

Fordingbridge Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116069
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312167
Inspection date	6 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	155
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Carol Jackson
Headteacher	Mr Martyn Beales
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2004
School address	Pennys Lane Fordingbridge SP6 1HJ
Telephone number	01425653624
Fax number	0

Age group	4-7
Inspection date	6 May 2008
Inspection number	312167

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. He investigated the achievement and attainment of current Year 2 pupils; whether the procedures for developing good attendance are sufficiently robust; and whether the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Evidence was gathered from the analysis of pupils' progress, scrutiny of samples of their work and observation of lessons. Discussions were held with staff, governors and pupils. In addition, the responses of 64 parents' questionnaires were analysed and comments taken into account.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties is average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties. The school has a new headteacher, who has been in post since January 2008. It has gained the Enhanced Healthy Schools Award and Sports Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. It fully meets its motto of 'Together we learn'. It has maintained and built on the excellence found in all areas at the time of the previous inspection. Parents are unanimous in their support of the school, typically commenting, 'I have nothing but praise for Fordingbridge Infants. It provides a very welcoming and friendly environment'. The new headteacher has made an excellent start. He has already developed into an outstanding leader who is much admired by staff, parents and governors. Working closely with the effective deputy headteacher, he has continued to foster a very strong team spirit where everyone's contributions are valued and people genuinely care for each other. As a result, the school provides excellent care and support. The resulting nurturing environment enables pupils to thrive in both their academic and personal development.

The staff demonstrate a deep commitment to equal opportunities and this is reflected in the attention that is given to securing the very strong progress for all groups of pupils. Achievement is outstanding. Current Year 1 and 2 pupils are making excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Year 2 pupils are on course to continue the exceptionally high results, attained in most years in national assessments at the end of Year 2. Standards are particularly high in reading and writing. This is because the staff are not complacent and they have strived to raise standards even further. For example, a careful analysis of written work was undertaken and it was felt that progress could be accelerated, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Year 1. Senior leaders decided that there was a need to strengthen pupils' understanding of letters and sounds. As a result, a new programme was introduced last year and the impact of this has been dramatic, particularly for pupils who find learning hard. However, all pupils have benefited from the close attention that has been paid to ensuring that their phonic skills are even more developed.

The school has wide ranging and rigorous systems to check both provision and pupils' progress. This involves senior and middle managers as well as governors. The resulting high quality improvement plans are monitored and evaluated well. Nonetheless, the school's evaluation of teaching and learning is modest. Because senior staff feel that there is room for more improvement, they evaluated this provision as good. However, it is excellent. Teaching is always at least good and frequently outstanding. Pupils are very positive in their comments about lessons. They say that, 'Learning is great and teachers make our lessons fun'. When combined with the highly positive relationships engendered by teachers' excellent behaviour management skills, their high expectations of pupils' progress are rewarded with pupils who concentrate exceptionally well. They develop into active and thoughtful learners who, as well as developing high levels of literacy and numeracy, also have very positive social skills. This results in pupils who are exceptionally well-prepared for the move to the junior school. Classrooms are a hive of highly purposeful activity because teachers make sure that activities are exciting and challenging. In an excellent literacy lesson, for example, Year 1 pupils were acting in role when preparing for writing 'Magic Quilt' stories, and they were excited when telling each other where the magic quilt was transporting them to.

Just as at the time of the previous inspection, guidance to support pupils' academic learning is of the highest order. Careful tracking of progress ensures that any vulnerable pupils are identified early and excellent programmes of support are quickly put into place. In addition, procedures to safeguard and protect pupils are of high quality. Parents of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are particularly positive about the attention and care that their children

receive. One parent said, 'My son's needs are quite complex, yet the staff have been undaunted by this and have tried their utmost to include him and he has flourished'.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. As one pupil pointed out, 'We make sure everyone is happy because we share and care for all'. Pupils say that instances of poor behaviour are very rare and pupils know who they can turn to if they are feeling sad or unhappy. Pupils have a highly developed understanding of the need to live a healthy lifestyle. This is supported not only by the strong provision for physical development and the attention given to healthy eating but also by the pupils having their own 'allotment' to grow vegetables. These are then sold and profits are put towards seeds for the future. Pupils' attendance has been close to the national average for the past three years. Mindful of the need to boost attendance, the school has tightened procedures. Staff follow up any unauthorised absences early each morning. A member of the school's support team visits any pupil whose attendance slips below acceptable levels. She helps the family to find solutions. The impact of this focus has been positive. Levels of attendance are now very high. This improvement, taken together with the positive outcomes of other development priorities, exemplifies the school's outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are given a good start to their education in the Reception classes. Parents commented that they were very pleased how quickly their children settle when they are first admitted. On entry to the Reception classes, children's skills are similar to those generally found. Excellent focused teaching and carefully conducted assessments enable children to make outstanding progress in the teacher-directed activities. Overall, though, their progress and achievement is good. This is because the Foundation Stage curriculum, though of good quality, at present does not ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the activities directed by the adults and those that the children choose for themselves. The classrooms and resources, both indoors and outside, are not organised sufficiently well to enable children to make these choices. Despite this, most attain the expected goals for children entering Year 1, and many exceed them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, for children in the Reception classes to choose activities for themselves.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fordingbridge Infant School, Fordingbridge, SP6 1HJ

I really enjoyed visiting your school. You were all extremely polite and keen to talk to me about your work and your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping me to find out about your school. Yours is an excellent school in almost all ways. Your headteacher, governors and all the staff are an excellent team and work really hard for your benefit. There are many outstanding things about your school. You make excellent progress and you told me that your lessons are really exciting. I agree because your teachers make sure that they give you interesting things to do. You love learning and school and you should be really proud of the way that you behave. You told me that your school is special because you feel safe and happy and you make sure that everyone else feels the same. I agree. You feel safe because the adults take really good care of you and look after you very well.

I have asked Mr Beales and the governors to do one thing. I have asked that more chances are given for the children in the Reception classes to choose activities for themselves. This will mean that there may need to be some changes in the way the classrooms are laid out, but Mr Beales already has some good plans about how he will do this.

Thank you once again for being so helpful to me.

With very best wishes for your future

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector