



Inspection report

# Fordingbridge Infant School

Unique Reference Number 116069  
LEA Hampshire

Inspection number 269364  
Inspection dates 10 – 12 November 2004  
Reporting inspector Brian Padgett

Inspection carried out under section 3 of the School Inspection Act 1996, and was deemed section 10 under the same act.

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Type of School	Infant	School address	Pennys Lane
School category	Community		Fordingbridge
Age range of pupils	4 - 7		Hampshire
			SP16 1HJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01425 653624
Number on roll	152	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Carol Jackson
Date of previous inspection	June 1999	Headteacher	Miss Angela M Rice

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Age group	Published	Reference no.
4 - 7	December 2004	269364

## Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of Fordingbridge Infant School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Most of the pupils live in Fordingbridge but a number of pupils live in the surrounding villages in the New Forest. The proportion of pupils taking a free school meal is low. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds and, overall, pupils' attainment on entry is average.

Fifteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, including four pupils who have a statement of special needs, which is high for the size and type of school. The range of special needs is wide, and includes pupils with particular learning needs, such as those with cerebral palsy and autism. Nearly all pupils are white, of British origin, and all speak English as their first language.

The school was awarded Beacon status in 2000. It received an Achievement Award in 2002, and became an Investor in People in 2003. A new extension housing two classrooms, a theatre and a library was opened just days before the inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

This is an outstandingly effective and inclusive school. All pupils achieve very well, and the school consistently attains standards that are well above average. Pupils make very good progress in their personal development because of the care with which they are nurtured. The school is exceptionally well directed and managed, and teachers and support staff teach consistently well. It is forward thinking and has built strong links with parents and a wide range of partners, creating a genuine learning community. It provides very good value for money.

**Grade: 1**

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

The school was judged as a very good school five years ago. It became a Beacon School in 2000. Since then it has maintained and even improved on the high standards already achieved, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Points for development raised in the previous report have been tackled with energy, and the quality of writing and the effectiveness of the work of subject managers are now strengths of the school. Improvements can be seen in all areas of the school's work.

**Grade: 1**

### **Capacity to improve**

This is a forward-thinking school. Under the leadership of the headteacher, it works innovatively with partner schools and other agencies. The school is very well managed at all levels and there are rigorous checks on the progress of pupils. The senior management and governors hold an accurate view of the strengths of the school and areas they wish to develop further; this was fully reflected in the school's self-evaluation. The school has a very good capacity to maintain its very high standards and improve still further.

**Grade: 1**

### **What the school should do to improve further**

There are no key issues for action. However, the school has identified where it wishes to improve further in its school improvement plan, and it is successfully implementing its plans.

## **Achievement and standards**

Pupils enter the school with a broad range of skills and knowledge. A good proportion are articulate, but a significant number have difficulties in communication and language. Pupils make very good progress in the reception classes. They have a good balance of opportunities to learn through play, and more demanding work for those who are ready for this. By the end of the reception year, most pupils achieve or exceed what is expected for children at this age.

Standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 have been consistently well-above average in reading and mathematics since the last inspection. Standards in writing are good and improving. Boys and girls do consistently well.

The progress of pupils in all other subjects is at, or about, what is expected at Year 2.

All pupils achieve very well. The ethos in every classroom is good and creates the right climate for all pupils to learn. Each pupil's progress is checked carefully so teachers know what has been learned and what needs teaching next. The more able pupils are set challenging work, and lower attaining pupils are given very good assistance and encouragement. Pupils with special educational needs receive particular attention and individual help so that they are fully included, and make good progress towards the targets set for them.

### **Grade: 1**

## **Personal development and well-being**

The success with which the staff develop pupils as young people is an outstanding strength of the school. The progress in maturity of pupils from the reception classes to the Year 2 classes is clear to see. Behaviour, consideration for others, and self-control improve as pupils move up from year to year, whilst the interest and enthusiasm for learning so evident in the youngest pupils is maintained. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils are lively and responsive, and excited by their work. Attendance is good and there is very little unauthorised absence.

Pupils are safe at school, because staff put safety and welfare first. However, pupils are also encouraged to take responsibility and look after themselves. The school is working as effectively as it can do to encourage pupils to lead healthy lifestyles. Fruit snacks are taken during breaks, pupils know what constitutes a healthy diet, and the playground has been systematically developed to promote physical exercise through play. However, the school is not having maximum impact as yet: for example, the large majority of pupils bring packed lunches which do not always include the right balance of foods.

Pupils are laying the foundations for future success in life very effectively and are learning to become good citizens. They take responsibility as monitors in a range of duties around the school. They contribute to decision-making by discussions in class, and through representatives, take their views to the headteacher. They then report on their findings to the whole school. Pupils are asked what they enjoy about the different lessons they undertake, and their comments are respected, with changes made to the school's policy where appropriate. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. In particular, pupils' spiritual development is enhanced by the opportunities they have to explore feelings and emotions in lessons, to develop respect for others' beliefs and values, and to understand the needs of others. Also, as well as developing an appreciation for their own culture, pupils are developing understanding of other races in our multi-cultural society: for example, through their work on Divali and through connections established with a multi-cultural school in Southampton.

**Grade: 1**

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching is good across the whole school. It is the consistency of the quality of teaching, underpinned by careful planning and rigorous review of what has been learned, that enables all pupils to make such good progress. Planning is thorough and since each pair of teachers plan together, equality of opportunity between parallel classes is ensured. Teachers prepare work to match individual needs based on their knowledge of what pupils have learned. They set clear targets, and pupils know what they have to do to achieve them. Marking is very good, and often contains comments to help pupils improve. The work of support staff is also planned to help meet the varied needs of pupils. Extension work is frequently available for more able pupils and to help them to develop higher order thinking skills. There is effective help for pupils with special educational needs, and special qualified staff contribute to reviews of their progress. Commitment to the pupils, excellent relationships in the class and with parents, and very good teamwork are common characteristics of teaching in each class.

**Grade: 1**

### **Curriculum and other activities**

Pupils undertake a wide range of interesting and varied work. Whilst the emphasis is firmly on learning the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, the school is innovative and creative in developing its work: for example, it has enhanced the teaching of literacy,

including improving writing for boys, through the use of drama. Learning is made more meaningful for pupils by teaching other subjects through skilfully constructed themes. These themes catch the imagination of pupils, such as the project on the Great Fire of London. Wherever possible, information and communication technology (ICT) is used to support learning in lessons. The work which pupils undertake in the reception classes builds strongly on the experiences they have had in the pre-school settings.

**Grade: 1**

### **Care, guidance and support**

The care for pupils' safety and welfare is a major contributor to the school's outstanding ethos. There are robust procedures for child protection, and dealing with accidents. Pupils receive very good guidance to promote their personal development; they feel sufficiently safe and secure to share their concerns with their teachers and support staff, and their views are respected. Guidance to support pupils' academic learning is of the highest order. The progress of each pupil is kept under close review, and there are regular discussions between teachers, the headteacher and parents to maintain the right degree of challenge. The arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are exemplary. The greater the need, the harder the school works to ensure that the needs are met. Parents of pupils with special needs are very appreciative of the degree of commitment staff show for their children and how fully they and their children are included.

**Grade: 1**

## **Leadership and management**

The leadership and management of the school at all levels are completely dedicated to the all-round development of pupils, personally and academically. The headteacher's exceptional skills as a leader and manager are at the heart of the school's success. Teachers, teaching assistants and support staff work as a team and consistently offer provision of a high quality that enables pupils to reach high standards. The school enjoys the full confidence of parents.

The headteacher holds an accurate view of its success across all the different aspects of the school. The school's own evaluation judged that it was providing well for its pupils, and had stronger features. Inspectors judged that the school's provision is of the highest quality. In the following aspects, the school could hardly be managed better:

- the checking and review of pupils' performance
- the effectiveness of links with other schools and agencies
- the inclusive nature of the school.

The senior team is very well supported by governors and staff. Governors are well informed. They maintain sound oversight of the school, including the progress of school improvement plans. They provide the necessary challenge to the headteacher to ensure developments are practical, affordable and in the best interests of all. The deputy headteacher provides very good support to the headteacher. Resources and accommodation are very good, and funding from various sources, including Beacon status, is used well.

**Grade: 1**

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