



# Fairway Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103330  
**Local Authority** Birmingham  
**Inspection number** 295791  
**Inspection dates** 7–8 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Linda Rockey HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Muirfield Gardens
<b>School category</b>	Community		Kings Norton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Birmingham B38 8XQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4643200
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	74	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4643201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Vacant Position
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine O'Malley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 April 2005		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7–8 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 295791
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) and an Additional Inspector. When the school was inspected in April 2005, it was judged to require special measures because it failed to give the children an acceptable standard of education. At the time of that inspection, the headteacher had been in post for two weeks following a succession of four acting headteachers. Since April 2005, the school has been monitored on a regular basis by HMI.

## Description of the school

Fairway Primary School is a small school situated in a residential area of Kings Norton. Over the past few years, local housing has been demolished and the number of children on roll has fallen significantly. In October 2005, a proposal to close the school resulted in another fall in numbers. Most children are from a White British background. About 20% of the children are from different ethnic groups, including dual heritage, Indian and Black African. Very few children are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is above that found nationally and rising.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The inspectors agree with the school's judgement about its overall effectiveness. The school provides a satisfactory quality of education and helps children develop well. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. Parents and children have noticed things have changed for the better. 'My son enjoys coming to school now,' is how one parent summed up the improvements. Children say they are made to work harder in lessons and they particularly enjoy practical activities 'like those in science'.

In April 2005, standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were exceptionally low and children throughout the school were seriously underachieving. The 2006 unvalidated results were well below average at both key stages. The school knows there is still a lot to do to raise standards. Nevertheless, as a result of the headteacher's strong leadership and improvements in teaching, children are making satisfactory progress. Analysis of the school's own data clearly shows that the gap between how the children are doing and what they are capable of is beginning to close.

Children enjoy coming to school and, as a result, attendance and punctuality have improved. Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Foundation Stage where they are helped to settle quickly. Recent changes to planning ensure the youngest children have an appropriate curriculum for their age, although there are not enough planned opportunities for outdoor learning. Throughout the school, relationships are a strength. Children feel secure, valued and well cared for. Therefore, their attitudes to learning, behaviour and personal development are good. Targeted support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities enables them to make satisfactory progress. They are included well in all the school activities. A good range of after school clubs and visits to places of interest enrich the satisfactory curriculum and engage children's interest well. A digital photography club has been especially popular with children of all ages. Children speak enthusiastically about their work with the artist in residence and love their new dragonfly sculpture. Children are satisfactorily prepared for their move to the next school and have a sound understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They trust adults and know who they can turn to if they need to.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although there are examples of good teaching, there is not enough of it across the school. The senior leadership team recognises this and is working hard to develop consistently good teaching in every class by sharing effective practice. However, the team's monitoring and evaluation is insufficiently focused on the impact of teaching on children's learning. Teachers mark work regularly and make helpful comments but children are not always sufficiently clear about the next steps in their learning. The headteacher has successfully created a positive climate for learning and nurtured effective teamwork within a stable staff. Leading by example, she is developing the senior leadership team and is determined to tackle underperformance. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They continue to strengthen their role as critical friends

and have nominated specific governors who keep a check on standards in the core subjects. Under the effective leadership of a well informed chairperson they have begun to monitor the work of the school, holding it to account for the standards achieved by the children. Both the capacity to secure further improvements and leadership and management are satisfactory.

Over the past two years, the falling roll has had a negative impact on finance. The school runs smoothly from day to day and the headteacher and governors keep a close eye on expenditure. The local authority is supporting the school with a review of staffing in order to secure financial viability for the future.

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

- Raise standards and accelerate children's progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching by increasing the proportion of good lessons.
- Ensure staff understand levels of attainment and know how to move children's learning on.
- Make sure monitoring and evaluation focus more precisely on the impact of teaching on children's learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children are making satisfactory progress as they move through the school. When they start school, the children's knowledge and skills are below that expected for their age. Attainment and progress are still not what they should be at the end of Years 2 and 6 because of the past inadequacies in provision. By the end of Year 6, the standards children reach are still well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. The 2006 results show the standards reached in mathematics were particularly disappointing.

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

### **Grade: 2**

This is an area of strength. Children are friendly, confident and well behaved. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children know the difference between right and wrong and work and play together in harmony. Other cultures and faiths are valued and respected by the children. This prepares them well for life in a multi-racial society. Children make a good contribution to the school community. They willingly take on additional responsibilities by representing their class on the school council and organising music for acts of worship. They also contribute to the wider community, for instance fundraising for the Java earthquake appeal. Assemblies provide regular opportunities for reflection and spiritual development. They successfully promote a sense of a school identity and reinforce key messages, for example the importance of 'working hard' and 'coming every day', although attendance, which has improved, is still no better than satisfactory. Friday assemblies are well attended by

parents and carers and provide good opportunities for children to share and celebrate success.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated and some teaching is good. There needs to be more of it. Where teaching is good, it is characterised by: clear learning objectives shared with the class; well planned activities which meet the wide range of children's learning needs; and, active engagement and purposeful learning. Teaching assistants work in effective partnership to provide a stimulating, exciting learning climate. Areas for development include providing more opportunities for children to discuss their thinking and increased modelling of language by adults to develop children's range of vocabulary. On occasions, adults miss opportunities to promote and develop basic skills, for example, by explaining vocabulary when reading an unfamiliar story.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Resources have been significantly improved since the last inspection, for example, information and communication technology is resourced well and children are gaining confidence and skills which will support them well in the future. Children enjoy the after school clubs. Activities to enrich the curriculum have been appreciated by the children. They said the recent art project was a highlight of the term. It resulted in an exciting musical instrument for outdoor play.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Academic guidance is satisfactory but children are not always given a clear enough picture of what they need to do to improve their work. However, staff provide good pastoral care and support for all children. Children feel safe and secure in the school. They appreciate the 'worry box' outside the headteacher's room and say they know who to turn to if they need help. There are effective arrangements in place for child protection and safeguarding is well attended to. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out diligently and governors are regularly involved in these activities.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher is determined to make this school better. Despite recent difficult circumstances, she has remained positive and maintained a clear focus on improving the quality of education for the children. She has worked systematically to tackle issues identified in the last report. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and teachers have been challenged and supported to provide children with the best learning experiences possible. There is a greater consistency of practice and a series of initiatives have improved the curriculum, behaviour and attendance. There is a growing sense of corporate responsibility for improvement developing amongst the staff. A new assistant headteacher has strengthened the leadership team and is working well with the deputy headteacher. They both lead a new curriculum team. These teams are yet to have an impact on raising standards. The school has set a deficit budget with the agreement of the local authority. The three-year financial strategic plan indicates the school will be able to set a balanced budget for 2007–8.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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.

## 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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, I have been visiting your school regularly to check how well things are going. There have been a lot of improvements since the school was judged to need 'special measures'. I am delighted to tell you that the school is now much better and it no longer needs 'special measures'. When Mrs Harker and I visited your school recently we judged it to be a satisfactory school.

Here are some of the things we liked.

- You are now making better progress as you move through the school.
- Mrs O'Malley and the staff are working very hard to make sure you all do your best.
- You enjoy learning and come to school regularly.
- Adults take good care of you and help you to learn.
- You get on with one another and behave well.
- Extra clubs and artists, like the wood carver, are helping to bring learning to life for you.

What we have asked the school to do now.

- Help you to make even better progress and reach higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve teaching so that all your lessons are good ones.
- Make sure the teachers know how to move you from the level you are working on to the next level.
- Keep a closer eye on how well you are learning from the teaching in lessons.

Make sure you keep up your hard work! Best wishes for the future.