

Foley Park Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135049
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	329014
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	223
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Howard Martin
Headteacher	Kathryn Sugars
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Northumberland Avenue Kidderminster DY11 7AW
Telephone number	01562 823857

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2009
Inspection number	329014

Fax number

01562 752191

Age group	3-11
Inspection dates	16-17 June 2009
Inspection number	329014

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Foley Park is an average sized primary school. It was newly opened in September 2007 when the existing first school became a primary school. This is the school's first inspection. Pupils are predominately White British with very few from other ethnic groups. A very small minority of pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. A much higher-than-average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals and have a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one, mornings only, Nursery class and one Reception class. At the time of the inspection the school was being managed by the deputy headteacher in the role of acting headteacher during the substantive headteacher's planned absence.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Foley Park is a satisfactory school. It is a happy and harmonious community where pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and all the interesting things they do. Pupils demonstrate satisfactory progress, achievement and personal development, and these are rapidly improving as a result of good leadership and management. The school is a delight to visit, it is beautifully arranged, with stunning wall displays and a caring, friendly atmosphere in which pupils feel valued.

When children first join the school, their skills are below those levels expected for their age and they make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils aged five to 11 of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress over time, although standards throughout the school remain below average. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the majority of classes teaching and the progress pupils make are good, but in Key Stage 2 a small proportion of teaching is inadequate and a few pupils do not make enough progress, especially in mathematics. This is in part due to the way pupils' individual targets lack precision, and are not always used well to help them progress at a sufficiently challenging rate.

School leaders have an accurate view of the school and have put a robust and effective system in place for monitoring and improving standards and the quality of teaching. The standard of pupils' work was exceptionally low when the school first opened, but a clear focus on teaching, learning and assessment has ensured that standards have now risen in all age groups. Senior leaders recognise that there is still a way to go in helping pupils achieve at a higher level, particularly in writing. They also recognise that the low levels of attendance make this task more difficult. Effective actions have reduced the amount of persistent absence substantially. However, too many parents take their children on holiday during term-time and attendance remains unacceptably low for this reason. The school is working closely with parents to address this issue.

Parents are very positive about the school and appreciate the care and consideration shown towards children and themselves. They all report that their children develop well and, as one typically remarked, 'He is confident and enjoys all aspects of this super school.' Good care, guidance and support mean that pupils are equally positive. They feel safe, act very safely and really like the way 'everyone gets on well together'.

The good curriculum includes an excellent range of activities, trips and projects which, for example, encourage pupils to accept plenty of responsibility, contributing to the local community, for instance, by tree planting to encourage otters. Good promotion of community cohesion means that pupils show a strong respect and understanding for people who are different to themselves. This experience, together with good teamworking skills, but below average basic skills, means that pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their next school and future lives.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and it is led and managed well. Strong liaison with parents ensures that children quickly settle and begin to develop the skills essential for their future learning and well-being. Staff know the children well and carefully track their progress. The communication and language skills of children are particularly low when they

first join, but high quality interaction between adults and children helps them to catch up. As a result, pupils make good progress and are soon working securely towards all the areas of learning, sometimes reaching them. Nevertheless they remain below national averages overall by the time they join Year 1. Teaching is skilled especially in supporting basic skills. Children also work confidently when they are on their own or in groups and have great fun during the many activities provided, finding out about the seaside for example by writing letters and building sandcastles. Children's use of computers in the Nursery is very good. Activities flow freely between indoors and outside. The school recognises, however, that the outdoor spaces lack covered areas for wet weather and suitable room for ride-on equipment, which sometimes inhibits outdoor activities. The 'forest school' is used very well for developing many skills. In one session, for example, children enthusiastically dug, raked and filled up a wheelbarrow with wood chips, showing good physical skills and teamwork. Children develop well personally, learning, for example, to take turns and help others. This is supported by a rich array of additional activities such as the recent talks by visitors to Reception about the Chinese New Year and Divali, to help them understand the way different people live.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve attendance and raise standards throughout the school, particularly in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2, through better use of pupils' individual targets, especially in mathematics.
- Improve the outdoor spaces for Nursery and Reception so that children can go outside in wet weather and use the ride-on equipment more frequently.

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

Standards have risen significantly this year, but remain below average, because the quality of teaching varies from good to inadequate. Progress in Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics is satisfactory overall. A small minority of pupils in Key Stage 2 do not make adequate progress, especially in mathematics, but also in English. The school is aware of this and has clear plans in place to resolve the issues. There are no significant differences in the progress being made by more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In Key Stage 1, progress and achievement are good and pupils make more than expected progress in mathematics and reading and satisfactory progress in writing. In science and information and communication technology progress is also good and pupils reach standards in line with those found nationally.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and, although this is not reflected in their attendance, most pupils' attendance is satisfactory when they are not on holiday. There are many aspects of pupils' personal development which are good, including their understanding of how to lead healthy lives. The uptake of sport is high and many pupils have begun eating more fruit and vegetables. The strong contribution they make to the school and community is reflected in pupils' keen efforts to recycle and save energy, their team enterprise to raise money for charity and the road safety film and posters they produced for local people. These examples are but

a few of the many ways they help each other and become involved in how the school runs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils value the lovely environment of the school and the excellent playground facilities and look after them very carefully. They behave well and show a mature consideration for people from other cultures; as one explained, 'Just because people come from different families, we should still respect them, and you can get some really good friends by doing so.'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 1, where lively motivating tasks keep pupils engaged. In one lesson for example, well-planned activities helped pupils to quickly grasp how to make a symmetrical pattern using small bricks, pegs or crayons according to their different levels of understanding. In Key Stage 2 the picture is more mixed and teaching is satisfactory overall. There is a significant and increasing proportion of good lessons in this key stage where some pupils make rapid progress. However, a small minority of lessons are inadequate and fail to ensure that pupils make the progress expected of them, especially in mathematics. This is in part due to the inconsistent way that teachers make use of pupils' individual targets in planning to meet their different needs. It is also because pupils are rarely familiar with their targets and so are not always clear about what they personally need to do to improve. There are many strengths in teaching. For example, teachers plan well to encourage pupils to work well in groups and independently. In addition excellent relationships in lessons throughout the school ensure that pupils are well behaved, feel well supported and are keen to learn.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is arranged well to build systematically on pupils' learning. It is very rich and contributes substantially to pupils' enjoyment of school. The school has a varied and well-attended number of clubs, including a breakfast club, as well as many trips, visits and projects. For example, a trip to an animal sanctuary, the science 'think tank', a fire brigade visit and work with a graffiti artist are but a few of the more recent activities undertaken to bring learning to life. There are pockets of good provision in science and art for pupils who are gifted or talented, although provision for this group is underdeveloped. The school successfully encourages exercise with plenty of sports throughout the week and an exceptionally well resourced and attractive play area. Provision in the performing arts is good and the Christmas talent show and production were enjoyed enormously. Pupils' understanding of how to keep safe is also supported well through projects with the police and fire service for example.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures to safeguard pupils meet requirements. There is good quality support for pupils who experience learning and other difficulties, including close links with external agencies. The nurture class is securing a good start for those younger pupils and children who experience delayed development in one or more areas. Strategies were put in place so that local authority targets to reduce persistent absence were successfully met. The school has been effective in guiding and improving progress. There is accurate assessment, challenging long-term individual

targets for pupils and regular monitoring of pupils' progress towards these. Everyone is clear about the amount of progress being made by each pupil and skilled support is swiftly given to those falling behind. The skills of teachers in using this information in planning lessons and involving pupils however is not so well developed, which is why progress in some lessons is still too slow.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have achieved a great deal in the last two years despite major disruption from building work and staff absences. The quality of teaching has been improved substantially due to well-targeted support, good use of performance data and professional development. The levels of underachievement have reduced significantly and many pupils now make good progress. The capacity to improve is good. Senior staff use information about pupils' progress very well to provide an accurate self-evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development. They also use this information well to set challenging targets which are increasingly being met from a very low baseline. The role of subject leaders in raising standards is strengthening, although not fully effective yet in all subjects. The governing body understands the main issues facing the school but their role in challenging the quality of school improvement, although satisfactory, is still being developed.

The school promotes community cohesion well. For example, some enrichment activities teaching Mandarin and Polish, reflected local and international communities. Work with a special school has helped pupils become far more aware of the issues that children and adults with disabilities face.

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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	NA
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?	3
The standards ¹ 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

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
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	4
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 learners' needs?	3
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?	2

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 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**

18 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Foley Park Primary School, Kidderminster, DY11 7AW Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch, and seeing some of your lessons.

Your school has a friendly and caring atmosphere. It is a satisfactory school, with many good things going on, just as you described. Satisfactory teaching helps you to make at least adequate progress in your lessons, although we think the standards you reach in English and mathematics are not yet high enough. In many lessons teaching is good, but for a few of you it is not leading to enough progress. In addition some of you have poor attendance which slows your progress even more. For this reason we have asked the school to improve your attendance and the standards you reach, especially in writing. We would also like your teachers to use your individual targets more carefully so that more lessons are of good quality and you always progress well, particularly in mathematics. We are sure they would appreciate discussing this with you and hearing your ideas about how you might help.

Senior staff do a good job in running the school. They have made a big improvement to the quality of teaching and to your learning already, and for this reason you are doing better each year. You have a good curriculum and your teachers see to it that you have lots of exciting activities, trips and projects to keep you interested and to help you develop many different types of skills. We would like to see improvements to the outside areas for children in the Nursery and Reception so that they can go out during wet weather and also ride their tricycles and other toys.

Despite the low attendance of some, you make sound progress in your personal skills; especially in the good way you contribute to the local community, help each other and behave so maturely. We are impressed with the way you want to do well, and you clearly enjoy coming to school. We would particularly like to see you carry on with the good work you all do in helping to improve the school. All these things, alongside your good skills in working together, give you a suitable preparation for your next school and future lives.

Yours faithfully

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector