

# Forest Town Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	130255
<b>Local Authority</b>	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	315604
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roger Sadler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	284
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Gary Butcher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Gary Ineson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	Clipstone Road West Forest Town Mansfield Nottinghamshire NG19 0ED
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 477211
<b>Fax number</b>	01623 477211

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school is located in an area of some economic disadvantage and the proportion eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is average. There is a smaller than average proportion of pupils at an early stage of speaking English. The school has received the Gold Standard in the Healthy Schools Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the headteacher and other leaders have ensured that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Many children enter the Foundation Stage with levels of knowledge and skills below those expected nationally. They quickly settle in and make expected progress in the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 to 6 rates of progress have improved over the last year and pupils' work and school records indicate that pupils make sound progress. Although pupils are catching up to nationally expected levels, standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 remain below average. Few pupils attain above the standards expected of their ages, especially in mathematics where pupils are less aware of their targets. Staff accurately diagnose the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and these pupils also make satisfactory progress.

The quality of teaching and learning and care, guidance and support is satisfactory. The school has recently introduced a system to give pupils targets to aim at in their writing and mathematics. Pupils in some classes are beginning to see more clearly where they need to concentrate their efforts to improve their work, especially in their writing. In addition, some pupils are given checklists of what is expected and are directed to improve just one or two particular aspects of their work at a time. In these classes, pupils make good progress but school leaders have not ensured that these features of teaching and guidance are used effectively across the school as a whole.

The curriculum provides sound emphasis on pupils' personal development and is suitably enriched by visits and by external specialists, such as physical education and games coaches. The school has recently introduced daily lessons on letter sounds and this is resulting in improved confidence in reading and spelling. However, the curriculum is inadequate overall because pupils are given too little practice in writing at length and because teachers do not adopt a sufficiently consistent and progressive approach to teaching calculation and problem-solving skills in mathematics. The majority of parents and pupils are reasonably supportive of the school. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Behaviour is good overall, around school it is satisfactory and is consistently good in lessons. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility for helping the smooth running of the school and for helping other pupils. They make a strong contribution to the local community, for example, by regular involvement in charities. They feel safe in school, and feel confident that they can turn to any adult for support if they are worried about anything. The school's work towards the Healthy Schools Award has helped pupils clearly understand the importance of regular exercise and a healthy diet.

Monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory and the school has an accurate view of its own effectiveness. The deputy head has introduced a much improved and effective assessment system to monitor the progress of individuals and groups as they move through the school and this has been an important reason why many pupils are now learning at a faster rate. A lack of successful follow up by leaders, for example, by checking pupils' work, results in inconsistencies in aspects of teaching.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. A significant proportion of children enter the school with skills below those typical for their age. Good

procedures for introducing children to school help them settle quickly. Staff use assessment information well to provide suitable work for children. Because of the effective leadership of the recently appointed Foundation Stage manager, rates of progress are beginning to improve. Although in the past few pupils attained the expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage, more pupils are on track to meet these expectations this year. Pupils make particularly good progress in speaking and listening where children listen to others, talk confidently about their ideas and feelings and recount experiences they have had.

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

- Enable more pupils to attain standards above those expected for their ages, especially in mathematics.
- Improve the curriculum for writing and mathematics by providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and by ensuring that teachers adopt a common approach to teaching calculation and problem-solving skills.
- Ensure that leaders provide clear guidance and regular checks on teaching and learning to ensure that staff adopt a consistent approach.
- Ensure that teachers set specific and challenging targets for pupils in writing and mathematics and that pupils know exactly where and how to improve particular aspects of their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The school has placed good emphasis on improving English standards recently and this work is beginning to bear fruit. Standards of reading and spelling are rising in Years 1 to 3 in part due to the recently introduced effective daily teaching of letters and letter sounds. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to speak with partners or in small groups in lessons and make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. Pupils with learning difficulties are given carefully tailored additional support, often by teaching assistants, and they make satisfactory progress. Although more able pupils make sound progress, chances are missed to provide them with extra support and challenge. Consequently, too few pupils attain above levels expected for their ages, especially in mathematics.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory. Although cultural development is satisfactory, it is limited by a lack of first hand contact with pupils from other cultures or with other beliefs. There are sound procedures to ensure pupils attend regularly. Attendance is satisfactory, but the attendance levels of a few pupils are below average mainly because these families take holidays during term time. Pupils show a satisfactory level of enjoyment of school. Pupils are especially enjoying lessons relating to a writing project designed to improve boys' writing skills. Pupils behave well especially in lessons where work is interesting and where they are challenged. Pupils' satisfactory basic skills mean that most leave adequately prepared for life at secondary school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are best in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6. In other year groups, teaching and learning are mostly satisfactory. Behaviour is managed well in all classes and relationships are often good. In some classes, pupils are given reminders or short checklists of exactly where they should concentrate when working. These are used well at the end of lessons to review work and to identify gaps or the next stage in learning and this helps accelerate the progress pupils make. However, this practice is not used consistently across the school. In some classes, teachers' marking, especially in mathematics, does not provide sufficient guidance to pupils on which aspects they should concentrate on. Consequently, pupils lack a sufficiently clear idea of where or how to improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 4

The curriculum has a few good aspects such as the way it is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular clubs. The introduction of daily lessons on letter sounds is helping pupils improve their reading and spelling skills. However, it is inadequate overall because the school lacks a consistent approach to the progressive teaching of calculation and problem-solving skills in mathematics and this slows the progress of a few pupils. The curriculum provides insufficient emphasis on developing extended writing in English and other subjects. This slows the rate of progress in some aspects of writing, particularly in Years 3 and 4. An over-reliance on published worksheets in some classes limits the progress of higher-attaining pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Pupils' attainment and progress are effectively assessed and monitored as they move through the school. Assessment information is used well to provide additional support for pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Teaching assistants often provide good guidance to individual or small groups of pupils. Sometimes, when the teacher is talking to the whole class, they are not deployed fully effectively. Rather limited additional support or challenge is provided for higher attaining pupils. In some classes pupils show too little understanding of their learning targets and lack a clear understanding of which particular aspects of their work are most in need of improvement. Child protection procedures are in place and other procedures for pastoral care are effective.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 3

Over the last year the school has worked closely with the local authority to raise standards. Monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory and the school's improvement plan concentrates on appropriate priorities. Rates of progress are improving and standards, especially in writing and reading are rising. This indicates that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. However, the school lacks a clear and up-to-date policy on teaching and learning. Follow up checks to ensure a consistent approach are not effectively focused or rigorous. Inconsistencies

remain in, for example, how pupils are helped to assess their own work. Governors show a sound understanding of where improvements are needed and are developing their own ability to hold the school to account for its standards.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

25 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Forest Town Primary School, Mansfield, NG19 0ED

Thank you for making Mrs Harvey, Mr Wiggins and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers, and watching you learn. We think your school is properly run and is giving you a satisfactory education. We are pleased that many of you attend school regularly but one or two of you have too many days off. You enjoy the good range of clubs which the school arranges for you. Adults provide satisfactory teaching and care, guidance and support for you so that you make sound progress.

New children settle into your school happily and make expected progress in Nursery and Reception. We are pleased you understand about eating the right food and playing sports and games so you stay fit and healthy. This is important. Most of you behave well in lessons and your behaviour around school is satisfactory. Most of you know right from wrong, show enough consideration for others and are friendly and helpful to each other. We were pleased to see how older ones look after the younger ones, so keep up the good work! Those of you who find learning hard make sound progress because teachers and teaching assistants help you learn.

There are four things that we have asked your school to work on:

- Help more of you reach standards that are above those expected for your age, especially in mathematics.
- Help you write at length more often and make sure that teachers in all classes teach you your number work and how to solve problems.
- Help all teachers ensure that they are using the same ways to teach you.
- Help you know your targets and how to improve your work.

With very best wishes for the future.

Mr Sadler

Lead inspector