



# Slip End Lower School

## Inspection Report

---

**Unique Reference Number** 109440  
**Local Authority** BEDFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 288372  
**Inspection dates** 30 November –1 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Geof Timms

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Ross Way
<b>School category</b>	Community		Slip End, Slip End
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9		Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 4DD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 720152
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	82	<b>Fax number</b>	01582 720152
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr A Evers
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2001		

---

<b>Age group</b> 3–9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 30 November –1 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 288372
-------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than usual and serves the village of Slip End and surrounding area. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds but a few are from a range of mixed backgrounds or Travellers of Irish heritage. There are a small number of pupils who are looked after by the local authority. Overall, a below average proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although this is high in some year groups. An above average proportion of the pupils join or leave the school at times other than usual. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. It is providing pupils with an effective education and preparing them well for the future. It provides good value for money. Parents are rightly happy with the school and they particularly praise the care for those children who are vulnerable or have particular needs. One parent said, 'It is a happy school with a good ethos and we feel the teaching staff are constantly striving for improvement and progress.'

The good provision in the Nursery and Reception unit ensures that progress is good throughout the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception year most of the children are reaching levels that are in line with or better than those expected. This picture of good progress continues throughout the school and, although results vary from year to year due to the small cohorts, the standards achieved at the end of Year 2 in 2006 were exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of Year 4 standards remain above average, and writing standards continue to be stronger than those found nationally. However, progress in mathematics is weaker.

Pupils' personal development is good and they have very positive attitudes towards school. They clearly enjoy being at school. One boy, when asked about what he liked at school said, 'I like everything!' Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and what they need to do to keep healthy. The school puts a high focus on their personal development and pupils are familiar with a range of values, and of how they should behave in different situations. For example, in one lesson, Year 1 pupils learned about ways to behave when meeting somebody new. The school has good links with the local and wider community and is used for a range of activities.

The quality of teaching is good and, together with the pupils' good attitudes, this ensures good learning. Teachers know pupils well and clearly care for them as individuals. Lessons are often lively and well resourced, although teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects. A number of assessment and target setting systems are new and yet to be fully part of teachers' everyday practice. The school offers pupils a rich and varied curriculum and a good level of care. The tracking of their progress enables teachers to identify underachievement so they offer all pupils better guidance on how they can improve.

The school is successful in many ways due to good leadership and management. However, that has not stopped the headteacher and staff from seeking to improve things further. The focus is on raising standards and doing all possible for pupils' well-being. Self-evaluation is accurate and honest. The governing body have had a number of changes recently. They require further training and a more effective system for gathering the information needed to hold the school to account. However, the recent improvements made clearly show that the school is capable of improving further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics in Years 3 and 4.

- Make more efficient use of the computer suite and extend the use of ICT in other subjects.
- Ensure the recently introduced assessment and target setting procedures are embedded in the school's day to day practice.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Current standards are above average and pupils achieve well. Although the overall attainment on entry to the Nursery is fairly typical, a significant number of children have weak social and language skills. Good teaching helps all of the children make good progress and most achieve or exceed the expected levels at the end of the Reception Year. Even so, their writing and the way they link sounds to letters, have been assessed as weaker and the staff have introduced a new system for learning letter sounds this year. Although too early to judge its success, this is clearly very much enjoyed by the children. Progress in writing throughout the rest of the school is exceptionally good. Teachers provide good opportunities to write in other subjects such as religious education and history. Standards are also high in reading and, although standards in mathematics were still above average overall, the progress made by pupils in Years 3 and 4 is weaker.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are very willing to talk about how much they enjoy school. These positive attitudes are the result of the effective relationships adults have with pupils. They show pride in their work and are willing to share their efforts, support each other, and to work together in pairs or small teams. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The teaching in the Foundation Stage has a very strong focus on children's personal development and on preparing them to be good learners in the future. Their behaviour is good in and out of lessons, and even during a wet lunchtime, pupils get on well together. Attendance is currently below average. However, the school works hard to encourage full attendance, although not all parents support these efforts sufficiently.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The teaching is good, and occasionally outstanding, because teachers work very hard to plan effective lessons, using appropriate resources. In the Foundation Stage all staff are effective in helping children make good progress. The accommodation is used effectively and children are provided with a very good range of different activities to help them play and learn together. Good teaching throughout the rest of the school

is based on the teachers' knowledge of individual pupils. Those with learning or behavioural difficulties are dealt with effectively and helped to make good progress. Teaching assistants offer a good level of support particularly for the less able pupils. Teachers are successful in matching work in literacy to pupils' prior attainment so that it is sufficiently challenging. This is less evident in other subjects. Teachers have introduced a range of new ideas and methods recently, such as the sharing of learning objectives with pupils. These are not yet used consistently and have not had their effectiveness evaluated.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good because the school provides an extensive range of enrichment activities that make pupils' learning more meaningful. For example, on 'No Pencil Day', pupils had a range of problem solving activities to take part in, which helps develop their teamwork and their thinking skills. Visits are used very effectively to enhance the curriculum, especially in religious education and history. The residential visit to France gives Year 4 pupils an excellent opportunity to use the French they have learned at school. Good use is made of outside expertise such as that for physical education. Links teachers make between subjects are meaningful and often support good progress. However, the use of ICT in other subjects remains an area for improvement.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a caring school in which adults work hard to support all pupils, whatever their needs or backgrounds. Pupils are aware of how they can stay safe and the school ensures all adults who work with the children, including volunteers, have been appropriately checked. The pupils say there is little bullying but if it happens they know how to respond. The marking of their work and the assessment information now available to staff is used to offer guidance to help pupils learn. The setting of individual targets varies between classes and between subjects, but most pupils know what they need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management are good because the headteacher and senior leadership team have a very clear focus on raising standards, as well as on pupils' well being. The recent changes to the senior leadership team and subject co-ordination have strengthened leadership throughout the school. This is already evident in the improvements made in teaching in Years 3 and 4, and in the work to raise standards in mathematics. The development planning is good as is the school's accurate and honest self-evaluation. The governing body provide a satisfactory level of support and challenge. However they are not making the regular focussed visits that would enable them to act fully as 'critical friends.'

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

4 December 2006

Dear Children

Slip End Lower School, Ross Way, Slip End, Luton, LU1 4DD

I want to thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave me and the way you all helped me find out about your school. I especially want to thank the school council, who were very helpful and keen to talk about what they enjoy and what they would like to see change. All of you said you were very happy at school.

I think you are right to be happy because Slip End is a good school. The teachers are working very hard to help you learn and because of this you get good results and are doing lots of very enjoyable activities. You behave well in lessons and this helps the teachers to teach you. The school provides a lot of extra things for you such as visits and visitors and after school clubs. You make good use of these and they help you learn new skills and give you the chance to try new things. The adults all care for you well and help keep you safe. Those of you I had lunch with understood the importance of eating healthy food.

The school is good at deciding for itself what needs to get better. However, I also think there are three things teachers and governors can do that will help you reach even higher standards:

- help you get better at mathematics especially in Years 3 and 4;
- help you use computers more often in other subjects;
- help the school governors learn more about how the school works.

Thank you again for the way you all made me welcome. I hope the Christmas Fair raised lots of money and that you enjoy performing your Christmas show. Enjoy your time at Slip End and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead Inspector