

Franche Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135050
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	381789
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Anthony O'Malley HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	559
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lee Wright
Headteacher	Val Weddell-Hall
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Anthony O'Malley

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Additional inspector

Rowena Green

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 22 lessons taught by 22 teachers. Over 12 hours were spent in lessons. Meetings were held with staff, representatives of the governing body, parents and carers, and pupils.

Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of documentation, particularly that related to pupils' progress and keeping them safe.

Samples of work were scrutinised and pupils were heard reading. Inspectors analysed 300 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers, as well as questionnaires from older pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Franche Primary is much larger than most primary schools. It opened in 2007, following the reorganisation of schools in the Wyre Forest. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The great majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well-above average. There are a small number of looked after children on the school roll. Franche Nursery Plus offers placements for children throughout the area who require additional support because they have special educational needs. Privately managed childcare is provided before and after school. This provision is subject to separate inspection. The school meets the current government floor standard.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Since the previous inspection, the standards attained by pupils when they leave the school have improved from below average to average. Achievement is good.
- Pupils make good progress in all year groups from below-average starting points. The proportion of pupils gaining the expected level in English and mathematics in last year’s national tests was above average.
- Following the opening of the school, pupils’ attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 was low. Improved teaching has led to pupils in these key stages now gaining the skills and knowledge expected.
- Achievement of all groups of pupils is good. The children who attend Nursery Plus are very well prepared for their primary school education.
- Teaching is good. Work in pupils’ English and mathematics books demonstrates that there is consistently good teaching in these subjects. Strategies to improve the teaching of writing have had a very positive impact.
- The school has a welcoming and stimulating environment where pupils feel cared for and safe. Their behaviour is good.
- The leadership of the headteacher has inspired the staff. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school.
- Good leadership and management have led to improved teaching and learning, resulting in higher standards. There are rigorous systems for evaluating the quality of provision and outcomes in English and mathematics. These systems are not yet securely established in other areas of the curriculum.
- The governing body has played an important role in the school’s development

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since its opening. However, it does not receive sufficient information about the impact of the full range of its policies to enable it to plan for further improvement in all key areas.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching and learning in all subject areas are as strong as they are in English and mathematics by:
 - giving all subject leaders opportunities to monitor and evaluate provision and outcomes in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that subject specific skills are developed year on year.

- Ensure the governing body has sufficient information on the impact of all of its key policies to be able to evaluate their effectiveness and plan for further improvement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well and reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. All groups make good progress including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. When pupils receive additional help because they have special educational needs, its purpose is identified clearly. The impact of the support is evaluated both at the end of the intervention and at regular periods thereafter. This checks that it has a long-term impact and helps teachers know if further support is necessary. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make better progress than this group does nationally, reaching expected standards.

When children start in nursery, the majority have skills and knowledge below those expected, particularly in their use of language and understanding of number. These areas become key targets for learning when adults lead sessions and when children choose their own activities. In Nursery Plus, provision is adapted well to meet specific needs and staff demonstrate high expectations when promoting the children's independence.

Adults consistently promote social development through group work and help pupils take responsibility for their learning by giving them opportunities to evaluate their own work. Both strategies promote good progress. Underlying the improvement in writing throughout the school has been good-quality oral work that engages pupils. Teachers plan carefully for pupils' speaking and listening, making good use of drama to prepare pupils for independent writing. In lessons, books and discussions with pupils, it is clear that this has a significant impact on their enjoyment of writing as

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well as promoting important aspects of personal development such as teamwork.

At the previous inspection, reading standards were low at the end of Key Stage 1. Daily sessions to teach letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 are now well established and effective. In addition, where tracking identifies underachievement in reading there is good quality additional provision to ensure those at risk of underachievement catch up. Reading standards are now at the expected standard in Year 2. Work on sounds and letters continues, where necessary, for pupils in Key Stage 2. All pupils also have opportunities to develop more advanced reading skills, such as inference and prediction, through guided reading sessions. However, on occasions, groups of pupils who are not working with an adult are given tasks which occupy them but do not move their learning on.

Parents' and carers' questionnaires show that they are happy with their children's achievement and inspection evidence confirmed their view.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have good subject knowledge and communicate this well. For example, teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 working to develop early reading skills, model the blending and segmenting of sounds confidently and explain clearly which letters and groups of letters make which sounds. A strong feature of the teaching of mathematics is how lessons build on previous learning. This means that pupils recognise links with earlier work and can apply skills in increasingly more challenging contexts. Pupils' workbooks show that there is high expectation for all groups and that lower-attaining pupils have opportunities to work at open-ended tasks and investigations to develop the broader mathematical skills of problem solving, reasoning and generalising. Programmes such as those that develop pupils' numeracy and other interventions support those identified as having special educational needs in gaining sufficient skills to be removed from the register of concern.

The great majority of parent and carer questionnaires judge that teaching is good and inspection evidence confirmed this view. However, there are a small minority of lessons where learning is no better than satisfactory. For example, in a science lesson there was a lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils because they were working at the same task as others. In a mathematics lesson, the teacher and supporting adults did not spot that a number of pupils were struggling to understand the lesson introduction. Consequently, the individuals stopped paying attention to skills being taught and became distracted.

Teaching promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. The curriculum interests pupils and regularly gives them opportunities to show imagination and creativity. Discussions with pupils highlighted that lessons typically provide opportunities for collaboration and reflection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

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Over half of all parents and carers returned questionnaires. The great majority of respondents agreed that their children were safe in school and that behaviour was good. A typical comment was, 'The staff and headteacher have really supported me and my children through a difficult time and changes at home...this school has provided a safe and consistent learning environment to ensure my children have continued to learn well and enjoy going to school.' Inspection evidence confirmed these views. Where questionnaires did raise concerns about behaviour and safety, these were shared with the headteacher, respecting confidentiality, who is keen to redress the general issues raised. In their questionnaires, a minority of pupils too raised concerns about behaviour. In discussions with inspectors, it became clear that pupils judged behaviour overall to be very good, but were disappointed with the disruptions to a few lessons caused by a handful of children with particularly challenging behaviour. The pupils added that staff manage such disruptions very effectively.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and learning. Even though some pupils have social and emotional difficulties, there are few instances of serious misbehaviour. The school tackles bullying in all forms rigorously and deals with prejudiced behaviour through its personal and social education curriculum. The school's records show that it deals effectively with the very rare instances of bullying or racist behaviour. In lessons, pupils consistently show good attitudes to learning and around the school they are friendly and polite. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, including Nursery Plus, children were observed developing self-confidence as the result of the very encouraging way in which adults speak to them.

Leadership and management

Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have secured significant improvements since the last inspection. For example, training for staff to improve pupils' writing skills has been effective and the commitment to sharing the expertise of the most effective teachers of reading and mathematics, through giving them opportunities to work alongside colleagues, has helped raise attainment in these subjects in all key stages. These improvements demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further. Subject leaders in areas other than English and mathematics have had fewer opportunities to drive improvement and do not monitor and evaluate as rigorously.

The curriculum provides a broad range of learning activities. Pupils say that topics begin with imaginative activities that spark their interest. They contribute their ideas and help shape the programme of study. Consequently, they are clear about the purpose of the activities they undertake. However, in some subjects, pupils do not develop skills systematically and this can limit the quality of their work. The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about the range of cultures and faiths in the United Kingdom, reflect upon their learning, enjoy the performing arts and contribute to decision making. For example, pupils have taken the lead in identifying the limitations of the

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current playground for the older pupils and in designing a new playground.

The school's work in ensuring that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have good opportunities for development, and in tackling discrimination, is effective. When leaders analyse performance data they take care to check on the progress of the different groups in the school. This helps ensure that all groups perform equally well; including looked after children. Carers and local agencies value highly the provision for the well-being and academic progress of this potentially vulnerable group.

A few questionnaires raised issues concerning safeguarding. The governing body is aware of the issues and taking appropriate actions to ensure the safety of the school site. Regulatory requirements for safeguarding, protecting pupils and promoting equality are met. The governing body monitors and evaluates the implementation of the school improvement plan appropriately. However, the impact of some of its policies are not scrutinised as closely. For example, it does not receive data enabling it to monitor participation in curriculum enrichment activities to ensure that all groups benefit from this aspect of provision.

Glossary

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.
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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Franche Primary School, Kidderminster, DY11 5QB

Thank you very much for your warm welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you, hearing you read and watching you at work in class. Some of the older pupils in the school completed questionnaires. These told us that you enjoy school and that the school deals with any bullying effectively.

This is what we have said about your school in our report:

- Franche is a good school that is improving quickly
- your achievement is good because you make good progress and reach the standards expected by the end of Year 6
- pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress
- the teaching you receive is good
- the way your school is led and managed and the curriculum you follow are good
- you behave well in school and on the playground and your attendance is above average
- your school ensures that you are kept safe.

This is what we have asked your school to do to help you achieve even more:

- find ways making teaching and learning all subjects as good as they are in English and mathematics
- help members of the school's governing body to contribute more to the leadership of the school by making sure they have all of the information needed to judge how well the school is performing.

All of you can help the school improve by continuing to behave well and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Anthony O'Malley
Her Majesty's Inspector

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