



Farley Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109538
Local Authority LUTON
Inspection number 288418
Inspection dates 24–25 January 2007
Reporting inspector Andrew Matthews

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Northdrift Way
School category	Community		Luton
Age range of pupils	7–11		Bedfordshire LU1 5JF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01582 725069
Number on roll (school)	221	Fax number	01582 480531
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Carol MacInally
		Headteacher	Mr Stephen King
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized junior school which serves a large housing estate on the edge of Luton. Just over half the pupils are White British whilst the remaining pupils come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. Seventeen different languages are represented in the school. Pupils' attainment on entry is very low and there is a higher than average proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties. A well above average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The school has achieved the national information and communication technology (ICT) Mark. The school is part of the national Excellence in Clusters initiative to help it raise standards.

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 which has improved well since the last inspection. The school judges itself to be satisfactory but it underestimates its many strong features. It provides a good quality of education and care for its pupils and is increasingly well regarded locally. Continuous improvement in the personal well-being of all its pupils lies at the centre of the school's work. The school sits in the heart of the community and racial harmony is promoted particularly well. Pupils are very happy and greatly enjoy school. Their attendance is satisfactory and their personal development is good. They are consistently well challenged by their teachers who use a well planned curriculum to capture and sustain their interest. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is all good. As a result, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are enthusiastic learners, work hard, achieve well and make good progress.

The school has a strong commitment to all its pupils and this is clearly shown in the very good relationships in lessons. Many of the teachers are just starting their careers and have been galvanised into a hardworking and enthusiastic team that is most anxious to do its best for the pupils. Lessons are well structured by teachers who plan activities that build successfully on pupils' previous learning and challenge all abilities. The use of computers has been developed very successfully since the last inspection and pupils use them very naturally to aid their learning. Teaching assistants give well focused support, helping to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the work of the class. Whilst parents are supportive of the school, very few are able to come in and help.

Good quality tracking procedures have now been introduced into the school to monitor the pupils' progress. However, the target setting process is not yet fully developed, resulting in some staff being unclear about the standards individual pupils should reach by the end of the school year. Marking is carried out regularly and helps pupils to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from very good support and make good progress. Their progress is exceptionally well monitored by the special needs coordinator. Standards have been on an upward trend since the last inspection, although a dip occurred in 2006 when results were exceptionally low in all subjects. Whilst there is clear evidence that standards will bounce back for the present Year 6, they will still be below average in English, mathematics and science. However, these pupils have made good progress since they started in the school.

Leadership and management of the school are good and all legal requirements are met. The headteacher provides strong leadership and has a clear vision of how the school can improve its provision. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses because of its effective self-evaluation procedures, to which governors, staff, parents and pupils all contribute. Its priorities for future development are rightly focused on improving achievement further to ensure more pupils reach the nationally expected standards. With its much improved management team, the school is well placed for further improvement. Overall the school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the proportion of pupils reaching Levels 4 and 5 in English, mathematics and science.
- Clearly identify the standards that individual pupils should reach in reading, writing and mathematics in each year group.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with very low attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Results for last year's Year 6 pupils fell noticeably but the reasons for this have been identified and addressed. Progress is now good in the school and Year 6 pupils are now working at standards that are much better, though still below expectations, in English, mathematics and science. Another positive factor is the rise in the proportion of higher-achieving Year 6 pupils. However, the school is not complacent and rightly is making the improvement of standards a key objective in its present improvement plan.

Whilst there is no discernible difference in the progress of boys and girls or between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds, the school is aware that some boys from a White British background should achieve better. Teachers' improved planning is helping to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged and achieving their full potential. Standards in ICT have improved and are now satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties receive well focused support which enables them to be fully included in lessons and make the same good progress as their peers. Similarly, the good support for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English enables them to make good progress in developing their speaking skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because the school successfully promotes positive attitudes to others. Pupils act safely at all times and are considerate of others as they move around school. They talk very enthusiastically about many aspects of school life. Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and of keeping safe because the school places such a high level of importance on these areas. For example, 'Huff and Puff', physical activity sessions are very popular. Pupils contribute really well to the community. Prefects are very proud of their position and play important roles around the school, such as looking after younger pupils in break times. The school takes part in many local sporting, musical and horticultural events. Pupils contribute effectively to the wider community and they have raised a considerable amount of money for a well to be dug in an African community. The school council meets regularly and has been instrumental in having new benches added to the playground. Attendance, a key issue from the last inspection, is now satisfactory and has improved because of strong monitoring procedures. Pupils' spiritual, moral,

social and cultural development is good because of the rich variety and effective range of learning activities linked to other subjects.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. Teachers challenge pupils well in lessons. Sessions are organised effectively so that pupils make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and science skills. Teachers make learning fun; in one excellent Year 5 literacy lesson, for example, pupils' enjoyment was particularly evident. Lessons are planned well so that time is used effectively. In one very good Year 4 lesson, the teacher shared specific objectives with the pupils who could check to ensure that their own work met these criteria. However, the use of specific objectives to challenge more able pupils is not consistent in all classes. The teaching of pupils who find learning harder is good and lessons are well matched to their needs. Their individual education plans are excellent and contain particularly clear and measurable targets. Pupils who are in the early stages of learning to speak English are well supported. The use of individual programmes with specific targets for these pupils is being developed satisfactorily.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Learning activities are well planned, and the curriculum is appropriate to all pupils' needs and contributes to their good progress. ICT is used effectively to develop pupils' skills both as a separate subject and to support their skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education and their future lives. Pupils' learning experiences are enriched by a wide range of extra activities during and after school, and opportunities for learning a musical instrument, such as the trumpet and guitar. The school provides splendid opportunities for pupils to participate in musical productions and these add greatly to pupils' confidence, self-esteem and speaking and listening skills. Stimulating and high quality displays are seen in classrooms and around the school and celebrate pupils' achievements well. Gifted and talented pupils are satisfactorily provided for and the school has correctly identified the need to develop this area in the future.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school offers good care, guidance and support to its pupils. This is evident in the ways staff manage pupils. The pupils' personal needs are well looked after. Pupils who have learning difficulties or who are developing their skills in English are supported effectively and they make good progress. All legal requirements for safeguarding pupils' welfare are met. A shortcoming in risk assessment procedures has been reported to, and has been addressed by the governors. Pupils' academic progress is reviewed

regularly with parental involvement. This is helping to promote even better progress as a result. Pupils' group and individual targets are used well to explain to them how to attain higher levels of skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils' transition into Year 3 and from Year 6 to the secondary school is handled effectively.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides good, incisive leadership which is focused clearly on raising standards. Using the school's much improved evaluation procedures, he is rigorous in addressing the school's weaknesses and in further developing its strengths. Good progress has been made in addressing the issues from the last inspection. Very effective monitoring is improving the quality of teaching which is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. ICT provision has been transformed and is now a strength of the school. The headteacher is rightly developing the role of subject leaders. Very good support and training from the local authority is having a very positive impact on this programme. Resources are used well and vetting procedures for all adults who work with learners are robust. The school benefits from its close working relationship with the local infant school and external agencies. Governance is satisfactory. Visits to school and lessons are giving governors a valuable insight into the school's provision. The school has a good staff development programme and has organised particularly effective professional training for its recently qualified teachers.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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

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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	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

25 January 2007

Dear Children

Farley Junior School, Northdrift Way, Luton, LU1 5JF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting your teachers and seeing you at work in your lessons. It was also good to join you for your assembly and see the work of your cine club. A special thank you to the children who talked to us about their work and also to the members of the school council who shared their ideas for making Farley Junior an even better school.

Here are the things that we really liked about your school:

- You thoroughly enjoy coming to school because you really like your teachers and the exciting work they plan for you.
- Your behaviour is very good and you get on really well together in lessons and at playtimes.
- You work hard in lessons and your work is getting better.
- Your headteacher is doing a good job and he knows how to make the school even better for you.
- Those of you who find work difficult get the right sort of help and you use it well.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants look after you well and help you do the best you can.

There are some things we have asked the school to do to help you do even better:

- Help more of you reach Levels 4 and 5 in English, mathematics and science in Year 6.
- Make sure your teachers are clear about what you should know by the end of the summer term.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Matthews

Lead inspector