

# Fernvale Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119967
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327166
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Capper

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	193
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maureen Hill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Elliott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Somerby Road Thurnby Leicester LE7 9PR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2416 722
<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2416 722

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- progress in mathematics, especially for girls
- enrichment of the curriculum and how well it contributes to pupils' enjoyment of learning and enables them to contribute to the community
- how well the school assesses pupils' learning to meet their differing needs
- the way in which the school welcomes and supports pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of documentation and an analysis of parents' views. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Pupils come to this broadly average sized primary school from the village of Thurnby as well as from neighbouring communities in the City of Leicester. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are taught in one Reception class, which has a new temporary teacher this term. Pupils transfer to a local high school at the end of Year 5.

## 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 that supports pupils' academic and personal development well. Pupils are happy, sociable and articulate. They behave well and this contributes strongly to good learning. The school's focused efforts to promote positive values are reflected in the pupils' good understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles and to stay safe. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school because the good curriculum is successfully enriched well by clubs, visits and visitors. These help to bring subjects alive. Pupils speak very positively of school, typically saying that 'school is fun' and 'we learn lots of exciting things'. These positive attitudes reflect the good way in which pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education and for later life.

Pupils' achievement is good because they are generally taught well. Teachers make learning interesting, get on well with the pupils and ensure that there is usually good challenge in lessons. Children get a good start in the EYFS and make good overall progress in the rest of the school. Consequently, standards rise to above average levels by the end of Year 5. However, teachers do not always expect older pupils to present their work neatly enough. This leads to pupils sometimes making careless mistakes, for example, in their numeracy work. In writing, pupils show that they can write neatly and to a good standard when they are producing special work for assessments, but their everyday work is too often scruffy, with few pupils in Year 5 consistently using a neat handwriting style. There are no significant differences between the progress of boys and girls. The school rightly identified from 2008 test results that a small number of girls were learning too slowly in mathematics. Leaders are tackling this well by providing additional support and planning a wider range of practical activities. As a result of these initiatives, the level of engagement of girls in numeracy lessons has quickly improved.

The school is welcoming to pupils with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision is managed well and teachers make good efforts to include pupils with statements of educational needs in all activities. For example, adults that have been trained in Makaton signing used these skills at the Christmas concert so that all pupils could be fully involved. Skilled teaching assistants and carefully planned support means that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. As one parent noted, 'The school has put in a lot of effort to help my son get on well and to achieve his goals.'

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory, with strength in the quality of pastoral support. As one pupil commented, 'Teachers are nice and all the children are very friendly.' Pupils say that they feel safe and secure and they know what to do if they have a worry. Academic support is satisfactory. There have been many helpful developments since the last inspection, but these are not yet consistently embedded across the school. Teachers generally make good use of assessments to ensure that pupils are provided with the right level of challenge in their work. Pupils are beginning to be aware of their targets for improvement. However, teachers rarely add written comments when marking work to show pupils the next stage of their learning. This means that they have too limited an understanding of how they can improve.

Pupils are proud of their school and the way it enables them to become responsible young citizens. Throughout the school, pupils happily take responsibility and they make a good contribution to the community. This is clearly seen in the conscientious way in which the school council and eco-rangers take on their roles. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good in terms of encouraging pupils' awareness of local, national and international issues.

The school's successful focus on teaching pupils about their place in the wider world is reflected in their recent International School Award.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is setting a clear direction for school improvement. Members of staff and governors work well as a team and they take a good part in monitoring school effectiveness. This means that there is a good understanding of what still needs to be done, although monitoring has not picked up quickly enough on the untidy work being produced by some older pupils. The school has gathered a wealth of data about pupils' attainment and this is used well to identify any who need additional support. The use of challenging targets to ensure that progress is consistently good is less well established. However, the school has already begun to tackle this successfully by introducing a new assessment system that is setting more challenging targets than in the past. This is already beginning to have a positive impact on learning. The school has demonstrated in the way that it has maintained above average standards since the last inspection and in the way it is being managed that it has a good capacity for further improvement.

There are good links with parents and outside agencies. Almost all parents are very pleased with the school. They make a good contribution to the school's success by supporting their children's learning at home, especially in reading. One parent summed up the views of many by commenting that 'the attitude of the staff and children is positive and the school always feels welcoming'. This comment successfully captures the key strengths of this school.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in the EYFS achieve well and make good progress. They are well cared for and learn new skills quickly. Consequently, from starting school with skills which are lower than those typically expected for their age, children's standards rise to slightly above average levels by the start of Year 1. Children make especially good progress in personal development because of the high expectations of all adults and the sensitive way that they are helped to settle when they start school. There is a happy, purposeful atmosphere in lessons, although there are some missed opportunities to challenge some of the more able when they are given work which is the same as others. Good use is made of the outdoor area to support learning. Provision is well managed. In the absence of a phase leader, the headteacher is effectively keeping a watchful eye on provision. New members of staff are being supported well to help them to improve their skills quickly so that there is no dip in children's progress whilst a permanent appointment is being made.

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

- Monitor the quality of older pupils' recorded work more carefully to check that pupils are writing neatly and are consistently producing their best work in English and mathematics.
- Ensure that teachers add written comments when they are marking pupils' work that give clear guidance about how it can be improved.



## 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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## 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	2
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

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

## 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	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	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



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

14 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fernvale Primary School, Leicester, LE7 9PR

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You are polite, friendly and well behaved. We enjoyed talking to you and agree that yours is a good school that does a lot to help you.

Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

- You make good progress in the Reception Year. You settle well and develop good confidence.
- In the rest of the school, generally good teaching helps you to learn well and to make good overall progress.
- You thoroughly enjoy school because adults make learning exciting by planning interesting activities and letting you take part in many clubs and visits.
- You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. The school council and eco-rangers are doing a great job!
- All adults in school are very kind and caring. You are beginning to understand how to improve your work, although this could still be developed further.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are leading the school well and are working hard to make it even better.
- Nearly all of your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Check that teachers always expect you to produce your best work, especially in English and mathematics, and help you to develop a neater handwriting style.
- Make sure that teachers add written comments when they are marking your work so that you are clear about how you can improve.

You can help your teachers by taking greater care with your written work. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn, and we wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Capper

Lead inspector