

# Norton Road Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109548
<b>Local Authority</b>	LUTON LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310019
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Aldridge

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	343
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Ian Rowlands
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mike Austins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Norton Road Luton Bedfordshire LU3 2NX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 571169
<b>Fax number</b>	01582 566394

---

<b>Age group</b>	4-11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 November 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	310019

---

© Crown copyright 2007

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 three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large primary school where numbers have risen since the last inspection as part of a re-organisation. Pupils of Asian or Asian British (Pakistani) origin form the largest group, followed by pupils of White British heritage. There are smaller proportions from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. The school serves an area of social and economic disadvantage and a much higher than average percentage of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion at an early stage of learning English is well above average and is more than half the pupils in most year groups. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is above average although the percentage with a statement of special educational need is below average. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is much higher than that found nationally.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Norton Road is a good school, which is how it sees itself. It provides a good quality of education and care. Standards have risen since the last inspection because there have been good improvements made in many areas of its work. The school has a good capacity to improve further because it is well led and managed. Parents think well of the school, which works very hard to establish a constructive partnership with them and to provide support for parents as well as pupils. The family workers fulfil an important role in this respect. Parents see the school as 'welcoming and friendly' and 'always improving'. Several noted that primary schooling at Norton Road had been a very happy experience for their older children who now looked back at their time there 'with fond memories'.

When children enter the school their knowledge and skills are below those expected nationally. For an increasing number, English language skills are at an early stage of development. By Year 6, standards are average, showing that pupils make good progress in their time at the school. This is because teaching is good and there is high quality support for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities or who speak English as an additional language. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and they particularly like their teachers. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has correctly identified the need to make this more enjoyable, by linking subjects together and making sure that it reflects pupils' interests and the needs of the local community. The curriculum and good care, guidance and support help pupils to develop well personally. Behaviour is good because there are effective systems for encouraging this and staff use these consistently well. Pupils learn about how to lead a healthy lifestyle and keep themselves safe effectively. There are also good opportunities for pupils to contribute to school life and the wider community. Pupils improve their basic skills rapidly and their good social skills, including an ability to work effectively with others, make them well prepared for the demands of secondary education and future employment.

The headteacher leads the school effectively. He provides a strong focus on improving standards and sets the tone for a caring school where the welfare of pupils and staff has a high priority and all are equally valued. All staff with leadership responsibilities share the task of monitoring the school's work. Self-evaluation is good and has improved the school. It is accurate and correctly identifies what needs to be done to improve further, particularly in English and mathematics, and has been helpful in driving up standards. However, there is not enough information in all subjects about how well pupils are doing for subject leaders to evaluate standards or the impact of any developments. Assessment information is not widely analysed to see how well different groups of pupils are doing either. However, it is used well to track pupils' progress and identify which pupils need support.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good liaison with parents and effective support for children before they start in Reception means that they settle quickly. Children are carefully assessed and any who have difficulties are identified early on. The classroom environment is vibrant, stimulating and well resourced. The outdoor area is used well to supplement learning activities so that a wide range is available from which children can choose. Teaching is good and children's enjoyment is obvious. There is a suitable emphasis on communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. There is also a good balance of teacher directed activities and opportunities for children to

initiate activities themselves. Staff are well deployed and briefed and they observe children closely and record all achievements. Given their starting points, and very limited skills in communication language and literacy, children's progress is good. It is monitored carefully through well-maintained records, and any who are struggling quickly receive suitable support. Nonetheless, by the end of Reception, most children do not reach the standards expected in all areas of learning. Staff acknowledge that more could be done to improve communication with parents, such as through an information board outside classrooms, to enable them to support their children's learning at home. Work has begun on this.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop the curriculum so that it is more enjoyable for pupils and reflects their interests and those of the local community.
- Strengthen self-evaluation by ensuring that all subject leaders have information on standards in their subjects and by analysing the performance of different groups of pupils in the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards by Year 6 are average. They have risen since the last inspection and the school associates this with improved teaching, more effective grouping of pupils and an increase in the range of activities designed to boost progress. The school's own evaluation shows an acceleration of pupils' progress from Year 4 onwards and this it links to many pupils' greater skills in understanding and speaking English. However, it has not analysed the progress of different groups to check whether this is the case. Pupils' standards remain below average by Year 2. They have risen a little since the last inspection. The school associates this pattern with the rise in the percentage of pupils admitted who are learning to speak English and also with some staffing difficulties, which have now been addressed. Inspection findings indicate that pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. The school has a clear strategy for boosting pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2, such as by teaching in smaller groups.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils have good cultural awareness and there is a high degree of racial harmony in school. They behave very well in lessons and around the school, and are courteous and considerate of the needs of others. They feel safe in school and know how to keep safe in the community. They enjoy lessons and the wide range of other activities that the school offers. They have a good understanding of the need to keep healthy, both through their eating choices and regular exercise. Attendance is satisfactory and improving, but is affected adversely by the small number of parents who take extended holidays during term time. Pupils take on responsibility well, for instance on the school council. They are also involved in the wider community through fund-raising for charity and initiatives such as the 'shoe box appeal'. They are developing the basic skills needed for later life well, including the ability to work as members of a team.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching is good, enabling pupils to learn well and make good progress. It ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants, who provide good support for groups and individuals within the class. There is a good environment for learning. Consistent use of displays gives good prompts for pupils, including specialist vocabulary needed in lessons. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards installed in most classrooms to engage pupils' interest. They manage pupils' behaviour very effectively. They are well aware of the need to support those for whom English is not their mother tongue and adapt the language they use in class to meet this need. In most lessons, work is matched well to the different groups within the class. In the minority of lessons when teaching is not good it is because not all pupils are fully involved in their learning. Occasionally teachers do not intervene quickly enough to provide support.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. The work pupils do is varied, with enough time given to most subjects. Teachers are successfully using the national strategies for literacy and numeracy in their planning. There is an appropriate focus on the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. The school has yet to establish links between different subject areas so that the work pupils do reflects the school's community and its interests more closely and is more interesting for pupils.

Staff provide good support for pupils who need additional help and successfully support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have full access to the school's curriculum. Pupils enjoy the range of clubs, activities and visits arranged to complement their work and these enrich the curriculum well. They also provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their interests and take responsibility. The school effectively promotes pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship through lessons and the newly elected school council.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

All adults in the school are fully committed to the care and welfare of the pupils. They create an environment in which pupils feel very secure. Pupils are prepared well for their transfer to secondary school. The school carries out the required checks on those who work with children, procedures for child protection are in place and thorough risk assessments made. In partnership with the education welfare officer and family workers, the school has been successful in improving attendance. The family workers also provide very good pastoral support to both pupils and parents, with sessions in school and home visits where necessary. The school communicates well with parents about their children's progress, which helps them to support their children where they can. Good support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, for English learners and those who start school at different times. Pupils generally know their group targets and what they must do to meet them. The school understands the

need to make these more individual to pupils and also to track pupils' progress more closely in subjects other than in English and mathematics.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Effective leadership and management have secured good improvement since the last inspection. For instance, standards by the end of Year 6 have risen because the school has improved teaching, staffing, groupings and support for pupils falling behind. Teachers are well supported in improving their practice and their performance management is now linked to the progress made by the pupils in their class. The school has suitable plans to create smaller teaching groups in Years 1 and 2 to boost pupils' progress further. Leadership roles are widely shared and so is school self-evaluation. Staff with responsibilities take these seriously and carry out a wide range of monitoring activities. However, the scope of evaluation is limited by a lack of assessment information in subjects other than English and mathematics. There is also little analysis of available assessment information to evaluate differences between groups of pupils. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are most supportive, particularly the small number of long-serving ones. Less experienced members are still settling into their roles.

**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).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

23 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Norton Road Primary School, Luton LU3 2NX

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school, especially to those who talked to us about school life. We really enjoyed our visit, especially the school dinners!

We agree that yours is a good school. We are not surprised that you enjoy it so much and we were pleased to hear that you all feel safe there. Many of you said that you particularly like your teachers. The teaching is certainly good and the fact that you all behave well in lessons helps you to make good progress. You take on many jobs in school and help others by raising funds. We were pleased to see that you are well cared for and given help when you need it. You know well how to keep healthy and safe. Because you are making good progress and get on so well with others, you will be well prepared for secondary school and working life in the future.

Your headteacher and the staff are all doing a good job and they are keen to make your school even better. They already have plans to make learning more interesting and enjoyable for you. We have asked them to make sure that they find out how well different groups of you are getting on, such as boys and girls. They are also going to check more closely how well you are doing in all your subjects. You can help by making sure that you attend school regularly. We feel sure that you will always behave well, because you are so polite and well mannered.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Mrs S Aldridge

Lead inspector