

# Fairisle Junior School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 116253       |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Southampton  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 312232       |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 7–8 May 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Mike Dukes   |

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                                    | 298                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                       |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr Michael Dant                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mr Peter Howard                          |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 15 March 2004                            |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Fairisle Road<br>Southampton<br>SO16 8BY |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 02380 733415                             |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 02380 734473                             |

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|--------------------------|--------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools and serves an area including mainly social housing. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is more than twice the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is above average, as is the number of those with a statement of educational need. Many of the LDD pupils are identified as having behavioural, emotional and social needs. The school has Healthy Schools and Investors in People status. It has also reached the Football Association charter standards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Fairisle Junior provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. The school is emerging from a period of low achievement spanning several years and is now improving. Achievement is now satisfactory and pupils' personal development and well-being are good. In spite of this improving picture, standards in English, mathematics and science remain below average. Progress is uneven and the school has still further to go.

The strong leadership of the new headteacher, in effective partnership with the local authority (LA), is providing a clear vision and focus on improvement. This has had an immediate impact on improving attendance and accelerating pupils' achievement and progress. A key action has been the introduction of rigorous systems for monitoring teaching. By accurately identifying weaknesses, the school is skilfully targeting the use of improvement targets and mentoring with teachers. In particular, the school has rightly identified that teaching often includes insufficient challenge to ensure good progress. Overall, teaching and learning are now satisfactory. This is resulting in better progress for pupils and satisfactory achievement.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Teachers know pupils well. They provide a high standard of pastoral care and work closely with parents. The school enjoys good links with partner schools and outside agencies to ensure the well-being of pupils. In this caring climate pupils develop a commitment to healthy lifestyles and they enjoy school a lot. However, attendance is only satisfactory due to a small number of poor attenders. Pupils behave well and know how to keep safe. They make a good contribution to the school and wider community through charitable fund raising and helping around the school as monitors, running a healthy tuck shop and through the school council. They are developing their basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) satisfactorily.

Subject leaders are not yet contributing fully to improving their subjects. This is because some are new to their roles and have not had sufficient time to become fully effective. Governors make a good contribution. They are well informed and well involved in the life of the school. They hold the school to account well and readily challenge the school to do well. School leaders have developed the school's capacity for improvement, and this is now satisfactory. This capacity can be seen from the recent record of improvements. The curriculum has improved, and there is now a clearer emphasis on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. However, assessment is inconsistent throughout the school, both in the systems used and in the way that teachers use the information gathered to set challenging targets for pupils. As a result, not all pupils achieve as well as they might. The school is aware of this weakness and has begun to address it.

Parents returning inspection questionnaires were overwhelmingly supportive of the school and virtually all felt that the school was well led and managed. As one parent said, 'Since the new headteacher has taken over - my children have a lot of respect for him.'

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that teachers consistently challenge pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Ensure that the new assessment and tracking systems are used effectively by all staff to set challenging targets for improvement.

- Develop the roles of subject leaders in improving teaching and learning and raising achievement.

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

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Attainment on entry is rising, and pupils now enter Year 3 with standards which are broadly average. In recent years, pupils' achievement from their starting points has been inadequate, and the 2007 national test results showed that standards in Year 6 were below average in English, mathematics and science. However, because of the successful strategies adopted, pupils' progress has improved in all year groups over the past school year, but remains uneven. Current Year 6 pupils are mostly on track to reach their challenging targets and have achieved satisfactorily. Pupils with behavioural, and emotional difficulties, and those with other difficulties achieve as well as their peers because teachers plan adequately for their needs and teaching assistants give support.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils believe that behaviour is good and inspectors agree. A very small number of parents are concerned about behaviour, but the inspection found no evidence to support those concerns. Most pupils say there is little bullying. They know they can go to teachers if there is a problem. Pupils understand how to keep safe and they are strong advocates of healthy lifestyles. Through 'Fairisle Friends', pupils ensure that no one is left alone at playtime. The school council helps pupils to learn to consult and take on responsibilities. They take great pride in planning and running a stall at the school fete, and this gives them experience of financial planning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They participate enthusiastically in assembly and their understanding of European art and culture is good. They have a sound knowledge of world faiths and cultures.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning has improved but there remains too much variation in the quality of lessons. For example, in some lessons, teachers do not use time well, and their expectations of pupils are too low, resulting in slowed progress. Some teachers are not yet using the school's new assessment procedures effectively and their marking of pupils' is of variable quality. Teachers' planning across year groups is generally good. They have a clear focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy by planning work, which they mostly match well to the needs of different pupils, although this is not yet consistent. Year 6 teachers are providing valuable revision and 'booster' classes, and parents appreciate this. As one said, 'My son has had extra lessons after school to get ready for SATs - the support he gets is great.'

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is now helping pupils to make satisfactory progress. This is because it now has a better focus on developing pupils' basic skills. The literacy curriculum has improved by increasing the links with other subjects, leading to good examples of writing. The school is yet to make similar cross-curricular links in numeracy. The curriculum provides adequately for the needs of pupils, including those learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good links with the infant and local secondary schools help pupils to change schools smoothly. The provision for music is good because of the effective support provided by the LA music service. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities and visits, including a residential trip for each year group. There are many clubs for pupils. Of these, dance, sport and gardening are particularly popular.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The academic guidance pupils receive is satisfactory. It is helping them to achieve satisfactorily, but could be more effective. The new assessment system is not yet fully implemented. As a result, pupils do not yet have clear enough guidance about how they should improve. Pupils are well cared for and they benefit from a pleasant and well-maintained school. Staff supervise pupils well at playtimes. The school provides lots of play equipment and pupils contribute by acting as 'buddies' in befriending others. Parents are particularly pleased about the quality of care for individual pupils, and feel that pupils settle well in Year 3. As one parent commented, 'Staff have been extremely supportive during my daughter's recuperation from ill health'. The school nurse and the emotional literacy support assistant also make valuable contributions. Procedures for health and safety and child protection are fully in place. Staff monitor pupils' behaviour and attendance well.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The good leadership of the new headteacher is driving the school to concentrate on raising standards. School leaders have ensured the school has begun to improve by setting high expectations and challenging targets for the school. These actions are part of a comprehensive improvement plan, prepared in effective partnership with the LA. Leaders have also improved the curriculum to provide a better development of skills and to have higher expectations of pupils. Because of these actions, pupils have begun to make satisfactory progress. Some key subject leaders are new to their roles. They have recently begun to monitor their subjects but are not yet fully effective in improving pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility. Self-evaluation is currently only satisfactory because weaknesses in tracking pupils' progress prevent leaders from having an entirely accurate view of strengths and weaknesses. School leaders have established a highly caring climate for pupils. They provide well for pupils' personal development and give high priority to meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils through specialist staff and outside support. Governance is good because governors are knowledgeable and well involved in the life of the school and fulfil their duties well.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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   | 3   |

### 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 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 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 | 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?   | 3 |

<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>                                       | 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  | 3   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 3   |
| 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  | 2   |
| 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

21 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Fairisle Junior School, Southampton, SO16 8BY

Thank you for making the inspectors feel so welcome at your school and for being so helpful when we spoke to you. We found your school to be improving and providing you with a satisfactory education.

What we like most about your school is that:

- you and your parents told us how well staff care for you
- you are polite and helpful and you behave well
- you are keen to live healthy lives
- you are good at helping around the school and you enjoy school a lot.

To help improve your school further we have asked your teachers to:

- use their assessments better to check what you already know and what you need to learn next
- make sure their teaching is not too easy or too difficult for you, so that you make better progress in your learning
- make sure subject leaders help teachers so that their teaching in different subjects helps you learn well.

You can help by remembering your targets and working hard to reach them.

Thank you once again for an enjoyable visit to Fairisle Junior. We wish you very good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Dukes

Lead Inspector