



# Ferrars Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 109539  
**Local Authority** LUTON  
**Inspection number** 288419  
**Inspection dates** 14–15 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Philip Mann HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Macaulay Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Luton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		Bedfordshire LU4 0LL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 573641
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	282	<b>Fax number</b>	01582 564415
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Boon
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms L Oliver
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Ferrars Infant School is average in size and located in an area of significant social and economic deprivation. The children's starting points are below average in the Nursery; particularly so in early literacy and social skills. About a quarter of pupils have learning difficulties, which is above average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is also above average. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is above average with 43 pupils at the early stages of language acquisition in English. A number of pupils join the school other than in the Nursery and Reception classes.

## 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 with several outstanding features. Leadership and management of the school are excellent. The visionary headteacher sets very high expectations for both pupils and staff alike. Teamwork is a real strength where all staff make a significant contribution to the school's success. As a result, a very positive climate for learning has been forged where every child is valued as an individual.

The achievement, personal development and well being of pupils are good across the school. The level of care, support and guidance shown for all pupils is outstanding. As a result, pupils behave very well and their attitudes to learning and relationships with others are very positive. These judgements are supported by parents and pupils alike. For example, a child in the dining hall said, 'This is a good school because all the teachers are very caring and always help me'. Levels of attendance are broadly average. The school works very hard to rectify this weakness by promoting punctuality at the start of the day and persuading parents not to take holidays during term times.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is good in many lessons with much of it being outstanding. However, in those lessons that are satisfactory, the teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. A vibrant and exciting curriculum has been established with a strong focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The 'Talking to Write' project has been a great success enabling older pupils to become confident speakers who listen well to others. Standards in writing have steadily improved as a result of this initiative. Standards are average overall by Year 2. Information and communication technology (ICT) is quickly becoming a strength of the school. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good despite very limited facilities in the outdoor areas.

Good partnerships have been effectively established with the community and other supportive bodies. School governance is extremely good. The governors are very supportive of the school but are not afraid to ask challenging questions and seek justification. Self-evaluation is rigorous and findings are used exceptionally well to inform future school improvement and raise standards. Since the last inspection, the school has made great strides in many key areas. The school provides very good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Use the very effective procedures in place to achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning in particular improving the expectations of what pupils can achieve.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good across the school. The attainment on entry to the Nursery is significantly below that expected for those of similar age; it is particularly low in

communication and social skills. Good provision overall makes an effective contribution and pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage. However, the overall attainment of pupils when they start Year 1 is still below that expected and low in communication skills. This is partly because other pupils join the classes part way through the taught year with very little pre-school experience, and often with limited or no English.

Effective teaching with a strong focus on speaking and listening ensures that infant pupils achieve well to attain average standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Progress is often rapid because many lessons are outstanding. The outcomes of the 2006 teacher assessments confirm a steady trend of improvement over the last three years with a significantly higher proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good strides in their learning overall. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language make equally good and sometimes rapid progress; this is particularly so in reading and writing.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils really enjoy lessons and display very positive attitudes to learning. One parent commented that her daughter 'loves school and loves her teachers'. Pupils behave well in class and in the playground; they feel that any incidents are dealt with quickly. Attendance, although improving, is still broadly average, largely because of parents taking holidays during term. However, the school works very hard to promote good attendance through rewards and liaison with outside agencies. Staff actively point out to parents the effect absence can have on their child's progress.

The school has Healthy School status. Pupils know what foods are healthy and enjoy participating in the very good opportunities for physical activity. For example, this is done through physical education sessions and activities led by coaches from a professional football club. Response to effective provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils make a good contribution to their local community, for instance by taking part in the Luton Carnival or by raising funds for local charities. Pupils know effectively how to keep themselves safe.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall, and several lessons seen were outstanding. Throughout the school much teaching is innovative, confident and knowledgeable so that pupils are well motivated to learn and have very positive attitudes in lessons. In some lessons teaching is not yet consistently good but the school is using its excellent

monitoring procedures to bring about rapid improvement. The comprehensive systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are being used effectively to ensure that pupils in all groups are learning and achieving well. However, the involvement of pupils in assessing their own achievement is not fully developed in all classes.

From the Nursery upwards, very good attention is given to developing pupils' confidence and independence. Pupils' contributions are valued highly in all lessons. Pupils needing extra help are identified early and supported well through focused additional sessions. Support staff play a vital role in helping pupils to learn and make good progress. All adults manage the pupils very well so that behaviour and the learning environment are good.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It is broad with an exciting range of opportunities to enhance learning and ensure the needs of the whole child are met. Teachers regularly review the curriculum to ensure it is relevant, interesting and vibrant. Special themed weeks allow parents to join in with their child's learning; for example, healthy living week. ICT skills are promoted well and very strong emphasis is placed on developing good speaking and listening. Pupils make good progress in developing skills useful in their lives through working in teams. There are many opportunities to take responsibility, such as the school council or dinner buddies. The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, providing effective preparation for the next stages in pupils' learning. Good opportunities exist in some classes for pupils to practise their basic literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects. This enhances pupil progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This good practice is not yet consistent across the school. The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes is well planned and covers all areas of learning. However, outdoor play opportunities are not as well developed because the environment does not yet provide well for imaginative and physical play.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides excellent care for its pupils. As a result they feel safe in the school and know who to turn to if they are in difficulty or worried. Pupils at risk are identified quickly and very good support is provided for all, including those for whom English is an additional language and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works well with parents and carers to support pupils, for instance, through its Family Support Worker. Pupils' academic progress is monitored very carefully. As a result, pupils understand clearly what is expected of them in the next stage of their learning. Older pupils say that working with pupils of similar ability in English and mathematics is enabling them to make good progress.

The school liaises well with the junior school to ensure that appropriate information about pupils is passed on efficiently. It has thorough systems for checking on staff and other adults who are working with pupils, and all staff are trained in child protection procedures.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The leadership and management of this school are outstanding. The visionary headteacher is energetic and enthusiastic and her leadership inspires all to strive for excellence. It is expected that both pupils and teachers focus on attaining high standards in all aspects of their work. The headteacher's vision is shared very effectively with other senior managers and governors but has yet to have a full impact on pupils' achievement and teaching. Planning for whole school improvement is very comprehensive and clearly having a positive impact on provision. Teamwork is very firmly established; staff state they are valued and empowered to succeed because performance management is so good. The leadership roles of other managers are continually being developed and reviewed.

Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are first class and judgements made largely agree with that of the inspection. Data is analysed thoroughly and lessons are monitored very regularly to raise standards. All senior managers are involved and the findings are acted upon to bring about further improvements to the quality of pupils' learning. School governance is extremely good. The capacity for further improvement is excellent and the school is extremely well placed to be even more effective.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### 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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
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	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

<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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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>	1

<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>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	1
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**

16 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Ferrars Infant and Nursery School, Macaulay Road, Luton, LU4 0LL

The inspectors and I really enjoyed visiting your school and would like to thank you all for making us so feel welcome and showing us what you do.

What is so good to see is the way you all love taking part in all the good things that the staff do for you. You clearly enjoy being at school and are keen to talk about your experiences with others. All the inspectors feel that this is because your headteacher always encourages everyone to work hard and manages the school in a really good way. The teachers and other staff work very hard as a team to make lessons interesting for you. Teachers mark your work very carefully and set new things for you to work at. This helps everyone make good progress during the year. It is such a pleasure to see you all working hard in the classrooms and playing happily together in the playgrounds.

Nearly all the lessons go as well as the teachers want them to but senior staff are going to look for ways to help teachers make lessons even more successful. You can help do this by always trying to do your best and coming to school on time each day.

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann

Her Majesty's Inspector