

# Limes Farm Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	114932
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	378964
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Norma Ball

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	118
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sonia Barnard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sophia Pardalis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2008
<b>School address</b>	Limes Avenue Chigwell IG7 5LP
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 85007566
<b>Fax number</b>	020 85007566
<b>Email address</b>	admin@limesfarm-jun.essex.sch.uk

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<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	19–20 January 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378964



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Norma Ball

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited eight lessons including one small teaching group withdrawn from class, taught by a total of six teachers. The inspector made visits to classes to look at displays and observe individual pupils and groups at work, and to listen to pupils read. Parents and carers were met informally during the inspection. Meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, members of the governing body and pupils also took place during the inspection. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, and documentation relating to management, curriculum and safeguarding. In addition, the inspector took account of responses to questionnaires from 55 parents and carers, 18 staff and 107 pupils.

## Information about the school

Limes Farm is a smaller-than-average junior school. Just over half of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and the rest are from a variety of other heritages. The number of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. An above-average proportion of pupils has special educational needs or disabilities of which most are moderate learning difficulties. The school has met the current government floor standard for academic performance.

The school has achieved National Healthy School status. The governing body manages the breakfast club but not the multi-skills after-school club which shares the school site and is subject to a separate inspection.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

### Key findings

- Limes Farm provides a good quality of education for all pupils. Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and for those for whom English is an additional language is well planned and flexible and so meets their needs well.
- All pupils make good progress from their individual starting points and attainment at the end of Year 6 is average and has improved over the past three years.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils work well and are enthusiastic about their learning. Pupils’ work is marked regularly but marking does not always make clear how to improve a piece of work, what pupils need to do next, or encourage them to reply to teachers’ comments.
- Pupils’ progress is tracked carefully through the school. Progress information is used effectively by teachers to plan interesting lessons that engage and motivate pupils but challenge for pupils of higher ability is inconsistent.
- Behaviour is typically good and pupils feel safe in school. The school has a happy and harmonious ethos.
- Teaching and the curriculum have a positive impact on pupils’ spiritual, moral social and cultural development.
- The headteacher gives the school ambitious and committed leadership. Leaders and managers have accurately evaluated the school’s performance and have implemented initiatives which have succeeded in accelerating pupils’ progress and improving achievement.
- A very large majority of parents and carers are satisfied or very satisfied with all aspects of their children’s experience of school, including pupils’ behaviour.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by ensuring teachers use assessment information to provide consistently challenging activities for pupils of higher ability.
- Improve the quality of teaching further by ensuring that marking always shows pupils what they need to do to improve their work, what is required to meet the next step in their learning, and gives pupils an opportunity to respond to teachers’ comments.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' academic achievement is good. Pupils enter the school with a variety of skills and some are below or well below expectations on entry. They make good progress as shown in the school's own tracking information, in pupils' books and in lessons. Attainment has improved steadily over the past three years. At the end of Year 6 it is now average and inspection evidence indicates it is improving. Pupils make better progress in mathematics than English but this gap is closing as a result of carefully selected strategies to improve pupils' attainment in writing. Pupils' good attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to their good achievement. They settle to their tasks quickly and work with enthusiasm because they find their lessons interesting and learning moves at a good pace. The successful use of discussion partners and the encouragement for pupils to assess for themselves how well they are learning adds to the quality of lessons and facilitates good progress. Pupils are articulate and enjoy sharing their ideas. The progress made by girls in English has improved as a result of a careful focus on storytelling and the use of subjects and themes that engage and captivate their imagination as well as that of boys. Pupils enjoy writing and settle quickly to their independent tasks after lively whole-class discussions. Reading skills are good because they are regularly monitored and assessed in all classes. Pupils appreciate the good range of reading books from which they can select a new reading book.

In mathematics pupils skills in problem-solving have improved and as a result their progress in mathematics is good. Pupils' progress is tracked accurately through the school. This information is used very effectively to plan tasks that motivate and challenge the majority of pupils but opportunities are sometimes missed in all classes to offer full challenge to the most able and accelerate their progress further. The needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are quickly and accurately assessed. A range of flexible and effective support, in and out of class, ensures that they too make good and sometimes better progress from their individual starting points. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well because they are sensitively supported in lessons and often have a buddy assigned to help them settle in school and make friends. Confidence in language skills and mathematics is developed progressively and well for these pupils. In one small group of Year 5 and 6 pupils working outside of the class, well-planned and exciting tasks in mathematics engaged and enthused pupils and reinforced their number skills so that they were able to participate confidently later in the class lessons. Parents and carers of all pupils, who expressed a view, are justifiably pleased with the progress their children make.

### Quality of teaching

Pupils and their parents and carers are pleased with teaching, a view supported by the inspector. One pupil, typical of many, said, 'I really like my school because they teach us a lot and teachers spend a lot of time planning fun lessons'. Teachers are successful in planning lessons that capture the interest of pupils so they are keen to

learn. The purpose of lessons is explained, clear expectations are set for attention and effort, and pupils respond very positively. Interesting tasks are set based upon teachers' good subject knowledge and their understanding of the progress that pupils are making. In a mixed Year 3 and 4 English lesson, boys and girls were equally enthusiastic about their writing task to use interesting words to capture the character of the 'Iron Man', after reading the story. Their discussion and independent writing was lively but also had a sensitive respect for the character and the feelings of fear, anger and other social and moral emotions that could be evoked. Teachers take good opportunities to develop pupils social, moral, spiritual and cultural development as in a Year 4 geography lesson where a study of soil and rocks extended to land use and the effect on local people and their lifestyle.

Teachers plan carefully for the extension of pupils' reading, writing, mathematical and technology skills in themed topics. The eco-warriors theme, for example, links history and geography with literacy, mathematical data-collection and analysis using computers, and a very practical litter-collection task in the local area. Pupils are encouraged to mark their own work and that of their classmates and they do so carefully and tactfully, showing an awareness of the feelings of others. Teachers mark work regularly but there are variations in all classes in identifying succinct development points for pupils to help them improve a piece of work. At times, insufficient attention is given to linking marking with the targets that are carefully set for pupils in English and mathematics to identify the next steps in their learning. Although pupils' independence is encouraged in their own assessment of how well they are doing, opportunities are occasionally missed to encourage them to enter a dialogue with their teachers on their marked work and how they are improving it.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. School data and the comments of pupils indicate a significant improvement in behaviour as a result of a whole-school focus and the integration of a revised behaviour policy. A few pupils can present challenging behaviour but this is well managed by staff. Pupils are clear that their learning is not interrupted because of poor behaviour and playtimes are happy and sociable. Pupils work well together and show respect and kindness to each other and to all adults. During the inspection a number of pupils were consulted about behaviour and bullying because of the negative response to this section of the questionnaire survey by some pupils. They were unanimous in stating that the school was a happy place, they were not affected by bullying and they felt safe and secure in their school. One pupil said, 'Yes people can get a bit silly at times but our teacher soon sorts it out. It isn't a problem.'

Attendance has improved rapidly to average levels as a result of the sustained and systematic approach to encouraging prompt and regular attendance at school. The careful monitoring of attendance, rapid follow-up of any concerns, and the use a wide range of popular incentives have all played a significant part in this success.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher and senior team are at the heart of the improvement in the school's work. They lead with enthusiasm and energy and show a united drive and ambition.

Leaders monitor provision regularly and thoroughly through classroom observations, learning walks and work and lesson-planning scrutiny. Clear points for development, both for individual teachers and generally for the whole staff, are identified and followed up to ensure improvements are made. The development of non-core subjects is improving through a team approach that extends pupils' basic skills across the curriculum. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies sharply the priorities for improvement that are driving the school forward. There is a strong capacity for further improvement.

The governing body, some of whose members are relatively new to their role, is supportive. Members visit the school regularly and are taking prudent steps to improve their skills and are now able to offer increasingly effective challenge to senior leaders and managers. They have been rigorous in establishing comprehensive arrangements to ensure pupils' safeguarding and their health and safety. Regular reviews of safety are carried out and all policies are securely integrated through the school. They are playing a greater part in strategic planning and review critically with senior managers the progress and attainment of pupils.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a wealth of experiences for pupils of all abilities. Carefully selected strategies to improve achievement in English and mathematics are proving successful because they are rigorously monitored to ensure they are effective. Pupils confirm that the school offers them a good range of learning experiences, including a wide range of clubs and an interesting variety of visits and visitors. Equality of opportunity is promoted well for all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language. All pupils are known and valued as individuals. The curriculum makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development alongside the extension of their academic skills. The effect of this is well exemplified by pupils' good behaviour, co-operative work in class and recognition of the needs and feelings of others in their school and beyond. Parents and carers are also encouraged to participate by sharing their skills, or information about their cultural heritages. Pupils and their parents and carers value their learning experiences and have a clear perception of their safety in school. Their links with the school have improved with regular progress reports and consultation evenings each term as well as informal social and curriculum-related events.

## 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](http://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.**



23 January 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Limes Farm Junior School, Chigwell, IG7 5LP**

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for being so polite and helpful. I enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and hearing some of you read. Several of you told me how pleased you were with the fencing around the playground and how safe you feel in school.

I was impressed to see how much you enjoy your lessons, and you told me you found learning fun because teachers make your lessons interesting. You get on together and behave well. You know a lot about being safe and healthy. I found that you make good progress in your time at Limes Farm and you are well cared for by all adults. Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body work well together to make your school a happy place in which to learn.

You told me you thought Limes Farm was a good school and I agree with you. I have suggested two things which would help to make your school even better.

- I have asked your teachers to make sure that when they plan your lessons they always give you work that is not too easy but really makes you think hard, especially those of you who find learning easier.
- So that you are very clear about how you can improve your work and know what you have to learn next I have asked your teachers to mark your work clearly with points to help you improve. I have also asked them to link these points to your targets in English and mathematics, and to encourage you to reply to their comments.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and doing your best at school. It was a great pleasure to visit Limes Farm and I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball  
Lead inspector

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