

Redditch, Feckenham CofE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116842
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	312420
Inspection date	19 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Don Mason

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4-9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	107
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vacant Position
Headteacher	Beverley Hartigan
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2003
School address	School Lane Feckenham Redditch B96 6QD
Telephone number	01527 892756
Fax number	01527 892756

Age group	4-9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils are from White British families and all speak English fluently. Children's attainment on entry to school is in line with expectations. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. There are five classes, one for each year group. The headteacher took up her post at the beginning of this term and a new chair of governors was appointed shortly afterwards. The appointment of a deputy headteacher is pending.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that enables pupils to achieve well and thrive personally. It is held in high regard by most parents with many sharing the view of one that 'The school provides a solid education in a friendly atmosphere.' Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress and most attain the levels expected in all areas of learning by the start of Year 1. They make good progress in their personal and social development. Progress in other year groups is good so that pupils reach above average standards at the end of Year 4. This represents good achievement overall. Achievement in reading is outstanding. Achievement is good, but more variable from year to year, in writing and mathematics. This good overall progress is made possible by the generally good teaching. Lessons are well planned and pupils say that they find them interesting. The curriculum is satisfactory and well enriched by after school clubs and events such as the music festival and village activities.

A high level of care and support ensures that pupils feel safe and secure. Their good personal development is evident in the playground where they play together happily. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported so that they participate fully in lessons and other activities. The staffing ratio is generous with the result that adults know the pupils very well. Teachers use this knowledge to plan work that generally meets the needs of pupils. However, their progress is not checked thoroughly enough so the school cannot be sure that all pupils, especially the more able, make as much progress as they should. Assessment information is limited. The information that is available is not being used to determine why the rate of progress sometimes varies in different subjects or to ensure that all groups of pupils are doing equally well.

Pupils make a good contribution to the community through activities such as acting as playground buddies for the younger children, fund raising and undertaking duties in school. Through the work of the school council, the pupils have a say in how they think their school could be made even better. This has resulted, for example, in a positive response to a recent request for more school trips. The new headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has clear ideas about how it can improve further. She has rightly identified the need to introduce more rigorous procedures for checking the progress made by all pupils and to use the information gained to set challenging targets for improvement. Staff are responding positively to these expectations. Subject leaders welcome the plans to enhance their leadership role which is underdeveloped at present. They are not sufficiently involved in checking the quality of provision and standards in the areas for which they are responsible.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Good induction arrangements and the friendly, secure and well organised environment help children to settle in very quickly. They are clearly enjoying their first days in school. The teaching is lively and the children listen well and participate actively in the activities provided. Staff provide a satisfactory range of curriculum activities inside and out which ensures that the children make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in their social and personal development. Most achieve the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. Specific aspects of progress such as 'understanding of numbers up to five' are regularly assessed. However, opportunities to assess their abilities and potential, when they are working

independently, are sometimes missed. As a result, the more able children in particular do not always make as much progress as they might

What the school should do to improve further

- Introduce rigorous procedures to check how well pupils are doing and ensure that all, particularly the more able, make consistently good progress, especially in the Foundation Stage and in writing and mathematics throughout the school.
- Use the information gained to set challenging targets for improvement.
- Provide teachers with opportunities to monitor standards and achievement in the subjects for which they are responsible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards by the end of Year 4 are above average and pupils make good progress overall. Children make a sound start in the Foundation Stage and their good personal and social skills mean that they are well prepared for later learning. The pace of progress picks up in Years 1 and 2, with the result that standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. This good progress is maintained in Years 3 and 4. Standards in reading are consistently well above average. Standards in writing and mathematics, while above average overall, vary from year to year. This is evident in assessments and tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Fewer pupils attain the higher levels in tests in these subjects than in reading and more able pupils do not always do as well as they should. In Year 2 national tests, boys outperform girls in mathematics and this situation is reversed in writing. The school has not been able to identify the reasons for this. This is because assessment information is not comprehensive enough to ensure that all groups of pupils, especially the more able, are making as much progress as they might as they go through the school. However, progress for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is consistently good because of the good support they receive from conscientious teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils grow in self-confidence because of the friendly, secure environment the school provides. While their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall, pupils' understanding of the culturally diverse community of modern Britain is underdeveloped. Pupils behave well and their good attendance is an indication of their enjoyment of school. Pupils generally express their views with confidence. However, they do not always listen to the views of others with sufficient concentration. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, helped by a recent agreement with parents to provide healthy break time snacks. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities in school. School council members are excited about the discussions they are having with the headteacher about future developments and the positive response to their suggestions about 'celebration' assemblies and team competitions. High levels of self-esteem and good progress in basic skills prepare the pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils display positive attitudes in lessons and good levels of concentration. These are key factors in their good overall progress. Teachers plan lessons effectively, take care to explain the purpose of activities and ensure that pupils know what they have to do. Pupils respond well to clear routines and expectations from their teachers and the pace of lessons is good, ensuring that learners generally make good progress particularly in reading. Most lessons are teacher led and the pupils have relatively few opportunities to make decisions about their learning. Opportunities to assess how pupils apply their skills in open-ended activities are often missed. Teachers do not assess what the pupils can do independently frequently enough to be sure that all pupils, especially the more able, are making appropriate progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities take part fully in all activities because work is well matched to their needs and they are well supported by teaching assistants. However, more able pupils are not always challenged as much as they might be. Pupils report that they enjoy practical activities in science and art. Good curriculum enrichment makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school life. Lessons in personal, social and health education, and good opportunities for physical activity effectively promote pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The equipment available for work in ICT (information and communication technology) has improved considerably since the previous inspection and pupils speak enthusiastically about their work with computers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

In this small, friendly, school community, pupils benefit from a high level of personal care and support. The school is quick to seek advice and support from external agencies to ensure, for example, that visually impaired pupils are given appropriate support. Policies to safeguard pupils are securely in place. The academic guidance provided for pupils is at an early stage of development. Pupils' progress is not being monitored systematically through the school to ensure that all make the best possible gains in their learning. Pupils are given limited information on how well they are doing. The quality of marking is inconsistent. It is mainly congratulatory, although there are occasional examples of good advice provided for pupils about how they can improve a particular piece of work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Because of good management, the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. It is popular with parents, and pupils are proud of their school. Pupils make good progress overall because of the good teaching. However, the efforts of individual members of staff are not drawn together well enough into a shared effort to make the school as good as it can possibly be. Procedures to check the progress made by pupils are not rigorous enough and there is no systematic use

of targets for pupils or teachers to promote further improvement. While colleagues support each other well on a personal level they have had little opportunity to monitor teaching in the subjects for which they are responsible or to contribute to the school's improvement. Governors are supportive of the school but until recently have not had the expertise or information to challenge the school appropriately. However, the new headteacher is determined to bring about swift change. Her aim is that this good school should become an outstanding one and she has clear ideas about how this can be achieved. She has already made progress in tackling the areas mentioned above and staff are enthusiastic about the future. The local authority and the new chair of governors share the headteacher's vision and the school has satisfactory capacity for improvement.

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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?	2
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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 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	2
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	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?	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	4
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

20 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Feckenham Church of England First School, Redditch, Worcestershire, B96 6QD

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so helpful and friendly. We particularly enjoyed visiting your classrooms, seeing the work you were doing and talking with you. We found that your school provides you with a good education.

Good things about your school:

- You make good progress overall in your work and standards are above average at the end of Year 4.
- Your attendance is good. You behave well in school and get on very well with each other.
- The teachers plan their lessons well and try to make sure that the work they set you to do is not too easy and not too hard.
- You are rightly proud of your school and the after-school clubs and events which the teachers provide for you.
- The adults in school know you very well and take good care of you.
- Your new headteacher is beginning to make changes to make your school even better than it is now.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Improve the way they check how well you are doing, especially those of you who are quick to learn, so that they can be sure that you are always making as much progress as possible.
- Set targets to measure how well the school is doing and to make sure that it continues to improve.
- Give the teachers more opportunities to check how well you are progressing in the areas for which they are responsible.

Some of you could help your teachers by trying always to listen carefully when others are speaking.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Mr D Mason Lead inspector

Annex B



20 September 2007

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Feckenham Church of England First School,
Redditch, Worcestershire, B96 6QD**

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Mr D Mason
Lead inspector