you become better at writing
- make sure that more lessons are as good as the best ones in the school
- make sure that your teachers who have responsibility for subjects find out more about your lessons and progress in those subjects
- make sure that you are clear about your targets and that they are the right ones for you by using the information that is gathered to check your progress.

Thank you once again for being so helpful to us.

With very best wishes for your future

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector