



Foxdell Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109572
Local Authority LUTON
Inspection number 288429
Inspection dates 26–27 February 2007
Reporting inspector Raminder Arora

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Dallow Road
School category	Community		Luton
Age range of pupils	3–7		Bedfordshire LU1 1TG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01582 736529
Number on roll (school)	232	Fax number	01582 486991
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Mahmood Hussain
		Headteacher	Mrs Carolyn Doherty
Date of previous school inspection	15 April 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–7	26–27 February 2007	288429

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors over two days.

Description of the school

Foxdell is an average sized infant and nursery school with a diverse community. The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language high. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The school's deprivation indicator is high. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is low. The Nursery is to become part of a Children's Centre being built on site. Staff turnover in recent years has been high.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Foxdell Infant is a satisfactory school with good features. Pupils' achievement is sound and standards are broadly average. The school justifiably enjoys a high level of parental confidence. It is a welcoming and happy place where much attention is paid to pupils' care and welfare. The school cautiously assesses itself to be satisfactory in all aspects. Nevertheless, some aspects are good and better than the school has judged itself. The school has recovered well from a turbulent time caused by a high turnover of staff. During this time the leadership team were not operating at full strength. This adversely affected the quality of education offered to pupils and the school's ability to engage in robust long term planning. In addition, the governors, although committed to the school, were not rigorous enough in their monitoring of the school's work. The appointment of the new headteacher two years ago had a positive impact on the school and brought with it much needed stability. The inspection findings indicate that the school has greatly improved since her appointment. The new leadership team is committed to raising standards and has eliminated most of the inadequate teaching. As a result, teaching is now satisfactory overall. Good teaching was seen in Reception and Year 2. The curriculum is satisfactory and appropriate action is being taken to ensure that it matches pupils' interests and experiences more effectively. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress leading up to Year 1. Their progress accelerates in Year 2 as a result of good teaching. Tasks and activities match pupils' needs closely so that pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points. Standards have improved particularly in writing and mathematics, but they are well below average in reading where pupils' understanding of what they read is limited.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Effective strategies have improved attendance and punctuality to broadly satisfactory levels. Pupils behave well, show a good level of responsibility for their age and enjoy their time at school. One parent reflected the views of many saying, 'My daughter loves coming to school and I am very pleased with her progress.' Pupils regularly choose healthy options to improve their lifestyles. They make good contributions to the community by taking part in local events, for example, the Carnival and the Lanterns Parade. They work together successfully, developing key skills that will help them in later life.

Good links are established with many agencies and other partners that play a considerable part in the school's successes. Rigorous checks are made to ensure that the school leaders know what is working well and what could be better, for example, the need to share good practice and further improve teaching and learning. Pupils are set personal learning targets in literacy and numeracy, and an effective system provides clear information to staff about how well pupils are doing. Some teachers mark pupils' work with clear comments for improvement, but this is inconsistent across the school.

The headteacher provides strong leadership. She has gelled the staff into a united team and given the school a clear direction securely centred on raising standards. The good leadership is impacting positively on the school's work but this is not yet reflected in test results. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are keen and supportive. Through

appropriate training they are beginning to take a greater role in the continuing process of monitoring and holding the school to account. The school makes good use of the advanced partnership with the local authority initiative to bring about needed change. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall and the capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading by improving pupils' understanding of what they read.
- Share best practice to improve teaching and learning, to ensure that it is consistently good in meeting pupils' needs and raising their awareness of how to improve their work.
- Strengthen the work of the governing body so that it challenges and supports the school more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage most children are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. They make satisfactory progress. Overall standards are below those expected on entry to Year 1. Pupils' results at the end of Year 2 declined between 2002 and 2005, partly due to changes in staff. In 2006 standards improved to average in mathematics and below average in writing. Indications are that standards this year are broadly average in mathematics and speaking and listening, below average in writing and well below average in reading. Although most pupils read words adequately, they have difficulty in understanding the meaning of what they read. Pupils make the quickest progress in Year 2 because the tasks set are well matched to their abilities. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those learning English as a new language, make satisfactory progress because the school works effectively to meet their needs and provides a range of programmes to boost pupils' understanding.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy learning and consequently behaviour is good. They apply themselves well to work, and are keen to take on responsibilities in the newly formed school council. Pupils make a good contribution to the community and have raised money for the Pakistani earthquake appeal. Links with the local football club are strong and pupils have supported the 'football in the community project'. Although the school works hard to raise attendance figures, they remain slightly below average because a few parents take their children on long holidays during term times.

Pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development are good. They are proud of what they do and aware of the beliefs and traditions of others, because teachers use their many experiences positively. Pupils show good understanding of how to stay

safe. They eat healthily and take regular exercise. The progress pupils make in their social development and basic skills, including communication technology (ICT) skills, provides them with a reasonable platform for success in their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and there are good features. It is particularly good in Year 2 and Reception, where teachers set an appropriate range of activities to interest pupils and encourage them to learn. Pupils settle to work quickly and cooperate because of the good relationships and clear expectations of work and behaviour. In most lessons teachers make satisfactory use of the interactive whiteboards to keep pupils focused. Teaching assistants provide appropriate support to pupils, including those new to the English language. The bilingual assistants make use of pupils' home language to ensure that they meet with success. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of lesson slows because too long is spent on disciplining pupils; the expectations are low and the work is not well suited to pupils' needs. The feedback to pupils on their work is helpful when written or oral comments let pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. Although some teachers do this well, the practice is inconsistent which reduces the school's ability to make best use of time given to marking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. In the Foundation Stage, children benefit from a range of activities that promote their learning. Children do not spend enough time in the outdoor learning activities, because this provision is currently being developed as part of the Children's Centre. The curriculum in the main school is suitably planned to meet pupils' needs. Appropriate attention is given to developing their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT and making links between subjects. The personal, social and health education programme pays good attention to the development of safe and healthy living. Educational visits and visitors, and after school clubs, for example, football and dance benefit pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils receive good pastoral support and report that bullying is not a problem. Pupils know who to turn to if they have difficulties. Teachers use assemblies very effectively to reward pupils for good work and behaviour. Good procedures are in place to ensure that pupils are safe. The school has effective links with other agencies to support pupils with particular needs. Pupils with other learning needs, such as difficulty with speaking and listening, are well supported by teaching assistants and make good

progress in lessons. Pupils know the personal targets set for them. The progress of pupils is tracked well using an ICT based system efficiently. There are very positive relationships between the school and parents. Good links with the junior school allow for a smooth transition. A parent commented, 'Links with the junior school are superb'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good because the headteacher leads with a very clear and purposeful vision that is strongly focused on continual improvement. She is well supported by the deputy head and Foundation Stage manager who form the leadership team within the school. The way the school works to include pupils from all backgrounds is very good and contributes to the school's warm family ethos. All staff work cohesively to help maintain and promote the school's ethos. All this has resulted in improving pupils' progress, particularly in Year 2. The views of all members of the community are effectively sought and taken on board. A parent commented, 'The staff are very caring and listening, my children couldn't be happier.' The school benefits from working effectively with other local schools and organisations. The school self-evaluation, while cautious, is honest and the priorities for future development are very well founded. Various new initiatives are impacting well, although some need more time to be fully effective, for example the consistency of teachers' marking. The governors are supportive of the school and focusing better on collecting the information to form judgements about the school's performance and holding the school to account. They are well involved in the development of the new nursery buildings and the new Children's Centre.

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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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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?	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?	3
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

28 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Foxdell Infant School, Dallow Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 1TG

You might remember that we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit very much, and would like to thank you for talking to us and sharing your work with us. We were there to see how well your school helps you to learn, and what we saw and heard helped us to decide that yours is a happy and welcoming school. We were impressed by how well you all behave and how much you enjoy being there.

These are some of the things we liked best about your school:

- You listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and you are willing to work hard in your lessons. You learn to work and play well together and to look after yourselves.
- Everyone at school looks after you well, so that you are safe and healthy, and your parents are very pleased.
- Mrs Doherty, all the staff and the governors, know what they want the school to be like and work hard together to make it a happy place for you to learn and play.

There are four things that we think, would make your school even better:

- Your teachers need to continue getting better and better at teaching so that they can help you even more to do the work that suits you and helps you to do your best.
- Your teachers can help you to get even better at your reading so that you can get to the higher levels.
- Your teachers can help you even more to understand what you need to do to improve your work.
- Your school governors can be even better at making sure that your school continues to improvement.

We think that everyone at Foxdell can work together to do these things. I hope that you go on enjoying all the things you do there that help you to learn and be happy.

With best wishes,

Raminder Arora

Lead Inspector