

Arthur Dye Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115597
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	342807
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Lorna Brackstone HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection 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 of pupils on the school roll	282
Appropriate authority	Interim executive
Chair	Bob Wolfson
Headteacher	Claire Morrison/Shirley Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out at no notice by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Just over three quarters of inspectors' time was spent looking at learning. Inspectors saw all classes being taught and, in all, 21 lessons or part lessons were observed. Thirteen teachers were observed teaching. Brief meetings were held with a small number of parents and groups of pupils. Inspectors also held meetings with the interim executive board and senior staff. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school development plan, the latest evaluation of the quality of teaching and various policies. Inspectors also looked at the outcome of a recent survey of parents' views.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following, which are the key areas for improvement from the previous inspection.

- Ensure that senior leaders rigorously evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses and implement measures to improve pupils' achievement.
- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2, especially for boys.
- Ensure that teachers match work accurately to the needs of all pupils in lessons, and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Use assessment, marking and target setting more effectively to track pupils' progress, and provide pupils with better indications of the next steps in their learning.

Information about the school

Arthur Dye is slightly larger than the average primary school. It serves a local area comprising mainly of local authority housing. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin and around one third are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.

When the school was inspected in June 2008 it was judged to require special measures. The school's progress was monitored regularly. In November 2008 and March 2009 it was judged to have made inadequate progress in tackling the weaknesses identified above. An executive leadership team, comprising of three experienced headteachers from local schools, was appointed on a temporary basis in March 2009.

An Interim Executive Board of Governors was appointed by the local authority starting in April 2009. The two monitoring visits in June and December 2009 judged the school to be making good progress in tackling the weaknesses. In January 2010 a new partnership was formed between Arthur Dye and nearby Rowanfield Junior School. The schools share two co-headteachers, one of whom was previously a member of the executive leadership team. At the same time a new deputy headteacher started at Arthur Dye.

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

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Arthur Dye has improved significantly since the last inspection and now provides a good quality education. Self-evaluation systems provide the school with an accurate picture of its effectiveness and plans clearly reflect what needs to be done next to secure further improvement. The school has a good capacity to continue this improvement and has the following strengths.

- The exceptional vision and drive, established by the executive leadership team, are shared and maintained to a very high standard by the co-headteachers.
- The interim executive board has made an outstanding contribution to school improvement.
- All pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Attainment has improved throughout the school and is broadly in line with age-related expectations in all year groups.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers are well organised, enthusiastic and have high expectations of pupils' work and their behaviour.
- The planned programmes of work are interesting, enjoyable and motivating.
- The school is a happy community where pupils look after each other carefully and feel safe.
- Pupils develop well as sensible young people and their behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy exciting activities and make good progress in their learning.
- Parents and carers are involved in the life of the school and most have positive views of the school.
- The close relationship with Rowanfield Juniors is having a positive impact on the professional development of the teachers. Other partnerships ensure that the school provides a stimulating range of experiences.
- All pupils are well looked after and their welfare needs are met effectively.

The following areas are satisfactory, but leaders recognise the need for further development.

- Subject and curriculum leaders are not fully involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Pupils have a limited awareness of the cultural diversity of British society.
- Community cohesion is promoted appropriately at a local level but not at a national and global level.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the school's capacity to embed and sustain improvement by:
 - extending the role of the subject and curriculum leaders so that they can share the strengths of the most effective teaching.
- Establishing a more detailed plan to promote community cohesion by:
 - evaluating and using opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of different religious and ethnic backgrounds at a national and global level.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The pattern of underachievement, particularly for boys, which has been reflected in the national test results over the past few years, has been halted and teachers are working hard to cover lost ground with the oldest pupils. During the inspection pupils were observed making good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in their lessons. There are no significant differences in the progress being made by different groups of pupils. For example, all pupils in a Year 5 class performed at their very best during a guided reading session which had been skilfully planned to meet their learning needs. Higher attaining groups worked with purpose and independence as they consolidated words for a spelling test whilst the teacher reinforced dictionary skills with a group of lower attaining pupils. This good learning and progress are reflected well in the quality and quantity of work in all year groups.

Pupils confirm that they enjoy their time at Arthur Dye. They are proud that they attend this school, are very appreciative of the improvements that have been made. The school's vision 'EPIC' stands for Effort, Participation, Improvement and Celebration and the pupils work hard to be 'EPIC' every day. Behaviour is consistently good and pupils feel safe and well cared for. A particular strength is the way in which the pupils understand how to keep safe when they use the internet. Most make sensible choices when selecting food and were delighted to receive badges for eating healthily. Older pupils value the responsibilities they are given and the school council plays an important role in representing the views and suggestions of pupils. For example, the decision to improve the crockery used for school meals was positively influenced by members of the school council. Working with jockeys at the local race course, fundraising activities for victims of the Haiti earthquake, and Chinese New Year celebrations help the pupils develop an understanding of the wider community. However, links with people of different cultures elsewhere are less well developed. Pupils' improving academic achievements, average attendance rates and positive attitudes to work make a satisfactory contribution to their future economic well-being. Whilst suitable links have developed with a local government office, the school is fully aware that it needs to develop further the pupils' knowledge of the world of work.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The methodical approach to planning lessons and the clear attention given to meeting the needs of all groups of pupils are consistent strengths throughout the school. Pupils fully understand what they are learning and persist at their work so that they can achieve their challenging targets. Classrooms are vibrant learning environments and displays effectively balance the promotion of key skills and the celebration of pupils' achievements. Good use is made of different strategies to assess pupils' learning. Throughout the school pupils know that the 'brilliant blue' marking celebrates what they have learnt and the 'purple pointers' help guide them towards their next step. In-depth questioning and good use of talking to partners ensure that learning is consolidated well. The good support pupils receive from teaching assistants is clearly focused on making progress within a warm and caring relationship. Outstanding lessons were seen when teachers dramatised a scenario and this was fully embraced by the pupils. Senior leaders know that sharing this excellent practice is the next step in improving the teaching further. Visits by 'hungry caterpillars', 'Caribbean carnivals' and 'winter wonderlands' make the curriculum content come alive and thus learning is interesting and fun. For example, investigating the grounds to solve a mystery and warning their partner school of the dangers of an impending visit by an ogre develop speaking, writing and problem-solving skills. However, the school is fully aware that this exciting new approach needs to be fully embedded and carefully evaluated. Pupils' welfare and

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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personal, social and health needs are catered for well. The school's good partnerships with external groups and agencies contribute strongly to this good provision.

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?

The inspirational leadership and management of the co-headteachers have maintained high staff morale and ensured that the wider community has a strong sense of trust in the school. Frequent observations of lessons, followed up by effective identification of strengths and areas for development, have ensured that the quality of teaching has rapidly improved. Improvement planning is extremely well targeted and responsive to changing circumstances. Those leaders with subject and curriculum responsibilities share the vision and ambition of the co-headteachers but are not yet involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. The interim executive board use their professional expertise to hold the school to account and have rigorously dealt with any barriers to learning such as staff absences and pupils' behaviour. The members of the interim executive board engage extremely effectively with parents, pupils, staff and the local community. Their exceptional strategic skills are illustrated very well through their insightful plans for a new governing body.

Equality is promoted satisfactorily and this is evident in the pupils' achievements where no group of pupils is discriminated against and all are supported well to do their best. However, the co-headteachers are fully aware that equality policies require updating and revising. Safeguarding procedures are effective and all staff have received appropriate and up-to-date training. The school has a positive relationship with parents and carers, who are kept well informed about their children's achievements. In particular, parents are very appreciative of the way in which mobile text messaging is used to communicate quickly and efficiently with them. The parents' forum has been used well to gauge views on school improvement and future plans. Close liaison with local playgroups and nurseries ensures that transition into the Early Years Foundation Stage is seamless. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily within its local context. The school community is calm and harmonious and characteristics of the locality are well understood. However, it is only recently that attention is being given to ensuring that pupils have a greater understanding of promoting religious and ethnic cohesion within a wider national and global context.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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	1
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

Children in Reception are benefiting from much improved provision. High aspirations and effective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage have ensured that children learn well through an effective blend of adult-led sessions and activities where they work independently or alongside classmates. Provision is securely based around practical and meaningful activities. Teaching is consistently good. The classrooms are brimming full of interesting equipment and displays which the children relate to with enthusiasm. The exciting outdoor area is used well as an integral part of the children's learning. In an outstanding lesson children were observed working out how they could discover who had taken the oversized sandwich that they had made for a giant. They looked at photographic evidence to solve the mystery and eagerly explored the indoor and outdoor areas for clues. Their level of engagement and the amount of progress they made in their learning during this session was outstanding.

Adults carefully observe activities and compile extensive records of progress which are supported through photographic evidence. This is used to plan the next steps in their learning. It is evident that the children, most of whom started school with attainment well below age-related expectations, have made good progress in their learning. Progress in social development is outstanding. Children are well cared for and their safety and welfare are given a high priority. As yet the teachers do not use the views of parents, carers and the children in their improvement plans but understand that this is the next step in perfecting provision.

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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

Findings from the most recent survey of parents and carers (March 2010), where 50 parents responded, were positive. There was an overall feeling of support for the school and encouragement after a period of turmoil. One parent stated, 'Keep up the good work - I am really seeing the benefits,' whilst another encouraged the school to 'just keep being EPIC'. Most parents and carers felt that their children were happy attending Arthur Dye and considered that behaviour was generally good. A significant minority of responses indicate that aspects of communication could be improved and this was endorsed by the parents and carers who met with the lead inspector during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Arthur Dye Primary School, Cheltenham GL51 0PH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. Quite a few of you told me how pleased you are with the way that the school has got better over the past year. I have certainly noticed this in my regular visits and I am very impressed with the way that you behave in school and how much you enjoy your learning.

I was very pleased to tell your co-headteachers that your school no longer needs an inspection each term because it is now making sure that you all get a good chance to do your best and do well in your work. Your school is a good school and these are some of the things it does well.

- Your two co-headteachers are so enthusiastic and determined that you get the best possible education.
- The experienced governors who were brought in to support your school during its difficulties have done so very well.
- Your lessons are interesting and exciting because your teachers plan them really carefully. They make sure that you understand what you are learning and help you to improve your work.
- All adults in school look after you well and keep you safe.
- Your parents are pleased with the improvements which have been made.

Although your school has improved, there are still some things that could be even better. So we have asked the adults who lead and manage your school to make sure that:

- all teachers are fully involved in improving their areas of responsibility
- you have plenty of opportunities to link with people from different backgrounds to your own.

Thank you again for making me so welcome. I will certainly miss my regular visits and I wish you every success for the rest of your time at school and in the future.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Brackstone

Her Majesty's Inspector

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