

Fitzmaurice Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126177
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	328460
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Christine Pollitt

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	211
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Edward Savage
Headteacher	Shiel Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Frome Road Bradford-on-Avon BA15 1LE
Telephone number	01225 862162
Fax number	01225 863921

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils attending the school are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage into two mixed Reception and Year 1 classes. The school holds Healthy Schools and Activemark status. The new purpose-built onsite children's centre includes a privately run nursery with out-of-school holiday club provision.

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. It is vibrant and caring with a welcoming community spirit. From the earliest days in Reception, children feel very safe and happy. It has a number of outstanding features. One of these is the new children's centre, which secures an excellent partnership with parents and is a key factor underpinning the school's high-quality provision for care. Such care supports pupils extremely well, especially when they face difficulty in learning or personal matters. Another outstanding feature is pupils' excellent personal development and sense of well-being, which is evident in their huge enthusiasm to learn, their responsible attitudes, exemplary behaviour and respect for others. Pupils look after each other really well and are very keen to perform many roles in making a constructive contribution both to the school and the wider community.

The school sought advice from the local authority following a dip in standards in English and mathematics in 2007 and 2008. The school has subsequently undertaken a thorough overhaul of its monitoring and the evaluation of its work. This improvement has led to a focus on better quality teaching and a strong commitment to involving pupils more closely in judging their progress and in understanding what they need to do to improve. This action has resulted in swift improvement this year. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment a little above that expected. This overall level, however, is largely due to the higher attainment of girls. In contrast, boys' attainment is below the expected levels in key aspects of language and literacy. The excellent care of pupils and their very positive attitudes, combined with the good teaching and curriculum, ensure that all pupils achieve well in their work as they move on through the school. Consequently, by the time they leave Year 6, standards for girls and boys are securely above the national average. The pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in line with their peers.

Lively teaching engages pupils' interest well. Teachers and their assistants give plenty of encouragement and individual support. Since the last inspection, the use of assessment data has improved and this means that activities in most lessons have the right level of challenge for all pupils. However, sometimes, assessment information is not used as effectively as it could be in planning activities, so that pupils do not always make maximum progress.

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and have a positive start to their learning. They settle into school quickly and well because robust procedures, such as home visits for every child, are in place to make sure they do. Children enjoy exciting opportunities to learn through play, but these are restricted at times by too many adult-led activities.

The strong commitment of the headteacher to providing an exciting curriculum is evident in the wonderful displays of pupils' creative work, and the enjoyment of pupils in lessons. A strength of the school's broad and balanced curriculum is the outstanding range and quality of learning opportunities and experiences provided through special events, educational visits and visitors, out-of-school clubs and community links.

The good, and sometimes outstanding, quality of this school is the result of the determined and inspiring leadership of the headteacher and her very close-knit team of staff and excellent governors. Their vision for the school has a firm focus on the particular needs of every child, their parents and the community the school serves. Well-considered actions are having an

impact in all areas of the school's work. The school understands clearly how it can be still better, and has good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children settle happily into school and make satisfactory progress, so that their skills remain a little above the national average when they enter Year 1. The disparity in attainment between boys and girls is tackled well, and the gap has narrowed by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their personal development and well-being are good, and their behaviour is excellent. Children have good relationships with adults and are confident to work with other children or on their own. Children very much enjoy playing and learning together, especially in the outdoor area. This space is well designed, bright and welcoming and offers exciting activities such as sand, water and large construction toys. However, there is not yet enough balance between play activities and more structured learning led by adults. As a result, children do not receive all the opportunities they should to explore, learn for themselves, and discuss how they might improve. These limitations constrain good academic progress.

Pastoral care is excellent, aided by extremely effective links with parents, other schools and pre-school settings, and includes welcoming each child individually at the start of the day. Parents are very positive in their views of the school's support and praise the 'wonderful, nurturing environment'. Leadership is satisfactory. All adults know the children well and regularly assess their progress. However, assessment is not always used as sharply as it should be to adjust provision so that it fully encourages children's independent learning skills and habits.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen the use of assessment information to ensure that pupils always receive the right level of challenge in order to make the best possible progress.
- Use assessment to plan stimulating opportunities that allow children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop independent learning skills and habits.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From Year 1 onwards, pupils build on their sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress. By Year 2, standards are above the national average, particularly in mathematics. Good progress between Years 3 and 6 leads to standards that are above the national average at Year 6, particularly at the higher levels.

Following a dip in test results at Year 6 in the previous two years, improvements to teaching and the curriculum have ensured rapid progress this year. Boys have sometimes done less well than girls in recent years. The school has taken strong action to redress the balance. New and more 'boy friendly' teaching methods and topics have proved extremely successful and, as a result, boys are now making as much progress as girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' enormous enjoyment of school shows in their good attendance and exemplary behaviour. These factors make a significant contribution to their learning. Classrooms are characterised by strong teamwork and much cooperative learning among pupils. Pupils are very welcoming

and friendly and show great respect for each other and adults. They are extremely considerate of people from different faiths and backgrounds, and talk with confidence and maturity about important values. Community involvement is strong, with pupils keen to raise money for charity. Pupils readily take on an extensive variety of responsibilities around the school. They feel very safe in school, say there is no bullying, and are extremely confident when talking about internet safety. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. The school council suggested that pupils organise healthy snacks at break times and this has proved very popular. They very much enjoy the excellent variety of out-of-school activities and school trips. A great enthusiasm to work with other people and be fully involved in improving their community, together with their good academic progress, means pupils are well prepared for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and enhanced by some that is outstanding. Teachers are highly motivated, establish strong relationships with their pupils and know them all very well. Consequently, pupils are extremely keen to learn. Teachers now track pupils' progress more accurately and have raised their expectations of pupils' achievement. These improvements have had a very positive effect on the progress pupils make in the longer term. In the best lessons, teachers match lessons to the particular needs of individuals or groups of pupils. In some lessons, though, assessment information is not used as effectively, so pupils do not always make the good or outstanding progress they do in others. A strong element of lessons is the effective use of practical activities that involve pupils working together in pairs and groups. Skilful questioning promotes pupils' thinking skills and extends their knowledge and understanding, and the pace of learning is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively together to enable pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate fully in lessons, giving well-focused support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The broad and rich curriculum is relevant to pupils' interests and the needs of all. It promotes much enjoyment, encourages creativity and independence well, and is as appealing to boys as it is to girls. As a result, it is having a strongly positive impact on progress and standards. Links between subjects make learning more interesting, and have contributed to pupils' excellent motivation and involvement in their learning. Strategies to improve literacy skills are having a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' writing, while those to improve numeracy skills are strongly influencing outcomes for higher-attaining pupils.

Music tuition and specialist sports coaching are particular strengths, while local networking with other schools also extends and improves curriculum provision. The extensive range of out-of-school activities is extremely popular. Visits out and a good range of visitors add much to the variety of pupils' experiences and their enjoyment. The links with Sri Lanka and Italy give pupils a good understanding of life in other countries. The school recognises that there is further scope for pupils to learn about our multicultural society and, consequently, the school is set to develop links with an inner-city school in this country.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a very welcoming and extremely safe and secure environment, which very effectively nurtures pupils' learning, personal development and well-being. This strength is very much appreciated by parents and pupils. As one parent comments, 'All pupils are treated equally and strong friendships are built both cross-culturally and across all age groups.'

Requirements for safeguarding pupils' welfare are robust, comprehensive and up to date. The school works extremely well with partner agencies and provides extended services through the excellent children's centre. The school's policy of reaching out to people from all backgrounds has resulted in a high number of volunteer helpers, who do an excellent job of supporting the school and especially individual pupils. Very effective arrangements support children whenever they start at the school, and help to prepare Year 6 pupils for the next stage of their education. The school has significantly improved academic guidance since the last inspection, so that it is now regular and more challenging. New initiatives have secured a much closer match of work to pupils' needs, particularly within mixed-age classes, although work is not as closely matched as it might be in all classes. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and give clear guidance matched to the focus of the lesson. This provides invaluable support for pupils' good progress. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their learning and that of others, and enjoy being involved in evaluating their own performance. Consequently, they clearly know the level at which they are working, and what they need to do to be even better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The very comprehensive provision of care and the extremely strong partnerships with parents and the community reflect the school's commitment to the needs of all its pupils and to the strong promotion of community cohesion. Throughout its work the school plans with imagination and high expectations. The planning is based on rigorous self-evaluation and continuous checks across the school. Challenging targets are set and reviewed regularly and increased as appropriate. The impact of the use of these targets is reflected in the recent marked rise in achievement and standards.

Governance is excellent. The school has an exceptionally strong and profitable partnership with governors. They have extremely robust procedures for finding out about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This valuable knowledge enables the governors to share the school's clear focus on improving achievement and standards and to hold it to account for its performance. They have been highly influential in promoting the excellent extended services the school provides through the new on-site children's centre.

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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	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?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	1
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**

19 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Fitzmaurice Primary School, Bradford-on-Avon BA15 1LE

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we came to your school. We enjoyed talking to you very much. We thought you were very friendly and polite, and we wish we had been able to come to your fete!

Yours is a good school, and your parents think so too. We were pleased to read all the lovely things they said about your school. It provides you with a good education and ensures that you achieve well overall. Here are some important things we found out.

- Good teaching means that you reach standards that are above average by the end of Year 6.
- You very much enjoy school and behave extremely well.
- You have an excellent understanding of healthy eating, and of keeping fit with regular exercise.
- You love the out-of-school clubs, visits outside school and learning about children in other countries.
- Teachers and adults look after you extremely well.
- All the staff and governors are working very hard to make your school better.

These are the things we have suggested that the school does now.

- Ensure that the staff check really carefully how well you are doing in your learning so that your work always challenges you to do your very best.
- Plan many more activities in the Reception classes that allow children to explore and learn through play. Best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Christine Pollitt

Lead inspector