



Foxdell Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109577
LEA LUTON LEA
Inspection number 285542
Inspection dates 26 June 2006 to 27 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. George Falconer AI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Dallow Road
School category	Community		LU1 1UP
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01582 733764
Number on roll	219	Fax number	01582 733764
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Sajjad Haider
Date of previous inspection	21 June 2004	Headteacher	Mrs. Lynne McMulkin

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Foxdell Junior School is a popular, well resourced, community school with 219 pupils on roll. Socio-economic circumstances are significantly lower than the national average. The significant majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with ten percent of the pupils being asylum seekers or refugees. The overall pupil population represents 27 different nationalities. The vast majority are learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils from homes where at least one parent has little or no English is high. A third of pupils claim free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is less than found nationally. Pupils enter school with below average abilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors and the headteacher agree that this is now an effective school. It had been through some very unsettled times up until 2004 with a large turn over of headteachers and staff as well as dealing with an extensive building programme. These factors had a detrimental effect on the quality of provision and the achievement and standards of pupils. Behaviour was a serious problem for the school. However, since the current headteacher was appointed, there has been an extremely positive change. Leadership is good with some outstanding features. The headteacher demonstrates a very clear vision and direction for the school. Management is good, the headteacher being well supported by a very good deputy headteacher and a positive and effective chair of governors. The governing body now plays its full strategic role in supporting the school to move forward. During the course of the inspection, the quality of the school's self-evaluation was verified as good with a robust level of critical reflection, analysis and action. Achievement is now good throughout the school and the unvalidated test results for Year 6 in 2006 show a great improvement on the previous year with standards being broadly average in English and mathematics. Well thought out strategies for pupils with English as an additional language and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities now ensure their progress is similar to that of others. There is no significant underachievement for any groups and pupils are set challenging targets. Personal development and well being are outstanding, as is care support and guidance. The quality of teaching and learning observed was good in every lesson. The curriculum is good and is enriched well with healthy numbers of pupils taking advantage of clubs and activities. Raising attainment levels further in mathematics and science is an area for further development. The school plans to do this by providing more opportunities for pupils to learn and to use subject specific language. The school is also aware of the need to develop further strategies to extend the more able pupils by providing more challenging tasks and activities at appropriate levels. The capacity for this school to make further improvements, based on current performance and improvements since the last inspection report is good. The school now achieves good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise attainment levels in mathematics and science for all pupils so that they have more opportunities to learn to use subject specific language. - Introduce further strategies to extend the more able pupils to ensure more challenging tasks and activities are provided at appropriate levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards over the period 2001 to 2005 were below the national average in English, mathematics and science with attainment in mathematics being poor. Too few pupils gained above average standards across the three subjects. Particular groups of pupils including pupils who are learning to speak English as an

additional language and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities did not achieve as well as they could have done. However, the enthusiastic headteacher and all staff have worked relentlessly to turn this situation around successfully with the help of a strong governing body and the strategic and hands on support of external support agencies. Internal test results and evidence in pupils' work show that achievement is now good. Standards in Year 6 in English and mathematics are broadly average. The latest national test results for Year 6 show a much more positive picture with pupils doing far better in the 2006 results than in the previous year, with many gaining above the expected levels. Standards for mathematics although broadly average are slightly below those expected in some aspects such as the use of subject specific language. Well thought out and implemented strategies for pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities now make sure their progress is good. Pupils start at the school with below average levels of knowledge and understanding and make good progress so there is no significant underachievement and the majority of pupils are set and attain challenging targets. The school is now in the process of further developing enhanced provision for the more able.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well being are outstanding in this school where learners thoroughly enjoy their education and attendance is good. Attitudes towards each other and to adults in the school are outstanding as is the level of behaviour. The school makes an excellent job of actively encouraging healthy lifestyles within a curriculum that also promotes excellent understanding of being safe and adopting safe practices. Pupils are also taught well about the importance of exercise and a healthy diet. Pupils are given exceptionally good levels of responsibility and the school council and the school prefects, buddies, class monitors and class captains do much to support the smooth running of the school. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding such as the thoughts, feelings and consideration shown to children less fortunate than themselves. The school actively supports charities and plays a positive role in the community. Pupils think highly of the school and are now well prepared for their future economic well being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning in the school are good. Lessons are planned well with specific aims and activities for pupils. The needs of pupils who do not have English as their first language or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are taken into account well. The extra support provided for them by teachers and teaching assistants is very effective. Lessons move at a good pace. Teachers have high expectations which

challenge the pupils in their learning and lead to good progress. Pupils who are more able could be challenged even further in order to reach higher levels of attainment. The pupils' concentration and effort in their work is outstanding. They behave excellently and are eager to learn. Teachers have started to support pupils more effectively by providing the key vocabulary to be used and understood in each lesson. As a result the pupils are keener to answer questions and share their ideas. The school's systems for assessing and measuring the pupils' progress and attainment are good. The pupils know what their targets are and strive to achieve them. One Year 6 pupil said 'Our targets are good because we know how we need to improve'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school has focused on the need to raise standards in English, mathematics and science which is now resulting in the improved test results. Other subjects are allocated an appropriate amount of time, and good opportunities are made for pupils to use their basic skills in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Pupils know that what they learn in one subject can be used to help them in another. This has a positive effect on their achievement. The school provides a large number of enrichment and extra-curricular activities with a high level of take up. Nearly thirty pupils currently learn a variety of brass musical instruments and enjoy their experience greatly. There is a good range of educational visits and pupils' learning is extended by numerous visitors to the school. The use of key vocabulary to support pupils learning in mathematics and science is a little underdeveloped.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Provision of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Staff know the pupils extremely well and use this information to support them effectively. Pupils say that they feel very safe and happy. This helps encourage their excellent behaviour, relationships and personal confidence. This is a dramatic improvement over the situation just two years ago. They know that they can turn to any member of staff if they have a problem and that there are other children in positions of responsibility who are ready to help them. The school is very effective in the ways it seeks the views of pupils so that they contribute effectively to how it is run. The school has an excellent range of assessment information. This is analysed in great detail and is used extremely effectively to promote pupils' progress. The school has very good systems in place to ensure the safety of pupils. Governors carry out regular visits to check that the premises are safe and secure. Child protection procedures are very well established and staff have undergone training.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has undergone a great deal of turbulence over the last few years and this impacted significantly on the quality of education provided. However, leadership of

the current headteacher is good with some outstanding features. Since commencing her role just over two years ago she has demonstrated a very clear vision and a very clear direction for the school, combined with appropriate, achievable targets. Management is also good and the headteacher is well supported by a very good deputy headteacher and a positive and effective chair of governors. The governing body now plays its full strategic role in supporting the school to move forward. Systems for checking how well the school is doing are very effective with a robust level of critical reflection, analysis and action. The headteacher has remained focused on the big picture whilst demonstrating an eye for detail on the progress of pupils. The quality and effectiveness of self-evaluation is particularly good. There is a clearly defined, successful, distributed leadership and management structure that accommodates pastoral as well as curriculum development. Provision for English as an additional language and provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are successfully incorporated into the structure with the minority ethnic coordinator and the special education needs coordinator making invaluable contributions. The school has a clear perspective on what constitutes high standards. This school has high aspirations and is relentless in its quest to raise standards. However, provision for more able pupils is not fully developed in the school. External agencies are used well in support of the school's objectives as are the links with other schools. A strong link now exists between the junior and the infant schools to eliminate any discrepancies in attainment on entry to the junior school. Based on the progress made since the last inspection and within the last two years, the school has developed good capacity and planning to improve further. Resources are used efficiently and effectively to achieve good value for money.

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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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	2	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	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	1	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	2	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?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	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

Thank you for your very warm welcome and for all the help you gave to the inspectors. We were very impressed with many aspects of your school and we decided that this was very much due to all your hard work, your positive attitudes and outstanding behaviour. I have to say how impressed we were when we saw how much you enjoyed your work and how you concentrated really hard to do the best you possibly can. Your teachers help, of course, by setting you challenging targets to achieve and this makes learning so much more interesting for most of you. All the children we spoke to thought that all the teachers were great and planned lots of interesting work for you. One of you told me, 'I like cross-curricular work because it's more interesting and you learn several things at once'. Your headteacher and all the staff have now decided to think up even better ideas for stretching the brightest among you as well as making sure that they continue to develop your ideas and understanding in language and particularly in subjects like maths and science. The school gives you lots of opportunities to learn about different things and we were pleasantly impressed with the full range of extra activities you can do at lunch time and after school, including all those sports. The brass band is brilliant. The assembly I visited was smashing and it was so good to see so many of you with a firm belief and understanding about the importance of helping others less fortunate than yourselves. You also certainly showed your enterprise skills by collecting so much money for children in Kenya, and in such a short space of time. The man you handed the cheque to must have thought it was his birthday! Finally, the school council gave me a good understanding of all the great work they do, as well as that of the prefects, class captains, buddies and others. You may remember I asked you what would you choose for a poster caption for your school and the reply was, 'Come to fantastic Foxdell where the teachers are terrific.' There is not much about your school that you don't know!