

Forest View Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115517
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	326212
Inspection dates	16-17 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Tony Shield

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	303
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Derek Haseldon
Headteacher	Mr Ian Barkley
Date of previous school inspection	23-24 January 2006
School address	Latimer Road Cinderford Gloucestershire GL14 2QA
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Age group	Error! Reference source not found.
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's plans, its self-evaluation, its tracking data and the minutes of the governing body. They considered the responses in 71 questionnaires that had been returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether pupils make good progress.
- Whether teaching and learning are consistently challenging and ensure that all pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school serving the town of Cinderford. While most pupils are from a White British background, there are a small number of pupils from a wide range of other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. A children's centre, managed by the local authority, operates from rooms within the school, and most of its children go on to attend the school's Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception class) at the age of four years.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Forest View Primary School provides a satisfactory and improving education. There are a number of good and outstanding features. Monitoring is rigorous and self-evaluation is realistic. All staff and governors contribute effectively to the process. As a result, the school has been able to target areas for improvement sharply. It has made some significant improvements recently, particularly in relation to monitoring pupils' progress and an effective use of performance data to target interventions for those at risk of underachieving. The impact of these is shown in the improving progress of pupils. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve further and sustain improvement.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start in the Reception classes.
- From below average starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress further up the school. Progress accelerates as pupils move through the school and is good in Years 2, 5 and 6.
- Although standards are below average, they are improving. Pupils' writing skills are a barrier to more rapid progress in all subjects. Boys do not achieve as well as girls.
- The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding. The school's inclusive culture is dedicated to the support of each and every child.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, and their good attitudes and behaviour are key factors in their progress. They feel safe and well looked after in school.
- Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Most teachers are making effective use of performance data to plan work tailored to the needs of individual pupils, but this is not consistently good.
- The headteacher and his new senior team are ambitious for the future. Recent improvements in performance have given the school confidence, but some subject leaders lack the skills to monitor and contribute fully to school improvement.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment overall, and particularly boys' writing skills by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length across different subjects
 - reviewing the curriculum to make learning more exciting and to capture pupils' imagination
 - developing pupils' curiosity, resourcefulness and independence in their learning.
- Ensure more consistently good teaching by:
 - making sharper and more consistent use of assessment data by both teachers and teaching assistants, to plan more challenging work which is geared to the needs of individual pupils
 - sharing good practice more widely.
- Strengthen the capacity of managers at all levels to monitor and contribute fully to raising achievement and school improvement.

How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

3

The progress pupils made in lessons observed and in their work is satisfactory overall. In some lessons, pupils made good progress, but this was not consistently the case. Test results in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are below average, although in 2008, pupils did better in English, where pupils reached the national average. However, poor writing skills in lessons are a barrier to more rapid progress in a number of subjects. Boys' writing skills are a particular weakness and a significant factor in the generally lower rates of progress that boys make.

While standards are below average overall, pupils make satisfactory progress from their below average starting points. Importantly, the school's improved systems for tracking pupils' progress show evidence that progress is accelerating. Better use of data to identify pupils who are falling behind is ensuring earlier interventions and strategies to help pupils catch up. They also show that while progress is satisfactory overall, there are pockets of good progress particularly in Years 2, 5 and 6. Interventions and support programmes have already made a difference to the progress the younger pupils make in reading. Children's language skills are particularly low on entry.

The high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and /or disabilities also make satisfactory progress. Support for them is increasingly well managed and teaching assistants provide well-targeted support in the classroom. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups are included well in lessons and make the same progress as their peers.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils respect each other and make reasoned judgements on moral dilemmas. They show tolerance and

understanding of differences and are committed to fairness and the belief that, as one pupil said, 'everyone should be treated equally'. Pupils enjoy school. In lessons, they work hard for the most part and are keen to please. However, many pupils lack confidence in their ability to work independently and without the help of the teacher. Behaviour is good, and pupils are helpful and co-operative. They understand the school's expectations and do their best to live up to them. Pupils know very well how to keep safe. Although their understanding of healthy lifestyles is good, for many, adopting a healthy diet is more difficult. Pupils play a constructive part in the school community and the school council is active in promoting improvements to the school environment. However pupils' understanding of their responsibility to the local, national and international community is more limited, and overall, pupils' contribution to the community is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	3
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	3
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school's work

Teaching is improving. Classrooms are welcoming environments in which pupils are encouraged to work hard. Good relationships help ensure these good attitudes. Most lessons are planned carefully and activities are well designed to capture pupils' interest and attention. Much attention has recently been given to planning work that is matched to the needs of individual pupils. The use of graded learning objectives – 'must, should, could and super-could' – have proved to be helpful in this. Learning involves a good range of whole-class, paired and group work to encourage pupils to participate and share ideas. These characteristics are typical of much of the best teaching. However, this is not consistently the case, and overall, although teaching is improving, its impact on pupils' learning and progress is only satisfactory. Support for the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is effective, and teaching assistants provide well-targeted support.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Despite the improving picture overall, some teaching still lacks challenge, and explanations fail to clarify things when pupils do not understand. While in some lessons, a brisk pace keeps pupils on their toes, in others, there is a lack of urgency and the pace of learning drops. Sometimes, the learning is too passive and teachers talk for too long. Many pupils lack confidence in their ability to succeed and too often seek help from teachers when they get stuck. Pupils enjoy opportunities to think things out for themselves, but sometimes opportunities are missed to do this. The school has worked successfully to improve the quality of marking and regular praise is now balanced by suggestions on how to improve the work.

The school has good systems to monitor the progress of pupils. At a whole-school level, this has been effective in giving an accurate picture of pupils' progress and enabling intervention programmes to be planned for those pupils at risk of underachieving. Teachers are making better use of this data in the classroom to plan appropriate work. However, there is more to be done before this is consistently good.

The curriculum gives proper weight to the teaching of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, but also gives appropriate time to other subjects. There is a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities, and educational visits and visitors make an important contribution to pupils' enjoyment and appreciation of the curriculum's relevance to everyday life. Increasingly, writing is being planned across the curriculum, although this remains a weaker aspect. Sometimes, opportunities are missed to design activities that excite the pupils, encouraging their curiosity and firing their imagination. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory and improving as the procedures for identifying and targeting pupils are refined.

The school's commitment to the care, support and guidance of all pupils is at the heart of its philosophy. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and supported, and pastoral care is outstanding. They are known well to all staff and pupils feel safe and confident. Pupils' emotional well-being is given a high priority. This is best seen in the concern shown for vulnerable pupils and those at risk. In this respect, the work of the pastoral care worker is excellent. Relationships with outside agencies are good and ensure appropriate support is available when needed. Health and safety procedures are comprehensive and safeguarding and child protection procedures fully meet requirements.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Decisive leadership by the headteacher has led to recent improvements. He is well

supported by the acting assistant headteacher and together they are setting about raising expectations and improving the quality of provision with energy and commitment. Having identified inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and other areas of relative weakness, the new remodelled senior team has begun to tackle them effectively. More challenging targets alongside the introduction of more effective tracking procedures have raised the game. As a result, improvements, already evident in the performance of Year 6 in national tests in 2008, are being sustained this year. Furthermore, improvements to provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage are now leading to higher starting points for children in Year 1. While the senior team acknowledge there is much more to be done, and the impact of a number of initiatives has yet to be fully felt, there is much to be proud of and this gives the school confidence to build on these achievements.

Monitoring is regular and thorough, and along with the school's detailed analysis of performance data, enables self-evaluation to be realistic. The involvement of all staff and governors in this approach has led to a strong commitment of all stakeholders to school improvement. However, some middle managers lack the skills and confidence to contribute fully to monitoring and school improvement. The school regularly seeks the views of parents and pupils regularly, and works well in partnership with parents and others to broaden the range of opportunities open to pupils. The school development plan provides a sensible and appropriate framework for the future, although governors would be better able to hold the school to account if the targets were measureable and time-referenced. Governors make a good contribution to both strategic planning and monitoring. The school's resources are well managed. Some aspects of the school's promotion of community cohesion, particularly within the local community, are well developed. However, the school recognises that there is more to be done to promote a national and international dimension to its work in this area.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good provision in the Reception classes enables children to get a good start. Provision for the youngest children in the school has improved significantly during

the year, largely because of a fresh and energetic approach to its leadership and management. Children join the school with skills well below expected levels, particularly in their communication and language. They make good progress in several aspects of their learning, although children’s skills, particularly their language and literacy skills and their ability to manipulate numbers, remain lower than expected levels for their age. They are given good support and encouragement to achieve well, becoming happy and confident learners. Children’s welfare is at the heart of everything the school does. Activities such as the Forest school encourage a love of learning and ability to relate real experiences to classroom learning. The positive attitudes fostered through such programmes are used well to enhance learning. Good quality planning and organisation encourage children to choose from a range of well-designed activities. They particularly develop children’s self-confidence in working alongside others. Relationships between the children and adults are very secure. Adults regularly assess children’s progress and tasks are carefully adapted to match individual children’s needs. The outside area is used well. The Early years Foundation Stage is well led and managed, and children are well prepared for entry to Year 1.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents’ views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. All parents who responded felt that their children enjoyed school and were kept safe and healthy. ‘My son goes to school with a smile on his face and returns home happy and content’ was typical of a number of parental comments. Other parents noted the recent improvements and the approachability of staff. A few parents had concerns that information about their child’s progress could be better, but inspectors judge the school’s reporting systems to be satisfactory.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Forest View Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children. The inspection team received 71 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 303 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	46	22	3	0

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



18 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Forest View Primary, Cinderford, GL14 2QA

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming, and for helping us during the inspection. We agree with a lot of what you told us. Forest View is providing you with a satisfactory education but it is getting better all the time, and there are lots of good things about it. These are some of our key findings.

- You work hard in lessons and enjoy coming to school.
- Most of you behave very well. We observed a number of thoughtful acts of kindness during the inspection.
- Everybody at school gets on well together.
- While some of you are making good progress, progress for most is satisfactory and there is still some catching up to do, particularly amongst the boys in writing.
- Teaching is satisfactory and getting better. Teachers plan lessons which keep you busy and interested.
- The school takes exceptional care of you, ensuring that you feel safe and well looked after.
- The headteacher and the other teachers are working successfully to make your school even better.

We have asked the teachers to do the following in order to make things even better.

- Make sure that all of you make better progress in all subjects, but particularly for boys in writing by giving you more exciting opportunities to write at length in all subjects.
- Ensure that the teaching is always of a high quality and makes you think for yourselves and work hard.
- Help all the teachers to contribute to making the school even better.

You can certainly help the teachers with these things. Thank you once again for your help during our visit and good luck with your work in the future!

Yours faithfully

Tony Shield
Lead inspector

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