

# Limes Farm Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114932
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	311764
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Milton

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	144
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Tolu Oni
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Sophia Pardalis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Limes Avenue Chigwell Essex IG7 5LP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 500 7566
<b>Fax number</b>	0208 500 7566

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Limes Farm Junior is a small school that serves an area with significant social deprivation. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with about one third from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. A small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. At present, no pupils have statements for their special educational need. An above average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at other than the normal times. The school is a member of the Epping Forest Primary Collegiate for school-centred initial teacher training. The acting headteacher has been in post since September 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Limes Farm Junior provides a satisfactory and improving education for its pupils. The school has several strengths as well as areas for improvement that it has identified accurately. Parents strongly support the school and are grateful to the headteacher and staff for the many improvements made recently. As a parent wrote, 'In one year, the headteacher and her committed staff have transformed the school.'

The headteacher's effective leadership has secured the commitment of the staff and achieved a great deal of improvement in a short time. For example, there is a good system for tracking the progress of individual pupils and taking action to help address any underachievement. These improvements have effectively raised the quality of pupils' personal development, which is now good. However, not all the improvements are implemented consistently and some have not had enough time to impact fully on pupils' progress.

Pupils make satisfactory progress from below average attainment on entry. The standards reached by Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science have improved over the last three years but are still below the national average. However, some groups of pupils make good progress. These include gifted and talented pupils, those learning English as an additional language and certain year groups in particular subjects, such as Year 4 pupils in mathematics last year.

Pupils' attendance rates have improved in the last year because of good strategies to encourage regular attendance, but are still below average. Pupils feel safe and lead healthy lives at school. The satisfactory curriculum has some good features. The new skills-based curriculum, special themed weeks and the good range of clubs have contributed to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Good links with other primary and secondary schools extend pupils' opportunities. Pupils learn well in lessons that set challenging tasks for pupils of all abilities, use interesting resources and do not waste any time, but these do not happen consistently enough to ensure that all pupils make good steady progress. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The curriculum and teaching for pupils needing additional learning support have improved in the last year and, as a result, some pupils are making good progress.

There are good levels of care for pupils. This contributes to the good progress made by some vulnerable pupils. All pupils are encouraged to identify their strengths. Year teams of teachers review pupils' progress and take action to address any underachievement. The headteacher monitors this important process. There are some inconsistencies in teachers' assessments of pupils' progress and their use of this information to identify pupils' next steps of learning. As a result, not all pupils are sufficiently clear about how to improve their work. The improving leadership of middle managers is satisfactory with some good aspects.

The school has a good capacity for further improvement because it knows its own strengths and weaknesses and it has made many well chosen and carefully planned improvements in the last year.

As a result, for example, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are now good, the school makes an effective contribution to community cohesion, and partnerships with parents and outside organisations are making a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' levels of attendance.

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better so that pupils in all classes make good progress.
- Develop teachers' skills of assessing pupils' progress so that the targets they set make clear to pupils exactly what they need to do to make good progress.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

There are well planned improvements to raise standards in English, mathematics and science and they are beginning to have an impact on pupils' rates of progress, but they have had insufficient time to result in sustained improvements in Year 6 test results. As a result, standards in these subjects remain below average. The school is evaluating the improvements to provision to ensure that they result in pupils' greater achievement. Boys' achievement is less than girls' in English and mathematics. In English, some good strategies have been introduced to raise boys' standards. So far, these have resulted in improved boys' motivation but they are at an early stage of implementation so there has been insufficient time to impact fully on boys' progress. The school sets challenging targets for English and mathematics which have helped raise standards. However, the targets were missed for the past two years, except for the higher standards in English in 2007.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy learning and being part of a friendly school. They report that bullying is not a particular issue and that isolated incidents are resolved by staff. They share the school's anti-racist commitment. Pupils from different backgrounds work and play together. They learn a great deal when pupils visit from schools in another areas. Pupils are actively involved in the school's decision making through the school council and the weekly whole-school meeting. They enjoyed the team building day at the start of term and report that it has made a positive difference to their relationships and work back at school. These factors contribute to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future economic well-being as their key skills are improving, they have good team skills, and they benefited from a careers' day organised by the school for pupils and their parents. Pupils' attendance rate is still below average, though improving.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Relationships are good and class management is usually effective, although occasionally there are brief periods when pupils are not as busy as they should be. The interactive whiteboards are used effectively as, for example, pupils studying 'The Diary of Anne Frank' saw a well chosen excerpt from the film. Pupils' work is regularly marked and teachers add comments although these do not consistently give advice about how to improve. Teachers plan lessons with tasks to match pupils' differing learning needs, but these are not always challenging enough for

some pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants give good support to pupils when they are working on their own.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum has improved in many ways in the last year. Although these improvements have helped pupils' motivation, they have not had sufficient time to impact fully on their achievement. A new skills-based curriculum was introduced this term, and the school has just joined the national initiative, 'Creative Partnerships', to develop pupils' ambition and creativity. Every year, there is a special themed week 'Journey Round the World' that involves the study of countries in which some pupils have family members. Links with the Woodland Trust have involved pupils' work linking art and English in Epping Forest. Many pupils are involved in the school's clubs. Links with local secondary schools are increasing pupils' opportunities in Spanish, sports, art and design and technology. The school's first computer suite was opened earlier this year, and this is creating many more opportunities for the use of information and communication technology in the study of other subjects.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Adults provide effective care for all pupils, including those that are vulnerable. The school has effective strategies for improving attendance and securing good behaviour. There is a broad range of provision to support pupils with particular needs including those facing emotional and behavioural problems. The school provides parents with guidance about how to support their children's learning, and is working with parents' groups and family support to secure greater parental involvement. All these have contributed to pupils' improving rates of learning and their good personal development. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and meet requirements. The progress of each pupil is tracked carefully against challenging end-of-year National Curriculum level targets. Pupils are set short-term challenging targets to help them progress to these end-of-year standards, but these are not yet firmly established.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory and have clear, emerging strengths. The headteacher leads by example and has secured much improvement in all aspects of the school's work, including the building and site and the involvement of parents. As one parent wrote, 'The headteacher is very approachable and willing to listen to parents' concerns.' The leaders for English and mathematics are making a good range of improvements to raise pupils' standards although there has been insufficient time for these to have their full impact. Governance is satisfactory. Governors carry out visits to the school and ask some questions to hold the school to account for the quality of education it provides. The school has strong partnerships with a wide range of local organisations. The school effectively involves all pupils in its life and uses its resources to break down any barriers to achievement. The school knows its local community well and makes a good contribution to community cohesion by working with local organisations and contributing to community events.

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## Annex A

**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
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	3

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<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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

24 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Limes Farm Junior School, Chigwell IG7 5LP

I really enjoyed visiting your school and meeting your headteacher, the staff and many of you. Thank you for making me so welcome. It was good to talk to you in lessons, at lunch and in meetings with members of the school council and Year 6. Your new school badge is a really attractive design. I could see how much you enjoy playing outside and hope that you are successful in getting the playground improved.

It was interesting to hear from you that you are happy at school, feel safe, live healthy lifestyles, enjoy the clubs, and can help make decisions through the school's council and weekly meeting. Year 6 pupils explained the importance of respect and fairness very clearly to me.

Most of you are making sufficient progress in English, mathematics and science but there is still scope for you to learn even more and progress faster. Some lessons help you to make good progress and I have asked the school to make more lessons like these. You are set targets to help you improve your reading, writing and mathematics and I have asked the school to make sure that all of these are clear so that you know exactly what you need to do to learn more. The staff provide interesting things for you to learn both in normal lessons and in the special weeks and clubs.

All adults take good care of all of you. The school is good at helping you develop as people. You behave well and are keen to learn. Your attendance has improved, but could be even better. The headteacher and the staff are good at identifying what could be better in the school and then taking action to get the improvements needed.

The headteacher, the staff and governors want the school to improve and I know you will play your part by continuing to behave well and work hard. In addition, you can help by making sure you attend school regularly and think carefully about your targets so that you know what you need to do to improve your work standards.

Yours sincerely

Mike Milton

Lead inspector