

Field Court Church of England Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115644
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	338630
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2010
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Gazzard
Headteacher	Karen Hart
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The majority of their time was spent looking at learning. Twenty-one lessons and ten teachers were observed. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, parents, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' progress, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching, documents relating to safeguarding of pupils and the responses to 45 parental questionnaires.

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

- the degree of challenge for the most able pupils in Years 1 and 2
- why vulnerable pupils appear to do so well at the school
- whether pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills across the curriculum.

Information about the school

The school is situated on the edge of the city of Gloucester. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals has increased since the school was last inspected, and is now average. The proportions of pupils from a minority ethnic background, those who speak English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have also increased, and all are now above average. The school site also houses the Field Court Little Owls playgroup, but this is not managed by the school's governing body and so is subject to a separate inspection. The school holds many awards. Most notable among them is one for high quality provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The school provides an outstanding education for all its pupils. For the great majority of pupils, the excellent teaching they receive is sufficient to ensure that they make the best possible progress and are exceptionally well equipped with the skills they will need in later life. For some, however, extra help is needed, either to help them catch up or to make sure that they can really fulfil their potential. This is where the school's outstanding curriculum comes to the fore. It does not matter what an individual's needs are, the school has a way of supporting them. In fact, the school has so many extra sessions to support pupils' academic achievement that many are held out of school hours. This does not bother the pupils; they love coming in early or giving up part of their lunchtime in order to work on new and exciting activities. The result is that all groups of pupils make outstanding progress, so attainment is high by the time they leave Year 2 and pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education. All the extra support, both in and out of lessons, means that vulnerable pupils, such as those who are at an early stage of learning English or who have special education needs and/or disabilities, achieve even better than other pupils and their attainment is far in excess of their counterparts nationally. While most higher-attainers make outstanding progress, some of the very highest attainers in Year 2 do not always make as much progress in mathematics as they do in other subjects, because they are often given too much help when they could be working things out for themselves.

It is not just academic standards that are high. Pupils' personal development is as outstanding as their academic progress. From the moment they start in the Reception class, children are treated as equal partners in their learning. Their views are taken into account and their opinions are valued. As a result, children quickly become highly independent and confident learners, whose behaviour is exemplary and who play an outstanding role in the community. They feel exceptionally safe because of the high degree of trust they have in their teachers. Every parent, carer and pupil spoken to or responding to the questionnaire told inspectors how safe children are at the school and praised the outstanding care provided. Pupils have an extremely well-developed understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Even the youngest could explain, for example, the risks of eating too much salt or sugar. They put their understanding into practice by making healthy choices when eating and doing lots of physical activity. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. They have much less knowledge about how people in the United Kingdom, from cultures other than their own, live their lives because they do not have enough opportunities to meet and talk to them.

The school goes from strength to strength because of the outstanding leadership

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provided by the headteacher and the manager of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment continues to improve, despite children joining the school with standards that are lower than at the time of the previous inspection. The school has excellent capacity to continue such improvement because self-evaluation is accurate; no stone is left unturned, and no weakness is too small to be tackled, in the school's relentless drive for excellence in all it does.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' understanding of how people from cultures different from their own live their lives, by providing more opportunities for them to engage with children from different areas of the United Kingdom.
- Enable the most able pupils in Year 2 to reach the same high levels of attainment in mathematics as they do in their other subjects by ensuring that teachers do not give them too much help when tackling problems.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils achieve outstandingly well at the school. Lesson observations confirmed that current attainment is even higher than that in previous years because more pupils are reaching the highest possible levels in their reading and writing. Attainment in information and communication technology is now equally as high as other subjects, because pupils have ample opportunities to put their skills into practice. Pupils love coming to school. The great majority arrive early so that they can start learning before lessons begin. The first lesson starts with a celebration of what pupils have already achieved that morning, which encourages others to come in as early as possible, and ensures all pupils are in the right frame of mind to learn. They are curious about what others have done, asking each other questions such as 'How did you draw the sky?' They then make use of their new-found knowledge in their own work. In lessons they are remarkably independent and cooperate very well when solving problems. They discuss issues sensibly and display some exceptionally well-developed skills for their age. In Year 1, for example, pupils work in pairs to develop their creative writing. One closes their eyes and describes what they see in the magic mirror, while the other takes notes and prompts for more detail, without any guidance from the teacher. In all lessons observed, pupils' concentration was total and their behaviour perfect. They take responsibility for their own learning by referring to their targets and always aiming to meet them. Pupils are also quick to take up the many opportunities to exercise responsibility in and out of school. The school council has elected members, who include representatives from all the different groups in the school, but all pupils are involved in the preparation for meetings, by discussing issues that they would like raised. Pupils patrol corridors, check that younger ones are safe in the playground and write a regular item for the local newspaper. They write letters to parents, telling them how important education is in order to encourage the best possible attendance. By the time they leave school, pupils are mature beyond their years. They take a great interest in what is going

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on around them, are confident with adults and respectful of the opinions of others.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils love their lessons because teachers make them fun. Lessons are full of surprises, such as the 'lion' wandering around the school or the visit from the farmer to talk about safety during the inspection. There is never any time for attention to wander, because there is always something going on in lessons. Tasks are placed in problem-solving contexts that pupils find interesting and very challenging. Learning about measuring lengths, for example, uses the garden. Pupils work out how many seeds they can plant in a row, and how many rows, if they follow the instructions on the packet. Then, how many vegetables could a caterpillar reach in 90cm? In turn, this sparks pupils' curiosity. What would happen to the plants if the seeds were closer together? Teachers never spend too long on one activity, so the pace of learning never flags. Discussion is used exceptionally well to make pupils think hard and to clarify their ideas. Assessment is detailed and used very well to place pupils in groups or to target them for extra support. All classes have at least four different ability groups, and pupils move between groups

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

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as they make faster or slower progress. The large number of teaching assistants are extremely well informed about vulnerable pupils, so they are able to provide extra support just when it is needed. They equally understand the needs of the gifted and talented pupils, so they can run extra lessons. Many pupils benefit from the extra sessions. Most receive an extra 15 minutes each day outside of lesson time, so they soon make up any ground lost or, for those who are at an early stage of learning English, develop a sufficient grasp of the language to allow them to play a full part in lessons. All staff have a deep understanding of the pupils’ backgrounds and needs. There are excellent systems in place to support pupils’ emotional development and to work with the parents and carers who need extra help to ensure that their children flourish.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Consistency is the key to the school’s success. The headteacher has forged the staff into an exceptionally strong team, all of whom look to improve their practice wherever they can. Data are analysed in great depth to identify pupils who may be falling behind or not taking part in after-school activities for example, and then extra provision is immediately put into place. For many pupils, especially the most vulnerable, this includes the support of many different specialist services. This approach has led to outstanding equality of opportunity, with groups who traditionally do worse than others actually outperforming them. The school adopts good practice across all areas of safeguarding. Checks on teaching are very detailed and involve governors and all staff. The results, together with other sources of information, are used to identify areas where performance can be improved. Governors themselves realised that parents do not know enough about them, so have issued their own questionnaires and are now looking at ways to improve the response rates. Other actions to improve are led by groups of staff, who take full responsibility for meeting the targets they have been set. The school has rightly identified community cohesion as the main area for improvement this year, as too much of the provision relies on pupils being taught in classrooms, rather than directly engaging with others. Overall, this is a school that is being driven forward by exceptional leadership and one that provides outstanding value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Virtually all parents and carers are very happy with all that the school provides. Many praised the school and its teachers for helping their child to enjoy their education and keeping them safe and secure. Inspectors entirely agree with parents' views. The small number of individual concerns did not fall into any particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Field Court C of E Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 213 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	69	14	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	56	20	44	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	36	27	60	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	51	22	49	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	49	22	49	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	44	24	53	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	42	24	53	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	38	26	58	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	38	27	60	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	27	27	60	2	4	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	27	26	58	3	7	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	16	36	27	60	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	47	24	53	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



4 March 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Field Court Church of England Infant School, Quedgeley GL2 4UF

Many thanks for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. Your parents and carers can be very proud of your excellent manners and behaviour. You all told us how much you like coming to school, because of all the interesting things you get to do, and because your teachers make learning fun. We agree. You go to a fantastic school where you learn very quickly indeed. From the moment you start, your teachers listen to you when you tell them about the things you are learning. This means they get to know you very well, and lets them decide how they can help you to learn as quickly as possible. They quickly spot anyone who is finding the work too hard or too easy, and then do something about it. The extra lessons before school and in the lunchtime are especially good at making sure that you can all do as well as you possibly can.

We were very impressed by how you can solve problems on your own. You concentrate and work hard at them, and are very good at writing or explaining what you have found. Sometimes, those of you in Year 2 get a bit too much help in your mathematics, so we have asked your teachers to give you more time to think things through for yourselves. You all told us how safe you felt, because all the adults take such excellent care of you. You also know how to keep yourselves safe and healthy. We thought that you were very responsible in all the extra jobs you do around the school and in the local community. You know a lot about other countries, but not as much about how other children live outside of Quedgeley. So we have asked your teachers to let you meet children from other areas, so you can learn about them.

Your school just keeps getting better and better. The people who run it look for even the tiniest thing that could be improved, and then put it right. All the adults in school work together so that they can provide the best possible education for you and make your school the special place that it is.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll

Lead inspector

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