

Loughton Manor First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131348
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	341133
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Duggan
Headteacher	Elizabeth Bancroft
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2007
School address	Paynes Drive Milton Keynes MK5 8FA
Telephone number	01908 241472
Fax number	01908 242085
Email address	loughtonp@milton-keynes.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Observations included 21 lessons taught by nine members of staff. Meetings were held with pupils, the governing body and staff. Inspectors looked at governors' minutes, curriculum plans and assessment documents. The questionnaires returned by 76 parents and carers, and 20 staff were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The accuracy of the school's view that pupils' learning and progress are outstanding.
- The attainment of more-able pupils.
- The effectiveness of feedback to pupils during lessons.

Information about the school

Loughton Manor First School is a large infant school that serves a suburb of Milton Keynes. Around two thirds of the pupils are of White British heritage, with the remainder being from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language and 10% of all pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils find learning difficult. There are a small number of pupils with visual or hearing impairment. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has Healthy Schools status, the Active and Quality marks, the Arts Mark Gold and is an Investor in People.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Loughton Manor Infant School provides an outstanding quality of education. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive. One commented, 'I have had nothing but positive and pleasing experiences with this school, not just for my children's education, but also friendship and support for the entire family through often difficult personal times.' The school's success in both supporting children's learning and reaching out to their families and the wider community was a recurrent theme in parents' comments, reflecting its highly effective promotion of community cohesion.

Pupils make rapid progress because of highly effective teaching, underpinned by thorough assessment of learning and an outstanding curriculum. They thrive in the Nursery and Reception classes and are very well prepared for subsequent work in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, their attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers and support staff are extremely good at ensuring that all pupils achieve very well, whatever their starting points. The help for pupils who find learning difficult and for those with visual or hearing impairment is exemplary.

As the result of excellent care, guidance and support, pupils develop into confident and independent learners who get on very well with each other and apply themselves diligently to all aspects of school life. Their behaviour is outstanding and this contributes significantly to their learning and progress. Pupils demonstrate a high degree of trust in the staff and move around with the confidence that comes from feeling thoroughly safe and secure. The school has developed excellent relationships with parents and carers. They are warmly welcomed as they accompany their children into school each morning.

The staff team work exceptionally well together under the inspired and dedicated leadership of the headteacher. Routines are very well established and the strength of the team's drive and ambition is most evident in the highly stimulating learning environment it has created. Staff are constantly looking at different ways of stimulating and developing children's learning. A drive to ensure that the more-able pupils fulfil their potential in mathematics has borne fruit. Staff are now, rightly, intent on boosting all pupils' confidence in using their numeracy skills to tackle mathematical problems. Children's outdoor learning is promoted exceptionally well throughout the year and the school is proud of its reputation as a 'muddy school'. All pupils have wellingtons on hand every day in order to make the most of the extensive outdoor facilities.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is excellent. The governing body is extremely well informed and highly supportive of the school. It challenges the school through its monitoring of pupils' progress and ensures that management systems are robust. Development planning builds very well on the priorities identified in the school's highly accurate self-evaluation.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend pupils' confidence in applying their numeracy skills in different contexts, by:
 - sharpening their instant recall of essential number facts
 - helping pupils to identify where this knowledge can be used to solve mathematical problems quickly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils enjoy lessons, are eager to learn and work hard. As a result, they achieve very well and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. This was fully supported by observations of work in lessons and pupils' books during the inspection. Pupils read well and use their developing vocabulary when writing. When re-telling a story, for example, Year 1 pupils used 'fierce', 'selfish' and 'discouraged' in their descriptions of a wolf. Year 2 pupils rose to the challenge of solving mathematical problems requiring two calculations. Although they were successful, the speed of their calculations was slowed as they were not able to instantly recognise basic number bonds, such as $6+4$ and $7+3$, and apply this knowledge to solving, for example, $60+40$ and $17+3$. Pupils have good skills in art. They use colour boldly and are imaginative in their use of materials to create dramatic collages. Every pupil in Year 2 is learning to play a musical instrument and they demonstrated good techniques and confident musicality as they enthusiastically practised the violin, cello and brass instruments.

Pupils who find learning difficult make outstanding progress due to the careful analysis of their needs, consistently effective support and meticulous monitoring of their progress. Pupils with visual or hearing impairment are often among the highest attainers due to the exemplary way staff enable them to take a full part in lessons. Pupils at an early stage of learning English progress rapidly due to intensive support. Their progress in reading is often exceptional.

Pupils are polite, tolerant of each other and appreciative of others' skills and efforts. Pupils' very secure knowledge about the importance of keeping safe and healthy is reflected in the Healthy Schools status and Active Mark. They learn how to deal with potentially unsafe situations and have a good grasp of internet safety. During discussions with inspectors, they explained the importance of exercise and a balanced diet. Pupils have a strong voice within the school. This was evident during an assembly when the school council offered their opinions and took suggestions for improvement. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of their school community and the local area. The choir performs regularly for senior citizens and appears at the local shopping mall. Playing and learning alongside children from many different backgrounds, pupils develop a strong sense of cultural diversity. Pupils are eager to attend school. Absences are mostly the result of early childhood ailments.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Excellent relationships underpin the high-quality learning and teaching. Lessons are imaginative, vibrant and full of pace. The curriculum is designed imaginatively to engage pupils and ensure they build on their previous learning, at the same time having fun. For example, reading 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' prompted work in Year 2 on sequencing stories and the geographical features of the seaside, and pupils created seascapes in various media, including computer graphics. Year 1 pupils were fascinated as they played with an extensive range of toys on loan from the local toy museum. The impact of this first-hand experience on pupils' historical knowledge and scientific understanding was evident as they commented on the lack of buttons and batteries, the absence of plastic and how the toys moved due to various forces or friction.

A key feature of lessons is the involvement of pupils in evaluating their own learning and progress. They are given frequent feedback during lessons about how well they are doing and how to improve their work. The needs of every pupil are well known to all the staff and pupils' personal development is at the heart of everything the school does. Every opportunity is taken to celebrate progress and build pupils' self-esteem. The response to any pupil showing the slightest sign of falling behind is prompt and effective. The support for pupils, who because of their circumstances might potentially be at risk, is outstanding. Group work is especially well planned, with highly skilled teaching assistants supporting learning exceptionally well. One-to-one support for individuals is equally effective. This

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was exemplified as a teaching assistant, who had trained herself in using a braille machine, translated mathematical problems into braille, provided specially designed counters and enabled a severely visually impaired pupil to take a full part in the lesson.

Pupils themselves demonstrate a high level of consideration for others in their sensitive interaction and genuine affection for pupils with such challenging disabilities. Their physical, spiritual and social development is promoted extremely well by an extensive range of enrichment activities, including visits and visitors and a wide variety of clubs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Central to the school's improvement is an excellent programme of staff development, in which each member is enabled to take responsibility and expand their range of skills. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate and planning for improvement is measured and thoughtful. Information about how well pupils are progressing is used to set suitably challenging targets for attainment, with the headteacher and staff ever eager to maintain the pace of improvement. The school promotes equality of opportunity for all and eliminates all types of discrimination highly effectively.

Governors visit the school regularly to follow up initiatives and discuss trends in pupils' progress with senior staff. This enables the governing body to contribute very effectively to planning for improvement and evaluating the quality of provision. Policies to ensure that pupils are safe are followed precisely and consistently. The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. Twenty nine languages are spoken by pupils' parents and carers, and the school provides first-class support for them. The availability of day-long care for Nursery children is much appreciated by parents. Events, such as the recent 'One World' day, contribute much to community cohesion and to pupils' understanding of different cultures.

Excellent use is made of support agencies. The school also benefits from extensive partnerships with local businesses, such as the 20 volunteers from a bank who help to maintain the grounds. The school's outreach activities are many and varied. The headteacher and all senior staff frequently contribute to courses for teachers and trainees. Valuing and responding to views of parents and carers is a key element in realising the school's vision for building a lifelong love of learning in a safe and happy school. Open-minded and honest communications with a range of stakeholders and partners is a significant strength. Parents' views are considered carefully. Through questionnaires and a 'graffiti feedback' board, for example, they expressed their ideas about the provision of

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day care. There is a flourishing parent-friends' association and many parents provide valuable support during the school day.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Nursery with skills and understanding that are below the levels expected for their age. Induction processes are exemplary. This means children feel safe and happy as they start. They love coming to school and display high levels of engagement within the stimulating learning environment. They make good progress and, by the end of Reception, levels of attainment are above those expected.

Nursery children soon develop a good level of independence as they choose from a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. Adults are always on hand to encourage children's social, language and mathematical skills as they tackle tasks such as wrapping presents or sequencing numbers. In the class 'Christmas Post Office', Reception children were absorbed in role play as they made stamps, wrote addresses and sorted letters. Again, they were very well supported by the adults who asked pertinent questions that promoted children's thinking and learning. A focus on letters and sounds provides a secure basis for developing children's early reading and writing skills.

Children's safety is paramount, but they are offered plenty of opportunities for appropriate risk taking and adventurous play, supported by skilled adults, particularly in the extensive outdoor area. This includes sheltered areas, play houses, gazebos and a mature copse for 'forest school' activities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage unit seamlessly blends Nursery and Reception and means that staff become familiar to all children from both year groups. All staff contribute to the regular recording of children's progress and monitoring outcomes. The leader of the

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Early Years Foundation Stage keeps the provision under continuous review, identifies areas for further improvement and provides an excellent role model for colleagues.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Almost all questionnaires were entirely positive in their views of the school. All parents felt their children enjoyed school and were happy with their children's overall experience. Individual concerns were expressed by two parents but they did not reflect the general view or the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Loughton Manor First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 76 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 221 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	76	18	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	80	14	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	63	26	34	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	66	24	32	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	57	75	18	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	64	25	33	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	66	26	34	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	45	59	27	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	58	28	37	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	53	32	42	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	59	27	36	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	49	64	23	30	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	68	22	29	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Loughton Manor First School, Milton Keynes, MK5 8FA

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed watching you work and play happily together. You get on well with one another and with all the adults.

The school is providing you with an outstanding education. You told us that you really enjoy learning because your teachers make sure you have many exciting things to do. Inspectors agree that this is the case. We were very impressed with how everyone has their say in helping to improve the school. We enjoyed your lovely singing and saw how much progress the string and brass players had made in such a short time.

The adults care for you extremely well and help you if you have problems. Those in charge of the school are working really hard to make it even better. They have some really good ideas that they share with other schools. We agree with the adults that, in order to make your school even better, they should help you become quicker at working out mathematical problems. You can help by practising and remembering which numbers add up to 10, so you do not even have to think when someone asks what 6 and 4 or 7 and 3 make, for example. This will help you when you add bigger numbers such as 16 and 14.

We hope you have an enjoyable holiday and come back to school ready to continue trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton

Lead inspector

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