



Filton Avenue Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108927
Local Authority Bristol, City of
Inspection number 288226
Inspection dates 19–20 September 2006
Reporting inspector Jacquie Buttriss

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Lockleaze Road
School category	Community		Horfield
Age range of pupils	7–11		Bristol BS7 9RP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0117 9030305
Number on roll (school)	259	Fax number	0117 9030089
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	John P Radcliffe
		Headteacher	Stuart Ransom
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is set within a large housing estate on the edge of the city in a comparatively deprived area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above the national average and there is a resource base for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. A number of minority ethnic groups are represented, making up a higher than average proportion of the school community. Many of these pupils' first language is not English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Filton Avenue Junior School provides a sound education where standards are broadly average but there is a strong emphasis on good care and support for pupils. Under the headteacher's effective leadership, very good pastoral guidance is having a big impact on the personal development and well-being of all pupils. They know how to stay safe and healthy. There is a strong ethos of inclusion; this is underpinned by the provision of a wide range of support for all groups of vulnerable pupils, and many of these pupils achieve well. This includes the small number of pupils in the resource base who are successfully integrated into mainstream classes whenever possible. The pupils as a whole are soundly prepared for the future. There are very good links with the community and with schools in a number of other countries which extend pupils' educational experiences.

Achievement is satisfactory. The staff are committed to improving achievement for all the pupils, but in practice the most able pupils are not making as fast progress as they might. The low proportion of able pupils who reach the higher Level 5 in their national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 reflects the low levels of expectation and challenge for the school's most able pupils in some year groups. As a result, some able learners are underachieving and are not always helped to fulfil their potential. However, teaching in Year 6 classes is outstanding. Here teachers demonstrate high expectations of all pupils and ensure they are all sufficiently challenged. The escalation of pace in Year 6 helps pupils achieve very well in their final year; indeed one pupil claimed, 'In two weeks I've done about five weeks' work'.

The headteacher's careful analysis of pupils' progress and performance has enabled the school to identify its strengths and weaknesses – subjects and year groups in which pace is slower or faster. However, the effectiveness of the actions the school has taken to improve varies between subjects, because there is quite a difference in how well subject leaders transmit their enthusiasm and engage the efforts of pupils and staff. In one case, as a result of dynamic subject leadership and the whole staff's team efforts, standards are being systematically raised in writing. Similarly, the energetic approach to improving attendance has resulted in a continuous rise in attendance rates. These examples demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to improve and provide a model for development. Parents think highly of the school. As one said, 'I love bringing my daughter to this school. I feel the teachers really care'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide greater challenge for more able pupils to help them achieve better.
- Raise teachers' expectations of pupils, based on their prior attainment.
- Ensure that leaders and managers improve rates of progress through more dynamic subject leadership.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment on entry to the school is average in reading and mathematics but lower in writing. Attainment in writing, however, has been raised over the past year as a result of new teaching initiatives. Standards reached at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen in the past year and are now in line with national averages. However, a smaller proportion of pupils than the school expected attained the higher Level 5 in each subject in the 2006 tests; the progress of able pupils remains a weaker aspect of the school.

Progress through the school is satisfactory, but there is some variation between year groups, with Year 6 particularly strong. Achievement is good for some minority ethnic groups and for pupils whose first language is not English. There is little difference between the achievement of boys and girls through the school. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy coming to school and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are keen to participate in the very wide range of additional activities offered, which is a strength of the school. The school council and questionnaires promote pupils' involvement in the life of the school. They show commitment to the community by fund raising for charities, looking after new pupils and thinking up good ways to improve the facilities, such as healthier meals.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have good opportunities for reflection through school and class assemblies. They listen well to the views of others and show respect for other faiths and cultures. Behaviour management is good. There is a clear and consistently enforced anti-bullying policy. Pupils are aware of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and Years 5 and 6 benefit from good sex education.

The attendance rate is below the national average. This is an improvement on a year ago, when attendance was significantly below average. This improvement is due to the imaginative strategies put in place by the school and attendance figures are still rising.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Several good lessons were seen where, as a pupil said, 'teachers try to make things exciting', but many teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils and so they do not always match work to pupils' needs and abilities. In particular, there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils. The

exception is in Year 6, where teaching is outstanding. In these classes the teachers have high expectations of all pupils and give them more challenging work to do, which results in excellent progress for all. Good subject knowledge and organisational skills are features of the best lessons and behaviour is managed well in all classes.

Learning support assistants provide high quality support for pupils with learning difficulties, but a few assistants lack confidence and give less effective class support. Pupils in the resource base are supported well and make good progress both in the unit and in the main school, where they are successfully integrated. Effective procedures ensure early identification of the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language, enabling them to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, and contributes effectively to pupils' good personal development. Effective planning and a strong, well structured approach to the teaching of personal, social and health education ensure that pupils throughout the school are fully aware of the importance of health, fitness and keeping safe. The academic curriculum caters better for the needs of middle ability and lower ability pupils than for the more able. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and is now good, resulting in pupils making effective progress. There are good links between different subjects, for example geography and science. There are good links with the community and with schools in a number of other countries. A good range of well attended clubs and activities out of school hours enriches pupils' learning: 'We've even got sign-language club.'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This school provides good care, guidance and support, which enrich children's personal development and the achievement of most groups. There are very good arrangements for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare. Regular safety checks and robust child protection procedures are in place. The quality of pastoral care is very high. Systems for monitoring pupils' academic achievement are satisfactory, but not enough guidance is given to ensure able pupils achieve as well as they could. Pupils' work is often constructively marked and helps them know how to improve, but this is not consistent across the school. Not all pupils are aware of their targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language receive good support. The full-time learning mentor is, as one parent put it, 'an asset to the school', as she gives highly effective support to groups of vulnerable children. Additionally, pupils and parents value the good support of a NSPCC counsellor.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The dedicated headteacher provides effective leadership, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and management team. Subject leaders monitor their subjects well and write action plans for development, but not all co-ordinators are sufficiently energetic in driving forward improvements to raise standards. By contrast, the dynamic literacy co-ordinator has introduced a range of strategies for the development of pupils' writing skills and these are beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards.

The recent introduction of a robust tracking system has enabled very detailed analysis of pupils' performance and the headteacher is particularly skilled in this area. As an outcome of sound self-evaluation, leaders know the school's strengths and the areas in which it can develop further. A core of active governors gives dedicated support to the school and they conscientiously fulfil their responsibilities to help the school move forward. Governors monitor the school's provision effectively and take a part in school evaluation, but they do not yet involve themselves fully in strategic planning. The school listens well to the views of parents and takes care to respond to their concerns in a positive way.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we came to inspect your school. You made us feel very welcome and we enjoyed talking to you.

- These are the things we especially like about Filton Avenue Junior School:
- You are friendly, polite and helpful and your behaviour is good.
- All the teachers and staff in the school work hard to give you very good care and support.
- You show respect for adults and for each other and get on really well together.
- You have many interesting lessons and activities to help you enjoy your time at school.
- Through your school council, you take an active part in helping to make your school a good place to be.

- These are the things we think your school could do even better:
- Some of you told us that you do not work as hard as you could, so your teachers could give some of you more challenge to stretch you and help you reach higher levels.
- If you know that the teachers expect you to do even better, this will help you to make even more progress.
- Some of your teachers are in charge of subjects and we think there are things they could do to raise your standards in each subject.

We would like to wish you lots of success in your future education.