



Falconer's Hill Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121887
LEA Northamptonshire
Inspection number 281123
Inspection dates 28 September 2005 to 29 September 2005
Reporting inspector David Cox RISP

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Ashby Road
School category	Community		Daventry
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		Northamptonshire NN11 5QE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01327 702878
Number on roll	198	Fax number	01327 311233
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Coleen Wilkins

Age group 4 to 7	Inspection dates 28 September 2005 - 29 September 2005	Inspection number 281123
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized infant school and is set in Daventry, Northamptonshire. Almost all pupils are from the immediate area and are from a White British background, although there are a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. When children are admitted to the Foundation Stage, many do not have the skills or knowledge typical of four-year-olds. The proportion of pupils who have individual learning needs is twice the national average. The school gained national Achievement Awards in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education for its pupils, a view shared by the school. Good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures children's education gets off to a flying start, with children reaching their early learning goals. Children make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and attain average standards, although some more able pupils are not reaching the higher levels with their writing. Teachers have an excellent knowledge of pupils' abilities because of the outstanding assessment systems and, as a result, pupils know how to improve.

The school takes excellent care of pupils and helps to develop their very positive attitudes, so that they enjoy their time at school. Pupils develop outstanding personal skills, with many receiving their 'people smart' award. Outstanding leadership is helping to create a school where staff try out new ideas with the knowledge that they have the full backing of the headteacher. Monitoring systems are outstanding and have been key in bringing about much-improved standards. There are very good resources but as yet teachers are not making the best use of the information and communication technology (ICT) facilities. The school provides good value for money. As shown by the successful way in which it has addressed the issues identified in the previous report, the school has a good capacity to improve in the future.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve more able pupils' writing skills.
- Make better use of the ICT facilities so as to improve the already good teaching and learning across all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When pupils start in the Foundation Stage their standards are below what is typical of their age. Many have difficulties with speaking clearly and in sentences, and many have social skills that are low for their age. They achieve well because the good teaching and the outstanding curriculum meet their needs well. By the end of the Foundation Stage most meet the goals expected for their age.

By the time pupils leave the school in Year 2, standards are broadly typical for their age. All make good progress and some do exceptionally well. Many pupils with learning difficulties make outstanding progress because of the excellent support they receive from teachers, support staff and outside agencies. The school has taken steps to improve standards in reading and these are now average. However, the school is correct in identifying that the writing of some more able pupils needs to be improved.

Pupils do well in science. More able pupils talk at length about the planets and space travel. Pupils with learning difficulties are inspired by the 'giant bug' images they see

when using a microscope. All pupils do well in mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 1 have a good grasp of three-dimensional shapes.

The school sets demanding targets and normally meets these.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's well-planned and innovative methods enable all pupils to make outstanding progress in developing their personal qualities. Pupils play a full and enjoyable role in the school, they play safely and older pupils look after the younger pupils. From the Foundation Stage onwards, their attitudes and behaviour are at least good and often better. They are excited and interested in their lessons. They enjoy growing and selling produce from the school garden and say what they want to do with the proceeds. Pupils quickly develop independence and self-discipline and their sensible approach in play and activities guarantees that the school is focused and well ordered. Bullying is not a significant issue and any challenging behaviour is effectively corrected.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding. They are developing an understanding of other faiths, and gaining confidence in their own place in the world. Pupils understand the behaviour rules and they are encouraged to realise their rights and take responsibility. Pupils like and respect all staff and relationships are consistently very good. They realise the importance of healthy eating, which the school promotes well. Cultural pursuits are led by exciting art and music activities, and pupils' understanding of other cultures is developing well through visitors and the celebration of festivals. Attendance is satisfactory and the school is working hard to improve it further.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and there are examples of outstanding practice, and as a result pupils achieve well. For example, in a Year 2 art class, because of the excellent resources provided, pupils were fascinated by the work of Van Gogh and produced highly original pieces of artwork based on his style. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and are encouraged to be inquisitive by their teachers. Teachers know their pupils exceedingly well and use the outstanding assessment systems to carefully match work to pupils' needs. Each lesson builds on what the pupils have learnt before. Learning support staff help the pupils very effectively and are an integral part of the teaching. Pupils' behaviour is managed skilfully by staff and this ensures that they listen attentively and concentrate hard. Teachers value the work of their pupils and use the excellent displays to praise and motivate pupils. Occasionally, teachers do not

gain the full attention of pupils and this results in some pupils drifting off task or not knowing how to proceed. Exciting and innovative resources are used to motivate pupils. However, whilst teachers use the ICT facilities, they do not use them as well as other resources to promote learning. Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils' work is very broad, balanced and always interesting. It often features imaginative and innovative activities. Planning is reactive to pupils' needs and the many pupils with learning difficulties enjoy and celebrate their learning. Children in the Foundation Stage make a fast start through rich activities and creative play. English is enlivened through topic work and pupils writing about their personal experiences. Science awareness is raised through "Question of the Week" and the Eco Club. The many journeys of the school mascot, "Fizz", enable pupils to learn about other countries and cultures. Information and communication technology is not used as an exciting learning method for all subjects. Health education is developed well through cooking and all pupils receive the recommended two hours of physical education each week.

The school offers pupils very high quality activities that help their learning outside the classroom. School lunchtime clubs include gardening and French. Pupils enjoy helping others to enjoy the school's 'Fort' and gardens. Visits and visitors further add to pupils' wide experiences and enjoyment. Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The headteacher and staff are firm believers that every child does matter. This is reinforced consistently through the 'Good Morning' sessions at the start of each day for all parents and pupils. Well-planned procedures are rigorously implemented by well-trained staff. The management of behaviour is a pillar of the school and creates an exciting and very productive learning experience. The health and safety of pupils and staff are a priority and thorough risk assessments help to keep the pupils safe. Minor accidents are above average, but are inflated by the school's insistence on recording all aspects of their tender loving care. Effective child protection arrangements are in line with local guidelines and training is up to date. The excellent assessment, monitoring and tracking of pupils ensure that the needs of all pupils are well understood, and action plans developed that are tailored to their individual needs. The school is skilled in bringing together parents, carers and support agencies to produce often outstanding children's progress. It is very dedicated and focused in educating more vulnerable children, who are fully included in the school. Pupils are consulted well on personal targets and they feel that they can positively affect their learning performance.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher and deputy head provide outstanding leadership. The headteacher is driving the school forward through innovation and a passion to provide the very best education for all pupils. The self-evaluation is mostly accurate and paints a picture of a school that provides a good education. The school undervalues itself with respect to the curriculum and the care it provides for pupils.

This is a school that never stands still and takes on many new ideas. For example, the school has appointed highly talented support staff who provide valuable support for pupils and play a key role in the ongoing assessment and tracking of pupils. Monitoring systems are a strength and have been central in bringing about improvement in standards, achievement and pupils' personal development since the previous inspection. The headteacher has involved the whole of the school community in the monitoring of the school's work.

Parents speak very highly of the school and the good support their children receive. Parents feel fully involved and appreciate the opportunities to be part of the school. The work of the governing body is good. Governors give the school good support, and make sure statutory requirements are met. They too have innovative ways of monitoring the school. For example, each class writes a half-termly report about what they have done, which governors receive. Resources such as the library are very good and support teaching and learning effectively.

Grade: 1

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

29 September 2005

Dear Children

As you know, we visited your school recently to find out how well you are doing. We would like to thank you and the school mascot, 'Fizz', for looking after us so well. Thank you also for talking to us about your school, the work you have done and how much you enjoy coming to school. We enjoyed your 'achievers' assembly' where so many of you received special badges for doing good work.

What we liked about your school:

Most of you do well at school and those of you who sometimes find it hard to learn do much better than expected.

Your school is a healthy and safe place to be and you help each other when there are problems.

Your lessons are exciting and you enjoy being at school.

Teachers and other staff in the school look after you very well.

The headteacher is making sure that you have lots of extra activities to do outside of lessons.

The teachers who run your school know what it does well and what needs to be done to make it even better.

What we have asked your school to do now:

Help some of you more able pupils to improve your writing.

Look at how well you and your teachers are using the computers.

Yours Sincerely

David Cox and the inspection team Lead inspector