



# Southfield Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 109580  
**Local Authority** LUTON  
**Inspection number** 288432  
**Inspection dates** 13–14 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Susan Aldridge

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>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Pastures Way
<b>School category</b>	Community		Luton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		Bedfordshire LU4 0PE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 604876
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	190	<b>Fax number</b>	01582 472615
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs J Shakespeare
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M L Redfern
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2001		

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<b>Age group</b> 7–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 13–14 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 288432
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average-sized school with a multi-ethnic population. Less than half are White and of British heritage, about a quarter are Asian and a fifth are of mixed race; the remainder are black. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well above average, as is the percentage at an early stage of learning English. The main foreign languages spoken are Bengali, Urdu and Swahili. The proportion of pupils that join the school part way through the year is higher than usual. The school forms part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ) and has links with a Sports Partnership and the Education Business Partnership. It is involved in a Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP). Its work has been recognised by the Healthy Schools Award and by Investor in People.

## 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 is how it sees itself; it provides good value for money. The school successfully achieves its aim of being a 'learning school' for pupils and staff. Pupils achieve well because the school is well led and managed, the teaching is good, the school provides a good range of learning experiences and there is good care and support for pupils who have additional needs. Although pupils generally enter the school with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age, the standards achieved by Year 6 are average. Standards have steadily risen since the last inspection and in 2006 they were average overall and in each of the key subjects. Pupils did best in English, because of particularly good results in writing. In science, the proportion achieving Level 5 was below the national average and particularly low for girls.

The headteacher and her deputy provide good leadership. They provide a clear focus on improving standards and complement one another well in their skills and qualities. Staff have good opportunities to improve their skills and expertise and are well supported in improving their classroom practice. Standards and provision in English, mathematics and science are kept under close scrutiny. Leaders of other subjects monitor planning and pupils' work but they do not have time to observe teaching and are limited in the extent to which they can check standards by a lack of assessment information. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, as well as good quality intervention programmes, led by skilled teaching assistants, have helped to raise standards. The accommodation has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now good. The high quality learning environment is well respected by pupils.

The school is inclusive. It strives to ensure that all pupils do equally well, and admits pupils who have been excluded from other schools. It makes good use of additional funding from the Education Action Zone and Behaviour Improvement Programme. A learning mentor and family support worker have strengthened support for pupils and their families and enhanced the school's communication with parents. Parents are pleased with the provision that the school makes for their children, particularly the way that the school explains how they can help their children at home. There are good arrangements for supporting the development of good behaviour and attendance including a nurturing environment. As a result, behaviour and attendance are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school where they feel safe and valued. The school's broad curriculum and its positive, supportive atmosphere result in pupils' good personal development.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the school is well placed to continue to improve at a good rate.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science, particularly for girls.

- Ensure that all subject leaders have the opportunity to monitor teaching in their subjects and have sufficient assessment information to enable them to monitor and evaluate standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Although standards are average, pupils achieve well. In 2006, Year 6 pupils, who had entered the school with well below average standards, achieved average standards in English and mathematics. This indicates that they made very good progress in these subjects. In English, the proportion reaching Level 4 was close to the national average, but the proportion that reached Level 5 was well above average. This was because pupils did very well in writing; the proportion that reached Level 5 was almost double the national figure.

In mathematics and science, the proportions reaching Level 4 were similar to the national figures, but proportions reaching the higher level were lower than the national average. In its improvement plan, the school has identified the need to increase the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 in mathematics. In science, the proportion of girls reaching Level 5 was particularly low, indicating that their progress was satisfactory rather than good.

The school sets challenging targets to raise attainment, and these were exceeded in 2006. It also analyses its results to ensure that all groups do equally well. Pupils from different ethnic groups and those with learning difficulties achieve equally well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They generally behave well in lessons, and occasional disagreements between pupils at playtime are dealt with effectively. There is a good level of racial harmony in the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now above average. Pupils have a good awareness of the need to stay healthy both through what they eat and through regular exercise. They contribute well to the school community through the school council and by taking on responsibility for others, for instance as playground friends. They also support events in the local community, such as Diwali celebrations or by donating harvest produce to the church. Pupils have a very good awareness of the diversity of cultures in Britain. Pupils develop adequately the key skills necessary for later life; teamwork and enterprise skills are satisfactory rather than good.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good; rigorous monitoring and support for teachers, including coaching and mentoring, lead to continuous improvement in the skills of staff. The good relationships between staff and pupils, and good classroom management skills result in pupils being well motivated and productive throughout lessons. Pupils' good behaviour supports their learning well. Teachers use their interactive whiteboards skilfully; these help to hold pupils' attention and, because preparation is good, lessons proceed at a slick pace. Skilled teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils and also to take small groups of pupils who need an additional boost to accelerate their progress. Assessment is satisfactory; it is well developed in English, mathematics and science, where teachers use their knowledge of pupils to plan challenging tasks. Assessment in other subjects is satisfactory. Occasionally, teachers rely on pupils receiving support from teaching assistants rather than varying tasks or learning outcomes, and this limits a few pupils' independence in learning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides a broad curriculum which is enriched greatly by a range of visits, visitors and clubs. These bring learning to life and pupils enjoy them. There are many visits to places of worship of different faiths, and older pupils enjoy a residential trip. There are clubs for a wide range of activities, such as football, netball and craft, which contribute to pupils' learning and personal development. The school also has a good range of intervention programmes which enable pupils who are having difficulty in key areas to catch up. The organisation of pupils into ability groups in English and mathematics works well, and small group teaching is most effective in building pupils' confidence and self-esteem. There is a good programme of personal, social, citizenship and health education, which includes teaching about relationships, the misuse of drugs and personal safety. The school's long-term plan identifies the need to develop links between subjects to make learning more meaningful to pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care for pupils is good. The school provides a nurturing environment. There is good support for pupils who are vulnerable, for those with learning difficulties and for those who are at an early stage of learning English. This enables these pupils to make good progress. The learning support mentor and family worker provide additional, important support to those who might be at risk, through 'drop-in' and other sessions for parents and pupils. The school has effective procedures for checking on those who work with children and for child protection. It also makes good use of external agencies to support pupils.

The deputy headteacher has a pivotal role in the analysis of assessment information and in the tracking of pupils' progress; good support is given to those pupils that need this. Pupils have targets for English and mathematics and set personal targets for themselves too. Older pupils are clear about the levels they are working at but it is not always clear from teachers' marking what pupils need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides strong leadership; there is a clear, shared vision for future development and a clear focus on learning, raising standards and creating an inclusive school. Teamwork is well developed and staff morale is good. A relatively new senior leadership team shares responsibility for school improvement. Leadership in English, mathematics and science is well developed; in other subjects, leaders are not fully involved in monitoring provision and standards. Governance is satisfactory; governors are most supportive and keep the school's work under review. The improvement plan correctly identifies the need to develop their strategic role.

Self-evaluation is good. It involves parents, pupils and staff, accurately identifies the school's strengths and weaknesses and informs the planning of improvements. The views of parents are taken seriously, and parental satisfaction is high. The school has improved considerably since the last inspection.

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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 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	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	2
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

<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	3
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

15 December 2006

Dear Pupils,

Southfield Junior School, Pastures Way, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU4 0PE

Thank you for making us welcome in your school, especially those who talked to us about school life. We came to see how well you are all getting on and whether there are any ways that the school could improve.

We were pleased to find that yours is a good school. You are making good progress in the time you are at Southfield, and this is mainly because you are taught well. It is also because you behave well in lessons and work hard. We found that you all get on well together, and that your attendance has improved. You are developing well as young people too. You are lucky to have so many visits, visitors and clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school, and you say that you enjoy these as well as your lessons. Staff at your school are good at helping anyone that needs some support with their work or who has a problem and needs someone to talk to. You say that you feel safe in school and we saw how well the staff care for you.

Your headteacher is doing a good job, and the deputy headteacher plays an important part too, by checking how well you are all doing in English, mathematics and science. In those subjects, teachers collect lots of information about how well you are getting on, so they can see who needs extra help and make sure they get this.

The headteacher and staff know what they need to do to make your school even better, and we are confident that they are able to do this. The staff are going to make sure that more of you reach Level 5 in science, especially girls. All teachers responsible for subjects are going to sit in on lessons to see how well the subjects are taught and collect information to tell them how well you are doing.

You can help by keeping up the good work, behaving well and making sure that you attend well. We wish you well in the future.

Mrs S Aldridge

Lead inspector