

7 March 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2018, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Forest Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents, carers, children and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We gathered evidence to evaluate the quality of leadership and management, learning and teaching and children's successes and achievements.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- Happy, articulate and creative children. They make the most of the motivating, and often exciting learning experiences on offer to them.
- The outstanding leadership and vision of the headteacher. Together with the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, she strives to ensure the best possible outcomes for every child.
- The inclusive and welcoming ethos, where diversity and equality of opportunity for all is celebrated. Children's views are valued and they have a genuine say in helping their school to grow and improve.
- The contributions that staff make, individually and as a team, to lead and develop the curriculum. This includes their participation in leading system-wide change across the Bailiwick.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and representatives from Education Services:

- Continue to share and embed best practice in learning, teaching and assessment across the staff team.
- Continue to develop children's ability to know themselves well as individuals, across all areas of their learning, their wellbeing and personal development.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *How good is our school?*¹

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Forest Primary School

Leadership of change	very good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	very good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	very good

What happens next?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvement. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this visit. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, Education Services will inform parents about the school's progress.

Lesley A Johnstone
HM Inspector

¹ *How good is our school?* (4th Edition) 2015 – [How Good Is Our School?](#)

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Education Scotland

Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330
E enquiries@educationscotland.gov.uk

www.education.gov.uk

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States of Guernsey
Education Services



Education
Scotland
Foghlam Alba

Summarised inspection findings

Forest Primary School

07 March 2018

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
 - Strategic planning for continuous improvement
 - Implementing improvement and change
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- Under the vision and outstanding leadership of the headteacher, Forest Primary School is a happy and inclusive school, where children come first. The headteacher has successfully created an ethos of teamwork where self-evaluation is central to the process of improvement and change. As a result, there is a strong commitment from staff to reflect on their practice, both individually and as a team, to ensure that the school continuously improves. The ever-developing bond between Forest Primary and Le Rondin Schools is mutually beneficial for adults and children alike. Commendably, the headteacher strives to ensure that both school communities make the most of this unique context for education in Guernsey. The strong sense of equality and the importance of celebrating diversity within society is an important strength of the school that is valued by all.
 - The headteacher demonstrates an inspirational model of leadership for leaders at all levels within the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. The deputy headteacher manages the day-to-day life of the school very effectively. He carefully tracks the progress of all children across the school, including children who require additional support for learning, through his thorough use of the school's management information system. Together, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed a range of effective approaches to monitor the quality of learning and teaching and the impact of improvement work across the life of the school. They give timely feedback to staff on their work, and take action to ensure any areas for development that are identified are followed up.
 - Key stage leaders provide valuable advice and guidance to their colleagues on developing the curriculum and in sharing whole-school approaches for learning, teaching and assessment. Their teaching is a model of best practice. Across the school, staff feel valued and they are encouraged to undertake leadership roles and to take part in working groups. As a result, all teachers lead developments in the curriculum, such as programmes for science, literacy and maths, as well as cross-cutting issues such as equality and diversity. Commendably, staff in Forest Primary School willingly share their skills and expertise to benefit all schools in the Bailiwick. Senior staff participate as island-wide assessment moderators and as leaders of the digital development of the Guernsey 'Big Picture' curriculum. Overall, staff make the most of the professional learning opportunities offered to them to continuously improve their practice.
 - Pupil voice is highly valued in Forest Primary School and there are many meaningful opportunities for children to influence their learning and the on-going work of the

school. Children's participation is a strong feature of school improvement. The well-organised system of class and whole-school councils give all children the chance to share their ideas and views on aspects of school life that affect them. Assemblies each week provide very good opportunities for children to collaborate in mixed-age 'family' groups, and to discuss the school values and what they mean to children. At all stages of the school, children take their role in school improvement seriously and they make sensible, well-considered suggestions for change. A team of pupil inspectors from the junior stages of the school recently carried out their own 'validation' visits to classes. They talk proudly of their involvement in this venture and thrived on the opportunity to be involved in school improvement in this way. During the inspection visit, an HM Inspector carried out a joint observation of a lesson with some pupil inspectors and was able to fully endorse the children's own evaluations of the learning and teaching that took place.

- The headteacher has plans in place to revisit and refresh the vision, values and aims of the school in partnership with staff, parents and children during the forthcoming 'mission week'. Parents, families and members of the wider community contribute in different ways to support the work of the school, for example, by raising significant funds, delivering the Guernsey French programme and assisting with Maths Passports. The school should continue to seek creative ways to involve parents and the wider community in school improvement processes.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- Learning and engagement
- Quality of teaching
- Effective use of assessment
- Planning, tracking and monitoring

- Across the school there are examples of highly effective learning and teaching, where children benefit from experiences of the highest quality. In these classes, the highly skilled staff use professional learning to inform and evaluate their practice. In addition, they use assessment information very effectively across all children's learning experiences, and make well-informed judgements during the course of lessons to maximise all learning opportunities.
- The high-quality learning is most consistently planned and delivered within literacy and maths. As a result, by the end of Year 6 children make very good progress in their learning. There is a need, as planned, to share the best in learning and teaching more widely across the staff team, to ensure that all children benefit from consistently high-quality learning experiences.
- Across the school, a child-centred approach is valued and understood by staff. The school's motto is to provide 'innovative, inclusive and inspirational' learning. Most learning experiences observed by inspectors were active and engaging for children. A blend of relevant contexts and pupil voice is used very well to direct and personalise learning. In addition, children are encouraged to make choices about their learning. As a result, children regularly and confidently create probing questions that motivate them to learn, sustains their interest and deepens their understanding.
- Working in pairs and trios, children have well planned opportunities to lead their learning. This process is well-embedded in practice from the Reception class through to Year 6. Moving forward, there is a need to ensure that all children have the opportunity to contribute to and lead within these co-operative approaches to learning. During observations, a number of children effectively took the lead in group work and directed the learning, whilst their partners/group members assumed a more passive role.
- Teachers use an appropriate range of learning environments in the classroom, across the school, the playground and the local community to plan learning. Of note, are those such as the recycling plant and the Reception class visit to the museum. These particular examples were planned as a result of children leading their learning and provided worthwhile opportunities for the development of more complex and higher order thinking.
- In literacy and maths, staff are skilled at observing children closely to plan interventions and respond to their understanding of taught concepts. Differentiation takes place through questioning techniques and varying tasks to meet the varying needs within the

class. In addition, the planning of targeted literacy and maths interventions takes place collaboratively with learning support assistants (LSAs). This approach works very well and effectively informs future learning. There is a need for teachers to revisit differentiation techniques and to apply appropriate and manageable strategies across children's learning.

- Well-developed assessments systems in place within literacy and maths support teachers and children very well. Teacher's plans are appropriately considered, children can demonstrate their knowledge and know themselves in learning. The blend of ongoing and periodic assessment is reliable and the moderation process ensures that staff are well supported in forming judgments. There is a need to ensure that assessment information in all classes in literacy and maths is used during the course of teaching more effectively, to support all children to make very good progress in their learning.
- The school has accurately evaluated the strengths and areas of improvement within learning and teaching. They are making very good progress in addressing their identified priority to improve further the reliability and effective use of assessment across learning. Older children are beginning to use learning conversations with key adults to understand themselves better as learners. Moving forward, staff should ensure that such learning conversations enable children to have a clear understanding of their progress and achievement across all areas of the school's vision for them as individuals. For example, their attitudes to learning, high aspirations, their health and wellbeing, participation in the community and respect for self and others.

2.2 Curriculum: theme 3 - learning pathways

- The staff team at Forest Primary School have enthusiastically embraced the new “big picture” curriculum. As early adopters of these new approaches, they have developed an appropriate rationale for their school curriculum, with the wholly appropriate aim to provide ‘innovative, inclusive and inspirational’ learning experiences for all children. At all stages of the school, there is clear evidence that children are developing as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- Staff appreciate the flexibility that the new curriculum guidance offers to plan relevant, motivating and exciting lessons and activities. Staff have reviewed class topics to ensure children learn about, and make the most of their local parish and island heritage. Partnerships and strong links with local groups help to enrich children’s experiences. For example, children benefit from working with the Sports Commission and Floral Guernsey as a key part of their school experience. At all stages, children benefit from visiting experts and specialists. They enjoy the stimulating, high-quality opportunities to learn music and Guernsey French as part of their core learning. All children benefit from learning to swim, making the most of the pool within their own school, and then applying their learning and skills during sea-swimming lessons during the summer months.
- Staff willingly lead and participate in working groups to audit and improve areas of the curriculum. As a small, one-form school, every teacher takes on responsibility as a subject leader. They collaborate very well to develop and build the curriculum in a cohesive way. Many staff lead professional learning sessions for colleagues to share good practice, for example, for literacy and maths. They share expertise with their colleagues in Le Rondin School, for example, to develop programmes for science and learning outdoors. Staff are making very good progress in embedding a progressive, skills approach to monitor children’s progress, for example, in science. They should continue to audit the knowledge and understanding that is taught in each curriculum area, in order to complement the well-understood skills approach.
- In keeping with their strong voice in the life of the school, children at all stages are given choice and personalisation in their learning. They are involved in choosing topics and generate their own questions that they would like to find out about as a result of ‘knowledge harvests’. They benefit from learning alongside children in Le Rondin School on shared topics and ventures throughout the school year.
- Children appreciate and clearly benefit from the variety of school clubs on offer to them. Senior leaders ensure that all children have the chance to participate in a club. Through trips, educational visits and residential experiences, out-of-school learning is helping children to develop important skills for life. Visitors into school also enhance children’s curricular experiences. For example, children in Year 6 enjoyed a presentation from Deputies on waste management in Guernsey. Visitors to the school also add value to children’s learning. Children in the Reception class relish the opportunity to read a story to Fred, the Pet Therapy dog; children were excited to meet the poet A F Harrold, who visited the school during ‘book week’.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. A very few areas for consideration and further development have been agreed with the school and Education Services.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- Wellbeing
- Fulfilment of statutory duties
- Inclusion and equality

- The health and wellbeing of all children is central to the life and work of the school. The close-knit, family ethos allows all staff to know all children very well as individuals. Overall, children demonstrate kindness and caring attitudes to one another. Older children look after and mentor younger ones. They lead clubs for younger children to take part in and have fun. Children who require additional support have appropriate interventions in place, for example, to help them make progress in literacy and maths. Children at all stages told us that they feel genuinely valued and included in the life and work of the school. The school is working very well with partners and parents to support the wellbeing of all children. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all parents told us they were happy with almost all aspects of school life. They found school leaders and teachers approachable and appreciated the welcoming, inclusive atmosphere. They appreciated the regular communication about their children's learning and development, and felt this was an area where they had seen improvement in recent years. They are confident that they can share any concerns they may have with the headteacher, and that their views are taken into account. Parents are keen for the school to have a high profile in the community. They would like to receive more information about how the school has attempted to increase partnerships with local businesses to enhance children's learning.
- Children are highly motivated to improve their own health. The whole school community benefits from participating in the 'daily mile' to start their school day with lively, sociable and fun physical activity. Through their significant work to gain the 'Healthy Schools Award', children at all stages can make the connection between the food they eat, where it comes from and the importance of a balanced diet. Older children can confidently talk about the energy they need to take part in sports, games and physical education. The programme for personal, social and health education ensures that children's learning, for example, about substance misuse, relationships, and the importance of staying safe on-line, is delivered in a progressive way.
- The calm, purposeful environment around the school helps to ensure that children enjoy learning and socialising together. Overall, children enjoy very positive and supportive relationships with their peers and with staff. In each class, children and their teachers agree class rules which clearly set out the expectations of all. Children told us that rewards help to motivate them to take responsibility for their own choices and actions. For example, gaining personal points and house points for their efforts. Through very well-embedded approaches to develop children's confidence, resilience and self-esteem, children at all stages have a 'can do' approach in classes. The fact that they feel listened to, and know that their views count, contributes greatly to their very

positive attitudes to their learning.

- School leaders are proactive in taking account of the principles of the States of Guernsey 'Children and Young People's Plan' as core business, and commendably, this is forefront in their improvement planning processes. The school should continue with their plans to further embed approaches to developing the social, mental and emotional wellbeing skills of children. Within this, a next step is to ensure children have a sound understanding of what it means for them to be: healthy and active; safe and nurtured; included and respected; and achieving their potential. This will provide them with the skills and a common language to articulate their own strengths and wellbeing needs, as they grow and develop, and progress from stage to stage throughout their school career.
- All children are included, engaged and involved in the life of their school. Regular professional learning opportunities for teaching and support staff to share expertise with their colleagues in Le Rondin School, helps them to identify any potential barriers to learning and to meet children's varying needs well. The school is inclusive of children who require additional support, including children with health needs and children who have English as an additional language. The school celebrates the diversity within its own community. Through learning alongside their friends in Le Rondin School, children at Forest Primary School are gaining an understanding of diversity and equality in a highly relevant, meaningful and well-managed way.
- The school collects a range of data relating to the needs of individual children and how these needs are being met, often in conjunction with partners. The headteacher and deputy headteacher use this data in a strategic and very well informed way, for example, in relation to evaluating the progress of children with additional support needs; vulnerable children; or children who may be disadvantaged by socio-economic circumstances. They take action to redress any instances of inequality that children or families may encounter. Children themselves play an important role in achieving fairness and equity. For example, they helped to come up with a fair way for children to celebrate their birthdays in school. Such approaches are helping to ensure that no child at Forest Primary School misses out.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy
- Attainment over time
- Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Equity for all learners

- The school has very high attendance rates, as confirmed by the School Attendance Service. Attainment data provided by the school shows that in 2017, by the end of Year 6, children made very good progress in literacy and maths. Triangulation during the inspection of attainment data with lesson observations, 'book looks' and lesson plans, shows that currently in Year 6, overall, children make very good progress. The school closely monitors children's progress at all stages of the school and has identified areas for development to improve children's progress further. (Since there is one class at each stage, it should be noted that one child equals 4+% when looking at attainment data.)
- From the school's own data for 2016 -2017, at the Early Years Foundation Stage, the majority (62%) of children achieved a 'Good' Level of Development including in literacy and maths. This was above the Bailiwick average. At Key Stage 1, most children made eight points, expected progress in reading (70.4%), writing (51.9%), and in maths (85.2%). This was below the Bailiwick average. A minority achieved ten points progress in reading (40%), writing (14.8%) and maths (25.9%). This was below the Bailiwick average. A minority attained L3 in reading (25.9%) and maths (14.8%) with a few in writing (7.4%) This is well below the Bailiwick average. From their ongoing assessment of children's learning, the school did not feel that these results were truly indicative of the attainment and progress of this cohort. As a result, the school has identified the priority to improve children's attainment in writing. In addition, staff have improved the reliability of assessment data through strengthening their monitoring and moderation processes. Their work in taking these action points forward is impacting positively on children's progress.
- At Key Stage 2, by the end of Year 6, children make very good progress in literacy and maths. Almost all (96%) achieved twelve points progress in reading and most achieved twelve points progress in writing (86.2%) and maths (82.8%) This is well above the Bailiwick average in reading and writing and above the bailiwick average in maths. The majority attained L5+ in reading (55.2%) and maths (51.7%) with a minority attaining L5+ in writing (37.9%). This is well above the Bailiwick average across these measures. Their progress is closely monitored and interventions are carefully planned to ensure that children's progress continues to improve. Development needs for children at an individual level, and at whole class level, are addressed through teachers' targeted monitoring and evaluation approaches.
- Improvement priorities, commendably, have recently focused on whole-school improvements to learning and teaching in writing and maths. Positive outcomes from

these actions include improvements in the quality and length of children's written texts; the range of genre explored by children; and importantly, increased opportunities for children to write for a real-life purpose. As a result, more children now make better progress; staff are more confident about assessment levels; and, there is an increase in the attainment of boys. In maths, school staff contribute to the development of island-wide approaches and share their expertise with colleagues on the developmental acquisition of mathematical concepts. As a result children's experiences in maths have improved. For example, concrete materials are used more regularly to reinforce mathematical concepts and scaffold learning.

- Across the school, there are examples of children making very good progress across their learning. In science, children in Reception class observed a simulated volcano eruption in the sandpit. They predicted the outcome of mixing bicarbonate of soda, water and vinegar. This complemented their exploration of dinosaur lifecycles and their feeding behaviours. At Year 3, children understand the concept of a fair test. They justify their predictions about potatoes sinking or floating in a salt water density science experiment. Impressively, a few children knew about the relationship between water molecules and buoyancy. Children record their learning in a large class exercise book which shows their learning in science very clearly throughout the year. At Year 4 children responded very positively to rhythmic patterns in music using instruments to keep the beat. In Year 1, children showed high levels of independence as they used their digital technology skills to log on to tablets to enhance their reading skills.
- In PE, children take part alongside staff in the Daily Mile. During this activity they have an opportunity to keep fit and speak to staff about a range of topics. At Year 2, children demonstrate their strength and creativity working in teams to create a sequence that demonstrates their gymnastic skills. A few children in the class attend gymnastics club after school and they confidently work collaboratively linking tucks, straight arch, straddles and bridges within their performance to the class. Children evaluate each other's learning and provide helpful feedback. Children in Year 6 develop essential swimming skills such as stroke technique, life-saving skills and recreate swimming in the sea. In art, children in Year 2 apply the techniques of the South African artist Mahlangu. They confidently use artists' tools to create patterns on clay pots that they designed and moulded. Children in Year 5 practise their Guernsey French speaking skills with the volunteers who visit the class. This is helping all children in this class to learn and appreciate the language which is an important part of the island's culture and heritage.
- Inspectors were able to endorse the impressive and wide ranging activities that children participate in across the school. The variety of activities available in the school enable all children to develop a range of skills and attributes. They participate and are successful in many island competitions. Family group assemblies, residential excursions, visits to the local community are a few of the opportunities that develop children's independence and team building skills. Children demonstrate high-quality performance skills through the outstanding school choirs, by giving whole school performances and through participation in the Eisteddfod and choral competitions. Raising money for charities and for school funds is a significant feature of the school. In addition, substantial funds raised at discos, the summer fair and sponsored events enabled the children to choose new equipment for the playground.

School choice of QI: 2.4 Personalised Support

- Universal support
 - Targeted support
 - Removal of barriers to learning
-
- Universal and targeted support for learning has a positive impact on children's experiences. A nurturing approach is evident throughout the school and embraced by staff. Universal and targeted support works most effectively in literacy and maths, with almost all children making very good progress in their learning in these subjects. Children with barriers to learning are identified at an early stage and well-planned interventions provide individualised pathways for progression. There are many examples of children benefiting from short-term interventions, for example, in reading, that enable them to overcome difficulties and make better progress.
 - Staff are very approachable and demonstrate an open-door policy for both children and their parents. They adapt their questions and instructions during the course of their teaching and children receive helpful verbal feedback on their work. Teachers encourage children to develop strategies to overcome challenges that they may experience in their learning, including a growth mindset approach and 'C3B4ME'. Praise is used effectively in classes and there is an overall consistent use of behaviour management through approaches such as personal rewards and house points.
 - Self-selecting challenges are available in a few areas of learning for children to extend their learning at their own level. Commendably, staff moderate children's choices and encourage them to set high expectations for themselves. 'Knowledge harvests' at the beginning of topics enable children to share their prior knowledge and staff to plan lines of development taking account of what children already know.
 - A next step is for staff to develop further their approaches to universal and targeted support across all areas of children's learning. This includes building on the strengths on differentiating learning in literacy and maths, to meet the range of needs in each class in other subject areas. Teachers should ensure that all learning takes full account of prior learning. For most children, lessons are brisk and delivered at an appropriate pace. At times, opportunities are missed to meet the needs of the most able children across the totality of their learning.

Particular strengths of the school

- Happy, articulate and creative children. They make the most of the motivating, and often exciting learning experiences on offer to them.
- The outstanding leadership and vision of the headteacher. Together with the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, she strives to ensure the best possible outcomes for every child.
- The inclusive and welcoming ethos, where diversity and equality of opportunity for all is celebrated. Children's views are valued and they have a genuine say in helping their school to grow and improve.
- The contributions that staff make, individually and as a team, to lead and develop the curriculum. This includes their participation in leading system-wide change across the Bailiwick.

Agreed areas for improvement

- Continue to share and embed best practice in learning, teaching and assessment across the staff team.
- Continue to develop children's ability to know themselves well as individuals, across all areas of their learning, their wellbeing and personal development.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvement. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this visit. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, Education Services will inform parents about the school's progress.

Education Scotland

Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330
E enquiries@educationscotland.gov.uk

www.education.gov.scot

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