

Foxdell Infant School

Dallow Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 1TG

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have maintained the school's overall effectiveness. They have also made some successful improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' achievements across the school.
- Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points, particularly in reading and writing.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils in Year 2 working at greater depth from each starting point was at or above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of Year 1 in the phonics screening check has risen. In 2017, it was broadly in line with the national average.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides stimulating experiences that enable pupils to learn well across a range of subjects.
- The pupils want to learn. With few exceptions, they behave well in lessons and around school. They have good relationships with adults and each other.
- The quality of provision in the early years is a strength. Children achieve well from their starting points and are suitably prepared for Year 1.
- Staff support those who speak English as an additional language exceptionally effectively. Adults provide a language-rich environment, and pupils have many opportunities to discuss their learning throughout the school day.
- Leaders use a range of effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance. Although some of these have proved successful, pupils' attendance remains below the national average and requires further improvement.
- Teachers do not deploy teaching assistants as skilfully as they could in subjects other than English and mathematics. This slows some pupils' learning and progress in these lessons.
- Leaders have an accurate view of what the school needs to do to improve. However, school improvement priorities are not reliably communicated so that staff and governors can contribute even more effectively.
- Governors do not have a clear enough understanding of pupils' achievement to hold leaders fully to account for the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress further by:
 - using additional adults more precisely across all subjects so that pupils who require extra help and support can make good progress in non-core subjects
 - ensuring that pupils' attendance consistently improves and is more in line with the national average.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management further by:
 - Ensuring that leaders communicate their improvement plans more clearly, and in a more timely manner, so that all staff, governors and the wider school community fully understand what the school's priorities are and how they can contribute to them
 - governors providing rigorous challenge to school leaders, holding leaders fully to account for their work and for the progress made by different groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and other leaders have continued to improve the quality and consistency of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection. Pupils are making better progress as a result. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a strong capacity to continue to improve even further.
- Leaders provide effective additional adult support to ensure that pupils make the best individual progress and closely monitor the effect of this support, particularly in English and mathematics. If planned interventions prove unsuccessful in accelerating pupils' progress, they are replaced with alternatives.
- Leaders offer a stimulating curriculum, which is rich in building pupils' language skills and provides pupils exciting ways to learn. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and want to achieve well. Pupils told inspectors that they learn to 'grow our brains'.
- Subject leaders for English, mathematics and science use a consistent approach to check that teaching is effective and that pupils make sufficient progress. They check the accuracy of teachers' assessment and the quality of learning that is offered to pupils of different abilities. Subject leaders provide relevant and high-quality staff training to all members of staff.
- Leaders use additional pupil premium funding precisely. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from a range of strategies to improve attendance, welfare and learning, which is proving effective. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the same opportunity to attend after-school sports clubs as their peers and receive learning support to help fill gaps in their understanding. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have introduced new approaches to teaching mathematics and handwriting across the school in order to accelerate pupils' progress. These plans have been introduced this academic year and their impact has yet to be fully assessed. However, early evidence is suggesting that the school's chosen approaches are proving successful.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively to provide pupils with an extensive range of activities. Pupils enjoy these additional physical activities and attend them well both during and beyond the school day. The funding has also been used to improve staff's ability and confidence to teach PE.
- Leaders ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported suitably within their classrooms and have access to the same learning as their classmates. The SEN co-ordinator focuses effectively on meeting the needs of individual pupils. The funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used suitably to provide targeted teaching, which is helping these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively in lessons, in assembly and during playtimes. Pupils know that there is a value of the month and a language of the month, which are celebrated across the school. The

influence of famous people is celebrated. Pupils confidently share experiences about their own cultural backgrounds with their classmates. Consequently, they are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are committed to continuing to improve the school. They have identified appropriate priorities and have produced credible plans. However, they do not share these plans clearly enough, so actions are not undertaken as swiftly as they could be. Other members of the school community, including staff, governors, parents and carers, do not fully understand how they can support and contribute to leaders' priorities. This slows the pace of some of the school's improvements.
- Leaders and governors do not ensure that the expected information is available on the school's website within the time frames required. At the time of inspection, many statutory documents had only recently become available online. Information for parents about what will be taught to all pupils in all subjects in the curriculum each term is not readily available.
- Leaders provide a breakfast club. Pupils of all ages can attend this provision, and inspectors saw them playing respectfully together after enjoying the healthy food options available. Leaders ensure that, when required, some pupils receive an effective start to their school day and attend more regularly as a result. The local authority provides 'light-touch' support for this good school and recognises the school's strengths.

Governance of the school

- Many members of the governing board are new to their role this academic year. Currently, they are working with leaders to find effective ways to offer pupils a consistently good standard of education throughout the school and as they move into the neighbouring junior school.
- Governors are supportive of leaders and recognise that leaders offer pupils a secure learning environment, with high expectations of behaviour.
- Governors do not, however, have a clear enough understanding of the attainment and progress that different groups of pupils make, including those who are disadvantaged. Consequently, governors do not provide robust enough challenge to hold the school's leaders fully to account for pupils' achievement. They have organised an external review of governance to identify how this area of leadership and management can be improved.
- Governors do not consistently set expected timescales for documents to be completed, nor for tasks to be undertaken. Actions are, at times, left incomplete for lengthy periods and this impacts on leaders' further effectiveness.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff training for child protection is regular and up to date, as are all safety arrangements. Newly appointed staff and all volunteers receive a thorough induction so

that they understand their responsibilities for keeping children safe. Adults know what to do if they have any concerns about pupils.

- Pupils feel safe. Parents and staff who responded to surveys agree that pupils are kept safe in school.
- Leaders are vigilant in checking the suitability of any adult who is likely to work with the pupils. Records are kept meticulously. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure that the safety and well-being needs of all pupils are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been maintained and continues to improve since the previous inspection. This is because leaders have ensured that there is consistency in the quality of practice across each year group. Pupils have well-established routines and enjoyable learning experiences. As a result, pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Staff know pupils very well. They have supportive relationships with pupils and strive to find different ways of offering new learning to them. Consequently, pupils enjoy their activities. They told inspectors that learning is best when it is 'active and fun'.
- Staff use subject-specific vocabulary and successfully encourage pupils to use it too. Pupils develop their use of language exceptionally well, particularly those pupils for whom English is an additional language, in a strong language-rich environment. At playtime, staff take every opportunity to encourage pupils to explain their play and their environment.
- Teachers use reading opportunities across the curriculum effectively to enable pupils to develop reading skills. The school's approach to combining different subjects is proving effective. For example, inspectors saw pupils purposefully using their writing, computing and art skills together to design their internet safety posters.
- Leaders provide support and challenge to teachers to ensure that assessments of pupils' achievements are accurate. When pupils do not achieve or exceed their individual targets, teachers are held suitably to account to demonstrate the progress pupils make over time. Consequently, teachers use the information they have effectively to plan and to ensure that they set work at the right level to enable all pupils to learn and make good progress.
- Pupils are invited to attend clubs after school. Many of these additional clubs are planned to support pupils' identified learning needs. Pupils enjoy attending and have effectively made progress in their learning by doing so. Leaders constantly seek new ways of supporting individual needs and review their provision regularly and critically.
- Teaching assistants are used skilfully to support pupils' learning during English and mathematics lessons. They often work with individuals and groups of pupils to ensure that they make good progress in lessons and over time.
- During other lessons for non-core subjects, teaching assistants are not consistently deployed to make the best use of their skills in supporting pupils' progress. As a result, some pupils who require additional support do not make as much progress as they should across all subjects in the curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident learners. They are enthusiastic about their learning and answer questions willingly, using appropriately technical and accurate vocabulary.
- Pupils are respectful and show consideration towards adults and each other. They shared with inspectors that 'being different is OK'. Pupils easily demonstrate that diversity in school is celebrated.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They are taught how to stay safe physically and when using online technology. Pupils with the roles of 'digital leaders' take their duties very seriously and ensure that e-safety remains a high priority in all classes.
- Pupils are confident that staff will act swiftly and appropriately if there are any behaviour or bullying incidents. Inspectors scrutinised records and found that there were no recorded incidents of racism in recent years.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils generally demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. Their presentation of work is of a consistently good standard in all subjects.
- Pupils play well together and care for each other independently of adult support. The vast majority of parents, pupils and staff agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils are polite and respectful around the school and during lessons. They follow established routines easily and willingly. Occasionally they need reminders to remain positive when the pace of learning in lessons slows.
- Attendance has been below the national average for the last three years. In 2017, it improved significantly but remained below the national average, particularly for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average for all pupils and is higher than attendance for any other group of pupils in the school.
- Family workers visit pupils' homes if they do not know why pupils are absent, and rewards are given to the families of pupils whose attendance improves. Breakfast club is offered to those whose attendance is low or for those who are not punctual.
- Leaders acknowledge that even further work with parents is required so that all groups of pupils attend school regularly right from when children start in the early years.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children in the early years start school with knowledge, skills and use of the English language that are below those typically found nationally for children of a similar age.

- Pupils make strong progress in all areas from their different starting points, particularly in reading and writing. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers, while disadvantaged pupils make greater progress and are working in line with others in their classes. This is because individual needs are carefully considered and provision is designed appropriately to meet these needs.
- The proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the nationally expected standards has continued to rise over time. Published data for all pupils does not recognise the progress made by pupils who joined the school in Years 1 or 2, often from very low starting points.
- In mathematics, at the end of Year 2 in 2017, middle-ability children did not quite reach expectations compared with the same group of pupils nationally. Leaders have identified this as a priority, and current pupils of all abilities are making effective progress. Inspectors saw evidence of pupils' strong progress in books and in lessons.
- The most able pupils make very good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently in 2017, from their respective starting points, pupils in Year 2 met or surpassed the national average for reaching greater depth in these subjects.
- The majority of Year 1 pupils have achieved the expected standard in the national phonics screening check for the last two years. This demonstrates a significant improvement. Pupils use correct technical vocabulary to discuss their understanding and use of sounds in lessons and group activities.
- The teaching of reading is consistently good across the school and enables pupils to develop their reading skills swiftly. Consequently, most pupils now read fluently and confidently by the time they leave the school.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is good and is a strength of the school. Leadership is effective and staff provide suitable learning activities which enthuse children's curiosity and develop an enjoyment in learning.
- Early years staff work well with parents and communicate with parents about their children's personal development and learning. Key workers build positive relationships with parents and children right from the start of children's education. Consequently, all children make good progress from their different starting points.
- Staff use questioning strategies precisely to encourage children to think about their learning and apply their skills. Children develop confidence in the early years because staff encourage them to demonstrate their independence skills as soon as they are ready to try. Children demonstrate a willingness to persevere with tasks even when there is no adult helping.
- Staff share good practice and are suitably trained regardless of whether they are teachers or assistants. Children receive consistent and technically accurate teaching. The least able children make academic progress that is in line with their classmates over time.
- Leaders precisely match individual activities to support the development of disadvantaged children and make effective use of additional funding. For example, they

provide additional opportunities for these children to read in class to help reduce any differences between these children and their peers.

- Phonics is taught consistently well by all practitioners. Children are questioned effectively in this area of learning, and staff's high expectations mean that an increasing number of children are working at levels above those typical for their age. However, children working at the higher levels do not have sufficient opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding at a deeper level.
- Too many children in this provision do not attend school regularly enough and as a result do not benefit from all the teaching that the school offers.
- The early years leader has an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement in the provision. She is constantly looking for ways to improve the provision further. Consequently, children's development in the early years has improved since the last inspection.
- Staff ensure that they provide appropriately for children's welfare, health and safety.

School details

Unique reference number	109572
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10041778

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	259
Appropriate authority	The governing board
Chair	Dr David Dallinger
Headteacher	Ms Justine Abbott
Telephone number	01582 736529
Website	www.foxdell-inf.luton.sch.uk/
Email address	foxdell.infants.admin@luton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 September 2014

Information about this school

- In September 2017, there was a change of governance to share the governing board with the neighbouring junior school in preparation for a federation of the two schools.
- Foxdell Infant School is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from Asian or Asian British backgrounds, although there is an increasing proportion of pupils from Eastern European backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are recorded as disadvantaged and who are supported by the pupil premium is in line with the national average.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about development of the curriculum on its website.

- Leaders report that a significant number of parents do not give the school correct information about their children's native language, or whether they are entitled to support from additional pupil premium funding. This means that published information for groups of pupils is often inaccurate.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in all classrooms, many with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. They also visited an assembly, playtime, lunchtime and before- and after-school activities.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in all subjects. They heard pupils read and spoke to pupils about their school and their opinions.
- Discussions were held with staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- A wide range of school documents were analysed, including the school's self-evaluation summary, the school's development plan, records of governors' meetings, policies, and external audits of the school's performance.
- Inspectors spoke to parents who accompanied their children to school. There were too few responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, to be considered. Inspectors analysed a recent parent survey that the school had carried out. They also considered 18 responses from staff to the online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Paula Masters, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Maher	Ofsted Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector

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