

# Ford End Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115115
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326127
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sandra Tweddell

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	53
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Derek Dickinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Hazel Arnill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 July 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Main Road Ford End Chelmsford Essex CM3 1LQ

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2009
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**Age group** 4–11

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This very small school takes in pupils from a wide range of social backgrounds, from the village and beyond. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage at the age of four. A lower than average proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals. Most pupils come from a White British heritage and a very small number from a Travellers' community. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly speech and language, is similar to most schools. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. A high number of pupils enter or leave the school after the normal time of admission or transfer. The attainment on entry is broadly average but fluctuates because of the small numbers. Awards include the Activemark for sports and Healthy Schools' Award. There have been significant changes of staff this year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

'Teachers treat you like adults and respect you ... adults are always there for you'. These comments by pupils at the school are echoed by a large number of parents who wrote about the confidence and good progress of their children because of the caring friendly staff who 'have given so much to many children'. They are right. Pupils flourish in this school that is at the heart of its local community. The headteacher's focus on high standards has resulted in all pupils making the progress that is expected of them and a significant number doing better than expected. With year sizes sometimes as small as three, standards inevitably fluctuate considerably from year to year. Looking closely at individual pupils, standards at the end of Year 6 lean towards above average and pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well.

Staffing difficulties this year have been managed effectively, as a number of parents recognise. The quality of teaching is good, largely because of good leadership from the headteacher. She has worked tirelessly, with the support of all adults in the school, to successfully mitigate the problems of some inadequate teaching. This occurred because the pace of lessons was too slow which, at times, reduced the rate of progress for some age groups. It has been overcome by concerted moves by all staff, including joint planning of lessons. All staff recognise that further consistency is required to ensure that all year groups now benefit fully from this teamwork. Care, guidance and support are good. All the staff accept very effectively their responsibilities for caring for pupils pastorally. Assessment has become more rigorous and therefore more accurate and is used to set challenging targets. Many pupils clearly understand their personal targets and how they can reach them, although a few older pupils have less understanding.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good, with some features that are outstanding. However, while pupils enjoy school greatly, attendance is only satisfactory. This is partly because some parents take their children out of school for holidays during term time. Relationships across the school are excellent and pupils care a great deal for one another's feelings. Pupils develop confidence through speaking about their passions in assemblies. They have a great appreciation of the wonder of the world and the 'Handy Hands' club enjoy growing plants and preparing a wildlife area. Their understanding of world cultures stems from a good curriculum, which includes a strong partnership with a school in Africa. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live safe, lead healthy lives and make a very positive contribution to the school and local community. This is because pupils are inspired to do their best by teachers who communicate enthusiasm for learning and the curriculum that is often excitingly taught. Since the last inspection, standards have risen, school leaders and governors operate more strategically and excellent partnerships, including those with parents, are used actively to benefit pupils' learning. The capacity for further improvement is therefore good.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get off to a flying start and when they enter Year 1, every child is working very securely within the goals expected for their age and a number are working beyond these. Outstanding personal development is due to the exceptionally nurturing adults who work very closely as a team. The older pupils in the class also act as strong role models. Children's confidence when they leave the Reception year is high, enabling them to try out new and challenging activities.

In one activity, a child experimented with a range of interesting body shapes on a box before jumping off into a forward roll. For this child, although the activity was very challenging, perseverance led to success and great pride in the achievement. Children are curious about their world and a good range of resources enables them to explore their environment. One child talked in great detail about what could be found in their bamboo jungle. Thoughtful questions by adults extend language and ideas. The result is that children are eager to learn and enjoy school. Teaching is always good and sometimes outstanding. Expectations of children's achievement are very high. Assessment is used well to focus learning and development. Resources are plentiful but sometimes are not displayed to best advantage. The book area, for example, is not instantly enticing to children. Children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported very well and make good progress. Parents are involved closely in their child's education and good links with local pre-school groups support their entry to school.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Work together as a team to ensure that effective teaching benefits all year groups and that all pupils receive good information about how to reach their targets.
- Work with the small number of families who take their children out of school for visits or holidays, so they understand the importance of regular attendance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well because work is tailored to their individual needs and they have very positive attitudes towards learning. The reliability of the school's assessment has improved over the last two years. School data shows that all pupils meet their targets for English and mathematics and a number exceed them. Some difficulties with staffing this year affected the rate of progress for a few pupils, but quick action by the headteacher overcame this difficulty. Pupils with speech or language difficulties make good progress towards their targets. Those who transfer from other schools settle quickly and achieve well. Standards are high in music, art and physical education. Imaginative robots constructed by younger pupils are made to a high standard. The school identified science as an area of concern and professional development for assessment in science along with more time for the subject has raised standards. The school also identified that the use of computer programs to control other devices was not good enough. Standards in information and communication technology are now rising. Pupils with special talents are supported effectively and, with the help of relevant external agencies, challenged to achieve at the highest level.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are very proud of their school and take great enjoyment in learning. They behave well and most attend regularly, which supports their good achievement. Those who have difficulty with controlling their behaviour understand the boundaries set by the school. Many are very sensitive to the needs of each other. For example, a pupil in Year 1 noticed the reluctance of a younger child to explore a cornflour mix and suggested the use of a paintbrush. They have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy and safe life. Pupils were involved in creating a safe walkway into school to avoid a busy road and older pupils run a healthy tuck shop. Pupils have a particularly strong role in the school and local communities. For example, they pick up litter in the village and play their part in local festivals, including those run by the church. Pupils

are in touch with a school in Africa and understand about many cultures. However, teachers are aware that this type of knowledge requires further development. They are prepared well for lives beyond school, developing a strong sense of responsibility. Many nods of agreement were made when a pupil remarked, 'The school gives us confidence.'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The buzz of learning throughout the school is because teaching is generally highly motivating. Most of the teaching is good and some outstanding. An eager air of anticipation filled a classroom when the teacher announced that a letter from a museum revealed that the school stood on a Roman site. Pupils were thrilled to become archaeologists for the day and to dig in the school grounds for artefacts. Discussion about what they might be was intense. The focus on assessment over the past two years has paid dividends in raising standards. The good teaching uses the information well to be clear about what pupils are expected to learn and to focus work on the needs of individuals. Classrooms are very well managed to reflect the needs of the different age groups and abilities. Teaching assistants play a key role in the classes, offering gentle and well-guided support, effectively extending pupils' learning, especially those with behavioural problems. Information and communication technology is not used to draft writing so pupils have to copy type laboriously, instead of improving the quality of what they have written. Much teaching uses a problem solving approach and pupils said that they use this when dealing with personal issues that arise.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The exciting curriculum with its wide range of enrichment activities, is one of the reasons why pupils enjoy learning and why their personal development is so good. The needs of most pupils are met well and this year, additional support in the form of team teaching and booster classes have helped those who were at risk of falling behind. All pupils from Year 2 upwards learn French, typing and to play a recorder. At the start of each day, pupils are challenged by half an hour of enrichment, such as thinking skills and music. Further opportunities to broaden pupils' learning come from the very good links with other schools and with the local community, including understanding the lives of Travellers. Visits by local politicians increase pupils' knowledge of local issues. Cross-curricular links develop a range of skills very well. The robots were used as basis for a film and extended pupils' learning of many curriculum areas.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The majority of parents wrote warmly about the care their children are given and delight at how the school does its utmost to ensure their safety. Pupils agree that they feel safe. Procedures for safeguarding children meet government requirements. The personal development of pupils has a high priority. Governors have taken on the role of monitoring attendance and the attendance policy was reviewed and clarified. Attendance has risen over the past three years and the school has mostly met its targets apart from when there has been a spate of illness or when a small number of parents take their children out of school for holidays. The code of conduct was also reviewed and pupils are clear about rewards and sanctions. Most

pupils are very clear about how they can improve their work and are eager to demonstrate their progress through their targets. Some older pupils know their targets but are not as clear about how to achieve them.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership team has come a long way over the past year. The headteacher has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, so self-evaluation is accurate. She has handled difficulties of staffing this year with admirable skill using the support of the strong and cohesive leadership team. Information from tracking the progress of pupils is used to identify priorities and to set rigorous targets. The leadership team is open to new ideas and has developed well this year. Time given for monitoring achievement in subjects has been used very thoughtfully, drawing on knowledge gained from professional development. Observation of one another and using case studies of pupils has increased the expertise of the teachers. Many governors are new to the role and the chair has taken the opportunity to review strategically how the governing body works and the values of the school. This has led to smarter operations and increasing challenge to the headteacher. All pupils are valued so equal opportunities are strong. Partnerships with a wide range of organisations enhance professional development and the learning of pupils. Community cohesion is good because the school very effectively draws on its partnerships to extend the experiences of pupils.



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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

9 July 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Ford End Church of England Primary School, Chelmsford, CM3 1LQ

I visited your school just before the summer holidays to see how well you were doing and I am writing to let you know what I found out. Thank you to everyone who showed me round and answered my questions, especially the school council. I was very interested in your bamboo jungle, your archaeological finds and thoroughly enjoyed trying your rice krispie cakes.

It is extremely clear that you are proud of your school and you have every right to be. I was very impressed by your enthusiasm for learning and by your good behaviour. Your teachers make your lessons enjoyable and you in turn work hard. You and your parents told me that you feel safe and cared for and I could see that all adults in the school look after you carefully. You work very well together and help one another and you make good progress in school. You understand how to live a healthy life and your school gives you much confidence, especially about your futures.

Mrs Arnill and I discussed how your school could become even better than it is. We agreed that some of your lessons this year have not helped you learn effectively. All the teachers are going to work together to make sure that you all learn as well as possible. A few of you miss school to go away for visits or holidays so the school is going to see if your parents can find a way around this.

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. Have a successful year and good wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Sandra Tweddell

Lead inspector