

Folville Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120034
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	313485
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Krishan Sharma

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Abhishek Tangri
Headteacher	Joan Bertram
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2004
School address	Folville Rise Leicester LE3 1EE
Telephone number	01162 824368
Fax number	0116 2827393

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a considerably larger than average-sized primary school. A large majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds but a higher than average proportion of pupils are from a diverse range of minority ethnic groups. The number of pupils for whom English is not their first language is higher than the average as is the number for those known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average.

The school has gained an Investors in People accreditation and, very recently, a Healthy Schools Award.

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 where pupils achieve well. The staff and governors are determined to raise standards and achievement for all pupils. Pupils enter Year 3 with standards consistently below the national average. The school's early assessment shows that many of these pupils enter with insecure literacy skills. The standards at the end of Year 6 are close to the national averages in English, mathematics and science. Some groups of pupils, such as those with English as an additional language (EAL) or learning difficulties, make good progress as a result of the school's careful guidance and interventions.

Pupils enjoy being at school and one of them described the school as a 'happy place to be'. The improving attendance further supports this view. Pupils are keen to learn in lessons because of the wide range of opportunities offered to them. Pupils feel safe and know that adults in the school care about them. Teachers focus on, and achieve outstanding success in, developing pupils' self-esteem. As a result, they display self-confidence in their work and relationships with others. Pupils are ready to take on greater responsibility for assessing and improving their own work, although at this stage, their skills are insufficiently developed for this task. Nevertheless, academic guidance and support are good overall. Targets for pupils' learning are set for English, but guidance about targets in mathematics is not as consistent. However, individual goals set for pupils in their homework logs are clear and represent an excellent way of involving parents in their children's learning.

Teaching is good overall, as is the curriculum, where planning delivers a broad range of knowledge and skills to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers' marking is supportive. The needs of a small group of average or near-average ability pupils are not always met as successfully as they are for other groups because the work planned for them is insufficiently challenging. When this happens, the rate of their progress is not always as good as it is for others. The curriculum is hugely extended through numerous enrichment activities, particularly in music and art.

Good leadership and management have secured effective improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' progress is recorded and analysed to inform future planning. This routine of collecting assessment data is working very effectively to identify individual pupils who need further support. However, the current system is lacking in details to track rigorously the progress pupils make as they move up through the school and to give a secure overview of the whole-school performance. The school's other checking arrangements are working well. The school is resourced well and the recent additions to the information and communication technology (ICT) suite and the library are beginning to have an impact on pupils' learning. Considering the steadily improving standards and its good overall provision, the school has a strong capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop pupils' skills in assessing and improving their own work.
- Ensure that the school's tracking of pupils' progress is rigorous and provides clear information for all leaders to maintain a secure overview of the whole-school performance.
- Strengthen the setting of targets for learning in mathematics and ensure that all average ability pupils receive suitably challenging tasks in all three core subjects to guide and improve their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are broadly average in Year 6 and pupils' achievement from their consistently below average starting points in Year 3 is good. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, those with learning difficulties and the higher-attaining pupils all make good progress. A small number of pupils, particularly those of average ability, do not progress as much as the other groups. Often this happens because the work given to them is not closely matched to their specific needs. The recent improvement in standards and achievement has been brought about through the focused teaching of basic skills and science across the school and by the additional support given to identified groups of older pupils. Achievement in reading is particularly good, partly due to additional daily time allocation and the training that has been provided. Although achievement in writing and mathematics is steadily improving, the school rightly considers these areas to be the ongoing priorities to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes towards learning. They show good manners and relate well to each other in this culturally diverse environment. Behaviour is good in and around the school and creates an environment that is conducive to learning as well as to ensuring pupils' safety. As a result of the school's concern with promoting good health, most pupils make healthy choices when eating in school and enthusiastically participate in a wide range of physical activities. Some parents were concerned about bullying in the school, but pupils assured the inspectors that it was rare and, if and when it occurred, the school dealt with it effectively. Attendance has been below average but has recently improved and is now similar to the national average. Pupils learn to take part in decision-making through the school council and they make a good contribution to the wider community by supporting local and national programmes and charities. Pupils' average standards in basic skills and ICT mean their preparation for the world of work is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is always at least satisfactory, and good overall. Teachers successfully foster good work habits. As a result, pupils engage with their work and most make good progress. Teachers' planning is consistently clear about what pupils are expected to learn. Teachers display good subject knowledge as they use and promote the use of key vocabulary in their lessons. Such emphasis effectively contributes to pupils' achievement, particularly that of the EAL groups and other pupils whose range of vocabulary is limited. In the high proportion of good lessons, the pace of learning is brisk, work planned is well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils and the purpose of all activities is fully explained. In the satisfactory lessons, activities planned are not always well matched to pupils' abilities and, as a result, some pupils make only adequate progress. Marking, whilst frequently good, is somewhat inconsistent. It provides a focus for further improvement, but occasionally it does not specify how this can be achieved.

Teachers encourage pupils to assess their own work, but not all pupils are fully confident to do this.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is structured well to meet all statutory requirements. The provision for literacy and numeracy has been updated to match the new frameworks and ensure that the focus remains on raising standards and achievement. Music and art figure strongly on the timetable. Consequently, in both areas, standards are high. The provision for ICT is now extensive but its use to promote pupils' learning across the curriculum is not as far advanced. Other significant features of the curriculum include an opportunity to learn a modern foreign language and Latin. There is a wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities. Parents appreciate the extended provision and strongly believe it adds to their children's enjoyment. There is strong focus on pupils' personal development through the curriculum. Consequently, pupils' confidence in themselves has grown considerably as has their awareness of healthy eating and staying safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care and support for pupils are excellent. Safeguarding procedures are secure. Pupils know there is always an adult they can confide in if they are worried or upset, and they feel safe in school. Staff have worked successfully to improve attendance. Academic support and guidance is good overall. The support and guidance given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in the early stages of learning English are particularly effective. As a result of assessments made in English, teachers set and share targets to support and guide the next steps in pupils' learning. The weekly homework logs also provide individual goals for pupils to meet, which are shared with parents and encourage them to get involved in their children's progress at school. In other subjects, guidance through targets, although satisfactory, is not as consistent. Some lack of clarity about targets and marking does not always help pupils know how well they are progressing in their work and how they could improve it.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, other leaders and the governors are fully committed to improving pupils' academic achievement and their personal development. After extensive consultation, the headteacher has identified the right priorities to guide the school's work towards this goal. Senior leaders and middle managers have a good overall view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A range of data is collected and effectively used to identify and support the pupils in each class who are not performing as well as they should. These arrangements ensure that the EAL pupils and those who need additional support make good progress. However, the use of data in tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school is inconsistent, partly due to some overlap in the responsibilities of subject leaders in English and mathematics and those of the four Heads of Year. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and are now sufficiently confident to provide challenge when it is needed. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and appreciate what it offers to their children. A parent captured this view well, 'the school puts a lot in and the children benefit enormously'.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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 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?	2

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

Thank you for the way you made us feel welcome and for talking to us about the work you were doing. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

This is what we thought was good about your school:

- you work hard at school and make good progress
- you behave well and get on well with each other
- your teachers plan their lessons well and they know what they want you to learn
- you are very good at music and art
- you enjoy taking part in after-school activities
- you feel safe at school and know someone in the school will listen to you if you have a problem
- you care about the community and show it by raising funds to help good causes
- your governors are fully committed to supporting the school
- your parents very much appreciate what the school does for you.

This is what we asked the governors and the headteacher to do to improve your school:

- help you to learn to assess and improve your own work
- improve the way teachers keep a close check on the progress each and every one of you make as you move through the school
- make sure that all of you have targets to aim at in mathematics as you now do in English, and that all of you feel challenged by the work given to you.

You can help your school by helping your friends so that all of you achieve your best.



23 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Folville Junior School, Leicester LE3 1EE

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Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma
Lead inspector