

Fairfield Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119969
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313462
Inspection date	20 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Ruth Westbrook

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Wood
Headteacher	Heather Osgood
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2004
School address	Cheshire Drive South Wigston Wigston LE18 4WA
Telephone number	01162 782424
Fax number	01162 774557

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. During a one-day visit, the inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the standards reached by pupils at Key Stage 2; how effectively the curriculum promotes spiritual and cultural development and provides pupils with opportunities to contribute to the community; and how effectively target setting supports pupils' progress.

The inspector gathered evidence from lesson observations, discussions with pupils, staff and a governor, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's documentation, parental questionnaires and national assessment data.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school on the southern outskirts of the City of Leicester, drawing many pupils from two adjacent housing estates. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Virtually all pupils are from White British ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Pupil mobility has increased in recent years. In the current Year 5, 37% of pupils did not start in Reception. In 2005 the school was recognised as an Investor in People and received a Sports Activemark in 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has improved significantly since its last inspection. The headteacher, with strong support from other leaders and governors, has very effectively shared her vision of inclusion, harmony and achievement based on a shared understanding between adults and pupils of 'The Fairfield Way'. The excellent care, guidance and support throughout the school promote an environment where pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities thrive and work well together. Pupils' care and safety are a high priority and very effective systems are in place to safeguard pupils. Many parents comment on the high quality of care and support that is, in the words of one parent, 'Excellent! The staff always go the extra mile.' One of the key contributors to this caring ethos is the pupils' excellent understanding of their role within the school community and locality. Pupils of all ages take their many responsibilities as 'superleaders', school councillors and monitors very seriously. They carry out their duties independently and show considerable respect for each other in the process. Many activities engage pupils in giving service to the local area, like carol singing and concerts in residential homes. Pupils welcome members of the community into school for lunches and shows. Strong links have developed with local organisations like the three churches and these partnerships enrich the school's provision.

Pupils' achievement is good. By the end of Year 5, standards are above average in English and mathematics and average in science. This represents good progress through the Foundation Stage and the rest of the school from a level below expectation on entry. All groups of pupils make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported because their needs are carefully identified and met by an appropriate allocation of resources. Pupils have made slower progress in writing at Key Stage 2 than in other subjects. The school has identified the reasons for this and has increased the opportunities to promote extended writing. There is clear evidence that these actions are raising standards. There has been an improvement in standards in Key Stage 2 English and, to a lesser extent, mathematics since the last inspection. In science, pupils have made slower progress because there are too few opportunities planned for investigation. There has been staff training to address this, but as yet, the impact is not reflected in improved science standards.

There has been a substantial improvement in standards at Key Stage 1. Before the last inspection, test results in Year 2 had started to decline. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved at a much greater rate than those nationally. In 2007, standards in writing in Year 2 were exceptionally high.

Good teaching helps pupils make this good progress in their learning. Teachers plan a range of activities that are stimulating. Relationships between all members of a class are very good, based on clear expectations about behaviour and work rate. Teachers and pupils share targets clearly and effectively. Pupils understand what they need to do to improve because regular marking highlights what they have done well and indicates what they need to remember in their future work. Teachers set clear learning objectives and review pupils' progress towards them. In these reviews however, there is not a sufficient match of demand made on pupils through the questions chosen, with their differing abilities.

The curriculum has been revised in the last two years. This has led to considerable improvements and it is now good. The emphasis has been on planning activities that pupils will enjoy. Pupils' enjoyment is high and reflected in their good attendance, which has also improved considerably.

Pupils' attitudes to work are positive. They are well motivated to learn and appreciate that their views are taken into account in the choice of curriculum themes. As a result, pupils develop a good range of interpersonal skills and self-confidence that are helping them to prepare for a successful future. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development have been a focus for improvement since the last inspection. These are now good and through a rich programme of themed days, visits and visitors, pupils have a much greater awareness of the faiths and cultures different to their own. Other opportunities are included like the Year 3 class orchestra, choirs and learning French in Years 3 and 4. Curricular planning takes account of the different needs pupils have within a group. However, there are occasions when tasks do not challenge the most able pupils to work independently and solve problems that are more difficult.

The curriculum and caring ethos of the school promote good personal development and well-being. Behaviour is good because pupils are encouraged to reflect on their actions and feelings towards each other through reflection time and assemblies. Pupils benefit from the many opportunities for social and moral development and learn to work well together. They are supportive of each other in lessons. Older pupils enjoy the opportunities to help younger ones with their work. Pupils say they feel safe in school as a result. They feel that bullying happens very rarely, but are confident that they know what to do when it happens and that they can seek help from the adults around them. Pupils are particularly active at break times taking advantage of the grounds and equipment that is available for play. Many take part enthusiastically in the many active clubs and sports opportunities that are part of the good extra-curricular programme. Most pupils eat healthily and understand the reasons for this.

Good leadership and management focus on raising standards. Senior leaders use data well to set challenging targets for year groups and individuals. Progress is checked carefully and intervention programmes are in place to support those who are underachieving. The good level of understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, as demonstrated by the good rate of improvement since the last inspection, shows that the school's capacity for further improvement is good. Plans clearly identify the improvements that are still to be made. Co-ordinators have varying levels of experience to lead their subjects, but senior leaders are well placed to support this development. There is a gap currently, in science, but plans are in place to address this. Governors' effectiveness has improved and is contributing towards school improvement. The school works very well with others to enhance the quality of its work. There are particularly good links with the high school that support smooth transition. Other links with a number of specialist schools contribute towards improving curriculum provision. Relationships with parents are very good and the overwhelming majority are very appreciative of the school's work.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good and the care, guidance and support provided for children are outstanding. Children settle well when they first enter the school because of the excellent links with home and pre-school settings. Home visits help to establish positive relationships with children and parents and promote future family learning links. Children enter the school with a range of abilities but most are below the level expected for their age. They make good progress and move on to Key Stage 1 with skills and abilities that are average. Consistently good teaching contributes to the good progress made in all areas of development. Well planned lessons provide a range of lively and imaginative opportunities for children to take part in an effective balance of child-chosen and adult-led activities. Both indoor

and outdoor areas are stimulating. Activities encourage children to be independent and to take responsibility, as shown by the very sensible way children watered and cared for their pansy tubs and vegetable garden. The Foundation Stage is well led. There is a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and a striving to keep on improving and raise standards. Leaders have rightly identified writing as a priority this year because gains made, although satisfactory, are not yet as high as in other areas of learning. Opportunities provided for writing, such as making shopping lists and producing short newspapers, are beginning to address this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science by increasing opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations.
- Use targeted questioning to challenge individuals and check out understanding.
- Provide greater challenge for the most able pupils by planning approaches that nurture independence.

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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?	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?	1
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 ¹ reached by learners	2
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	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Annex A

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 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	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 Pupils

Inspection of Fairfield Community Primary School, South Wigston LE18 4WA

Thank you for the help you provided when I visited your school recently. I received a very warm welcome and your comments were very helpful to me. It is a good school. I would like to share with you what I found. I particularly liked these things.

- You make good progress in your work and reach above average standards in English and mathematics.
- You enjoy school very much indeed, working with your friends on a variety of activities during and after school. Your lessons are interesting and there are some good opportunities to put into practice the skills that you have learned.
- The contribution you make to your school and surrounding community is excellent. You take responsibility sensibly and appreciate the opportunity to be involved in making decisions.
- Your headteacher leads the school very well. She and other staff care for you extremely well and support you to do your best. This makes you feel safe in school and there is always someone there to help you should you need it.
- Your behaviour is good and you care well for each other.
- Your attendance at school has improved considerably this year.
- You find the feedback you get from your teachers helpful. You know your targets and try hard to work on your feedback to improve.

I have asked the school to improve some things so that you can make even better progress. The progress you make in science is not as good as in English and mathematics. I have asked teachers to plan more investigations so that it is. Some of you could manage more challenge in some of your work, and questions put by your teachers could make more demands on some of you. I have asked them to make sure that these things happen.

I hope that you will do your best to help your headteacher and her staff to put these things in place and play your part in ensuring that your school continues to improve, The Fairfield Way.

Ruth Westbrook Lead inspector