

Forest and Sandridge Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 126402 |
| Local Authority | Wiltshire |
| Inspection number | 340974 |
| Inspection dates | 3–4 February 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Michael Merchant |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 184 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Stuart Andrews |
| Headteacher | Anna Mears |
| Date of previous school inspection | 0 March 2007 |
| School address | Sandridge Common Melksham Wiltshire SN12 7QS |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent 75% of their time looking at learning, visited 14 lessons and observed 9 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents and carers who were present at the start and finish of the school day. They observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 110 parents and carers and 100 pupils.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress, particularly higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how well the teaching takes account of the needs of groups and individuals, particularly higher attaining pupils and how well teachers help all pupils to improve their work
- how well the school meets its obligations to promote community cohesion and fosters an appreciation and awareness of other cultures.

Information about the school

The school is smaller in size than the average primary schools. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils whose first language is other than English is very low. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, is below average, as is the number of pupils with a statement of educational needs. The school achieved the International Schools award in 2007 and Healthy Schools award in 2004.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It is steadily improving and serves its community well. One parent spoke for many by saying, 'This is a great school, where staff and pupils interact well together to create a positive place for learning.' Pupils achieve well, not just because teaching and learning are good, and often excellent, but also because they are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and aim high.

One reason for the school's success is the drive and ambition of the headteacher, which is shared by all staff and governors. There is a strong sense of teamwork and pride in what has already been achieved, coupled with a total absence of complacency. School self-evaluation is accurate. Most importantly, the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its journey towards excellence and this, together with the successful action leaders have taken to ensure improvement since the last inspection, means the capacity to further improve is good.

The great majority of pupils are being actively challenged and supported well, so that progress through the school is good and attainment is above average by Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good, and often very good, progress. The attainment of some high attaining pupils, however, especially in English, is not as high as it could be. Sensitive and watchful pastoral care ensures that by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, they are confident, well-rounded young people, ready to play their full part in the world beyond school. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils have a very high regard for both their classmates and for the adults who work with them.

Teachers ensure that when pupils get to school, they are very well motivated and are eager to contribute to lessons. Teachers mark books carefully and regularly but there is inconsistency in the advice they give to pupils as to how to improve their work. Staff recognise that there is still some way to go to make the fullest use of assessment data to ensure that the tasks they set in lessons provide maximum challenge for high-flying pupils. Limited opportunities for these pupils to practise lengthy pieces of writing and solve mathematical problems prevent more of them reaching the highest levels. The school's promotion of community cohesion has focused on the pupils' own, local and international communities. Links with people in other parts of the country that are different to their own community are not as strong as they should be and pupils do not have sufficient awareness of others from contrasting backgrounds. This is why the promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise extended writing on a wide range of topics
 - planning more activities to help refine pupils' problem solving skills in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in the great majority of lessons by:
 - ensuring that teachers specifically plan for and extend the learning of the highest attainers
 - making sure that teachers' marking consistently gives pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to improve further.
- Extend the school's work on promoting community cohesion in the wider community, beyond the school and immediate locality, by increasing the opportunities for pupils to gain first-hand experience of communities different from their own.
- A realistic timescale to complete the objectives above will be by April 2011.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of good and improving progress, with pupils increasingly able to work at levels expected for their age as they move up the school. Pupils begin school with skills and abilities that are below average and they achieve well because most teachers expect much of their pupils and explain complicated ideas well. Progress was seen to be good for most groups of pupils. In an outstanding numeracy lesson in Year 6, pupils were seen by inspectors to be learning at an exceptional pace because of the teacher's immensely high expectations and the challenging tasks set. Progress is relatively slower in writing and problem solving abilities for some higher attaining pupils across the school.

The school works effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Detailed plans to support these groups, coupled with timely interventions of learning assistants, ensure that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.

Pupils greatly enjoy school. Their very well-developed understanding of right and wrong and appreciation and enjoyment of the wonders of life around them, is reflected in their exemplary behaviour. Relationships are happy and harmonious and support the calm and purposeful atmosphere observed by inspectors in all classes. A striking feature that the pupils displayed at all times was the caring way they look after each other. In discussions with pupils, the older ones made sure the younger ones had their chance to speak; the way pupils treat each other and speak to adults with such kindness and respect was a pleasure to witness. Pupils' impressive social and interpersonal skills, together with secure and improving standards in the key skills of mathematics and

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English, mean that they are well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum contributes positively to pupils' good learning and personal development. Learning is meaningful because the school carefully plans themes with strong links between subjects. Visits and visitors significantly enhance pupils' understanding of the wider world and make a valuable contribution to pupils' high levels of enjoyment. Extremely close and watchful support for vulnerable pupils and effective partnerships with outside agencies ensure that the needs of these pupils are well met. The school then ensures that exactly the right support is put in place to meet these different needs. There are effective links with parents and carers, and access to a range of other local agencies, should the need arise. The school has set up very thorough systems to check on pupils' progress and these are now used consistently well to ensure that none are in danger of falling behind and to enable teachers to set the next steps for each pupil's learning. This is not, however, always made explicit in teachers' marking of pupils' work. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable

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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and create a well-ordered and calm environment. Teachers are good at telling pupils exactly what they are expected to do in lessons and this helps them make sense of their learning. Adults ask perceptive questions and these help pupils to think and use more varied vocabulary in their answers. Where teaching is less effective, learning and progress is hampered because teachers do not set tasks that adequately match the range of abilities in the class or build on pupils' prior knowledge, with the result that some higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Clear sighted and strong leadership and management are at the heart of the school's success. The effective headteacher works tenaciously to improve pupils' educational opportunities. She communicates her high expectations persuasively to staff so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. A climate has been created where everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress is accelerating. There is no hint of complacency and there is a determination from staff at all levels to sustain and build upon the many recent gains. In this way, the school promotes good equality for all pupils and makes sure there is no discrimination on any grounds.

Subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities very well. They are growing well into their roles and are actively involved in checking pupils' standards and progress in their respective areas. The governing body fulfils all its legal obligations and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff, as all safeguarding arrangements were found to be effective at the time of the inspection. It holds the school to account well for its work. Leaders have worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils are developing into caring citizens who respect and value the views of others and that a set of common shared values is embedded in every child. Whilst there are positive features to the school's existing work on promoting community cohesion, within the school community itself for example, senior leaders are aware that some elements are not yet developed sufficiently. There are plans to forge links with other schools in more ethnically and socially diverse areas in England and to enhance other aspects of this work across the curriculum.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 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 equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good provision for the Reception class children enables them to achieve well and develop good independence. Children love coming to school and parents are very appreciative of the good start that their children receive in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have created a safe, attractive environment in which the needs of all children are well met. Children make good progress from their starting points. This is because teaching is good and a team of well-qualified adults support the children skilfully by asking focused questions to develop their understanding. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those from which children can choose. Children are developing excellent social skills because they are making choices and fostering independence through working with others. All adults make observations of children and carefully assess their learning. However, this information is not always shared well enough with parents for them to be fully involved in their children's next steps in learning. By the end of the Reception Year, most children are working securely towards the standards expected for their age in most areas. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader provides good leadership to her team. She has a very secure understanding of the early years curriculum and reviews her practice to ensure that all children receive high quality care and support.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

The school and its headteacher clearly enjoy the confidence and support of those parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. A number of individual comments reflected the good quality care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors totally agree with these views. A very small minority of parents raised concerns regarding instances of inappropriate behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour in class and around the school to be exemplary, however.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Forest and Sandridge Church of England 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 189 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 56 | 51 | 53 | 48 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 69 | 63 | 40 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 52 | 47 | 57 | 52 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 51 | 46 | 58 | 53 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 62 | 56 | 47 | 43 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 47 | 43 | 60 | 55 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 39 | 35 | 69 | 63 | 0 | 0 | 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) | 48 | 44 | 49 | 45 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 51 | 46 | 56 | 51 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 40 | 36 | 64 | 58 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 39 | 35 | 65 | 59 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 50 | 45 | 60 | 55 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 62 | 56 | 48 | 44 | 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.



Dear Pupils

Forest and Sandridge Church of England Primary School, Melksham SN12 7QS

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had! We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Forest and Sandridge is a good school and you are right to be proud of it. Here are some of the really good things we found out about it.

- You behave impeccably around the school and in your classes and you look after each other so well. You relish working in groups and helping each other to learn and you readily help your classmates when they find things difficult.
- You make good progress as you move up through the school, and your achievement is getting better all the time. This is because your teachers teach you well and you also work very hard.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work.
- Your headteacher and all your other teachers know exactly how to make sure that your school continues to get even better.

To help them to do this, we have asked your school to do the following.

- Ensure that more of you gain higher levels in the national tests in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 by giving you more practice at longer pieces of writing and solving problems.
- Make sure that all in all lessons, teachers plan activities for you that really make you think and that they give you clear advice as to how you can improve your work.
- Give you more opportunities to learn about the lives, values, customs and beliefs of communities in other parts of the United Kingdom.

I am sure that you will help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead Inspector

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