

# Farley Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109538
<b>Local Authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	337315
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Thomson

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	245
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Margaret Trinder
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Stephen King
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 January 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine teachers in twelve different lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and analysed 55 questionnaires from parents and carers, 200 from pupils and 20 from staff. The team also looked at the data the school had collected about the pupils' progress and at the school's records of its monitoring of the quality of teaching.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current attainment and progress, particularly in English, and of boys and White British pupils
- how effectively teachers use assessment in lessons to help pupils improve their work, and involve them in assessing their own learning
- the effectiveness of middle leaders' monitoring and evaluation to identify and address any underachievement and to accelerate progress.

## Information about the school

Farley is an average sized school. A much higher than average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who do not have English as their first language, has increased and is now much higher than average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also much higher than average, although the number of those with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average. A larger than average number of pupils joins and leaves during the school year. The school has gained many awards, including Healthy Schools status for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Since the previous inspection there have been considerable changes in staffing.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

Farley Junior school is providing a satisfactory and improving standard of education. Following a period when standards declined, there has been a steady improvement over the past three years resulting in gains in pupils' achievement. The majority of parents and pupils are positive about most aspects of the school. For example, most pupils feel that adults care for them and are interested in their views. Staff know the pupils well and those pupils who need additional support are particularly well looked after. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle, through their good participation in sport and keen awareness of healthy eating. Their behaviour is satisfactory and makes an effective contribution to learning. Some pupils, like some of the parents and carers, have concerns about the clarity and effectiveness of procedures to deal with any unacceptable behaviour. This is managed satisfactorily, but communication about how it is done is not clear enough.

The school's self evaluation is sound and the senior leadership team understand the strengths and areas for development well. Effective support from the local authority and other partnerships are having the intended impact on pupils' progress. Progress in English, in particular, has improved and also that of boys and of White British pupils. These rises are particularly apparent in Year 6 classes, but are not uniform across the whole school, or happening quickly enough. At present, the school has many systems in place to tackle underachievement, but it does not evaluate their relative effectiveness well enough to prioritise its actions to bring about rapid enough improvement. In addition middle leaders are not involved enough in the monitoring and evaluation of the areas that they are responsible for. There has been a considerable turnover of staff in recent years, which has interrupted the pace of improvement. The leadership team is monitoring lessons regularly and, although the quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving, it is not yet good enough to bring about improvements quickly enough. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils and pupils settle to work quickly. However, in some lessons, work is not always matched well enough to the needs of all pupils or expectation high enough. Nor are pupils always given enough guidance to enable them to be involved effectively in assessing how well they are achieving.

Attendance has improved, but it is still low. Much absence is due to extended holidays abroad. The determination, drive and commitment of all leaders, along with the improvements already made, mean that the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

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- Further raise attainment and accelerate progress through ensuring that all teaching is at least good by:
  - giving all pupils work that is sufficiently challenging and well matched to their individual needs
  - involving pupils more in assessing how well they are doing so that they know if they are learning effectively
  - having a consistently rigorous approach to making use of data to inform lesson planning.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management through more rigorous and effective monitoring and evaluation, which:
  - has a more systematic method of checking the effectiveness of any strategies put in place to address underachievement or areas for development
  - increases the involvement of middle leaders
- Raise attendance to be at least in line with that found nationally by reducing the amount of absence caused by extended trips abroad in term time.
- Provide clear information for parents and pupils so that they have confidence in the effectiveness and fairness of procedures to deal with unacceptable behaviour.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Most pupils behave appropriately and contribute well in class. They respond well to enthusiastic teaching, concentrating well on the tasks they are set. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, they were seen debating well with each other to evaluate the impact of various advertising leaflets, against clear success criteria. However, in some lessons, pupils could not say if they were learning well as they were not clear about what was expected of them. In those lessons progress slows. Pupils enter the school with standards that are generally below average. Progress is satisfactory although standards remain below average when they leave Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who do not have English as their first language also make satisfactory progress because of well targeted support, both in lessons and in small groups.

Most children say that they feel safe in school. They say that there is always an adult that they can turn to and they believe that there are few incidents of bullying. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and they make a satisfactory contribution to both the school and the wider community, through roles such as Junior Champions caring for the environment. At present there are not enough opportunities for the younger pupils to take on responsibility. The school council plays a prominent part in school life and has a large say in what happens in school, such as organising an International Day. Pupils are prepared adequately for their future

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economic well-being by having particularly sound information and communication technology (ICT) skills and a keen sense of co-operation and consideration for others when working together.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Most lessons have varied activities that ensure most pupils are engaged in learning. Although the work usually caters well for the pupils' differing needs, it is sometimes not challenging enough or matched well enough. Information from assessment is not always used well enough to support lesson planning. Teaching assistants provide good support that enables students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to have access to the curriculum. Teachers often use good questioning techniques to challenge students, but at times opportunities are missed for pupils to think enough for themselves. In some lessons, teachers explain clearly to pupils what it is they should be learning. This allows them to be involved in assessing their own learning. However, in other lessons this is not apparent and, as a result, progress slows. Whilst most teachers' marking is helpful in making clear the next steps students need to take in their learning,

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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for example in writing, this is not consistent across different subjects or across the school.

The curriculum is well organised, weaves together different subjects and is enriched by visits to places of interest, events at school and a wide range of clubs. Many of these opportunities add to the satisfactory progress that pupils make in their broader personal development. For example, during the inspection, a visitor brought to life Aboriginal culture through a series of imaginative activities, including music, dance and face painting. The new 'creative' curriculum is aiding enjoyment, although it is early days to show the full impact of many of the new initiatives on progress. Although care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, the school gives particularly sensitive attention to its most vulnerable pupils. The work of the family worker is much appreciated and there are some examples of significant successes in the way in which the school helps pupils overcome difficulties to achieve well. This was seen to good effect during the inspection in some of the small group work with pupils who do not have English as their first language. Strategies to boost attendance are beginning to have an effect on reducing the number of absences.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The senior leadership team has a clear vision for the school. The headteacher is beginning to involve middle leaders in the school's self evaluation in some areas, but at present they are not involved as much as they could be. Monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress has improved and is becoming more rigorous; already there is evidence of underachievement having been tackled, with gaps in performance of different groups of pupils beginning to close. This, along with a 'no tolerance' attitude to racism, indicates that equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are becoming more effective as teaching has improved but not enough of the teaching is sufficiently good or better to raise standards further and accelerate progress.

Safeguarding is satisfactory, with clear policies and sound risk assessment systems. Partnership with a local football club is helping pupils raise their self esteem through developing a range of interesting life skills. The school has carried out an evaluation of the three aspects of socio-economic, religion and culture in community cohesion. Whilst the promotion of community cohesion within school and locally is effective, planned links

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with schools nationally and internationally are yet to be fully established. Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development and some are active around the school. They ask appropriate questions of leaders and managers, but they are not sufficiently involved in evaluating the school's performance.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Around one quarter of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. Almost all felt that their child was kept safe and enjoyed school. The pupils' enjoyment was seen by the inspectors. A small minority feel that the school does not help them enough to support their children's learning or take account of their concerns and suggestions. Inspectors agreed with this and this is something that the school recognises and is taking steps to rectify. A small minority also feel that the school does not deal effectively with any unacceptable behaviour. This view was also backed up by discussions with the students themselves. Inspectors found that the school does not communicate clearly enough with parents and carers or pupils about how they deal with unacceptable behaviour.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Farley Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 245 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	33	32	59	4	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	35	30	56	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	30	34	63	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	30	33	61	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	31	33	61	3	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	31	27	50	9	17	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	20	33	61	8	15	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	13	24	37	69	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	26	32	59	5	9	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	28	24	44	10	19	3	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	19	32	59	10	19	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	17	31	24	44	8	15	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	28	32	59	5	9	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



Thursday 6 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Farley Junior School, Luton, LU1 5JF

Thank you for making the inspectors feel welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, both in your lessons and around the school. Your views were very helpful to us.

We judged that your school is satisfactory and getting better. You have a good understanding of what it means to be healthy. Most of you behave, work and play together sensibly. Your questionnaires told us that you enjoy all the things that you do at school and most of you feel safe there. They also told us that you feel adults look after you well and are interested in your views.

There are some things that your school could improve:

- your teachers should always give you work that is just right for you and make it clearer for you to be able to tell how well you are doing
- the headteacher and other leaders need to check more carefully how well you are learning so that you can make even faster progress
- those leaders who are in charge of the various subjects should also check on how well you are learning
- the attendance of some of you should improve
- the school should make it clear to you how it deals with those of you who do not behave well at times.

You can help by asking your teachers to make it clear how you can tell if you are doing well in each of your activities in class. You should also attend school as regularly as you can.

We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Thomson

Lead inspector

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