

Fleetville Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117137
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	363861
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Keith Brown

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Juliet Woodford
Headteacher	Jeremy Loukes
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 16 lessons and 12 teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, teachers, and the chair of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at safeguarding arrangements, as well as other information including development planning, schemes of work, policies, procedures and a range of pupils' books. A total of 121 parents' and carers' questionnaires were scrutinised, together with 16 from staff and 100 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Do all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, know how well they are doing in their learning and how to improve further?
- Are teaching and learning now consistently good or outstanding?
- How accurate are the school's assessments of the progress made by pupils?

Information about the school

Fleetville is an above average-sized junior school. Two thirds of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and the rest are from a wide variety of other heritages. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average as is the proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs are similar to the national averages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. Amongst its national awards, the school has Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools status and Activemark.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Fleetville Junior is an outstanding school. Pupils get off to an excellent start in Year 3 and the outstanding quality of the learning and progress of many pupils is maintained throughout their time in the school. Teaching is excellent, pastoral care is exceptional and the curriculum is highly stimulating and very innovative. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent and they feel very safe. 'We are proud to go to Fleetville Junior' is typical of the comments pupils made during the inspection. Parents and carers are very happy with the education their children receive. One noted 'I couldn't ask for a better school for my children to attend.'

At the time of the last inspection, the school was judged to be good and improving rapidly. The pursuit of excellence has now been maintained over a considerable period of time, demonstrating the school's outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership that is calm, analytical and responsive and he has empowered leaders at all levels to help drive improvement.

The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leaders have established an exceptionally rigorous programme of self-evaluation, which includes an extremely accurate assessment of teaching and learning in lessons and very detailed tracking of pupils' progress. It enables them to pinpoint where improvement is needed for individuals and groups of pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have a clear understanding of how well they are doing in their lessons and what to do to improve.

The school's performance in the national English and mathematics tests for pupils in Year 6 has been high for the last five years. It is typical of the school's aspirational approach that leaders have recognised that attainment in mathematics could be raised even higher. A programme to enable pupils to develop a greater depth of mathematical understanding is being developed for all year groups. Attendance is high and punctuality exemplary, as pupils enjoy all their time at school. Pupils' keen appetite for teamwork, together with their very high literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology skills, prepare them exceptionally well for their future education.

Fleetville Junior School is a very important part of its local community. Leaders do much to promote community cohesion and they are keen to lift provision for it to become outstanding. Although there are already some good links with schools in

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other areas, they are looking forward to promoting community cohesion still further by widening links with other schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics by raising pupils' confidence in using mathematical concepts.
- Extend the school's provision for community cohesion by implementing its plans to link with schools in other localities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The attainment of pupils on entry varies but is generally above average. The school builds exceptionally well on the favourable starting points of many pupils. The work of pupils currently in Year 6 and the school's assessment records show that the pupils are on track to maintain high levels of attainment. The progress made by all pupils, whatever their background, is at least good in all subjects. Pupils who arrive at the school with slightly lower abilities make exceptional progress in reading and writing, with high-achieving pupils making outstanding progress in reading and mathematics. Pupils learning English as an additional language are making excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress because staff have identified pupils' individual needs early and appropriate interventions are put in place. Teachers and teaching assistants help pupils by providing appropriate support and challenge, modelling skills precisely and teaching specialist subject vocabulary.

The learning observed in lessons was outstanding. Pupils gain knowledge and develop understanding exceptionally well. They practise the skills they learn very competently. Pupils listen to each other's views carefully and are skilled at using a partner to bounce ideas off and come up with a well-reasoned answer. In an outstanding Year 6 history lesson, for example, pupils worked in pairs to answer complex questions about the staging of plays in ancient Greece. Pupils showed a resolute determination to tackle very challenging activities in all the subjects observed and were rarely off task.

Pupils have an excellent understanding about what constitutes unsafe situations and talk confidently about how to keep safe and stay healthy. Their knowledge of safety procedures and rules within the school is exceptional and older pupils assume responsibility naturally for ensuring that younger ones learn and abide by them. Behaviour in and out of lessons is exemplary and pupils say there is no bullying.

Pupils make outstanding progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural

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development. They have an excellent understanding of their rights and responsibilities and pupils are keenly aware of how their actions can affect others. They enjoy taking on extra responsibilities, for example, by joining the school council or by becoming ‘buddies’ for younger pupils. School musicians are held in very high regard and perform regularly at local churches and the town’s concert hall as well as being featured on radio and in the town’s newspapers. Pupils have developed an excellent knowledge of the world of work and of their future economic role in society by the time they reach Year 6.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve. In all lessons, they make sure pupils understand clearly what they are expected to learn. At regular points in the lesson, teachers review pupils’ learning to keep the level of challenge appropriate. Marking of pupils’ work is exceptionally thorough and helpful, using praise well and providing clear guidance for improvement. Teachers have been able to develop their expertise through well-targeted professional development courses and through opportunities to observe the best practice of their colleagues in the school.

An excellent curriculum builds very well on pupils’ previous learning and prepares them thoroughly for the next stages in their education. Interactive whiteboards are used very effectively to enliven lessons and make learning more memorable. Pupils say that they enjoy the themed days and weeks that are a regular feature of the curriculum. For example, a recent Fair Trade day organised by Year 5 helped pupils

¹ 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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to learn much more about world markets and the ethics of fair trade. The curriculum is extended by an excellent range of art, music, dance and sport activities, as well as by visits and visitors.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding because pupils are so well known and they receive excellent individual support. Parents, carers and pupils are very confident that they will be looked after well. Pupils are helped to settle in when they join the school and there is sensitively targeted support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Links with external agencies and work with families, especially those facing challenging circumstances, are exemplary.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is supported very ably by the deputy headteacher and the leadership team. All staff are focused relentlessly on further improvement and work together outstandingly well. Plans are evaluated rigorously and followed through. Morale is very high. Promotion of equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work, creating a very positive and harmonious atmosphere. Fleetville Junior is a truly inclusive school in which there is no evidence of discrimination and pupils sometimes with major disabilities are welcomed as members of the school community. The school is tracking each pupil's progress towards very challenging targets. The headteacher and other leaders review teachers' planning, monitor the quality of lessons, and scrutinise pupils' work outstandingly well.

The headteacher's very informative reports to the governing body convey progress towards targets within the school development plan. There have been a number of changes in the composition of the governing body over the last two years. Several new governors have all been inducted effectively. The governing body provides good strategic direction and challenge and is involved fully and systematically in evaluating the school. Financial management is excellent and the school offers outstanding value for money.

The school works exceptionally well with parents and carers, whose views are sought and acted upon regularly. A well-organised Parents' and Carers' Forum represents a cross-section of the parents and carers. It has provided guidance on topics such as the content of curriculum evenings and the layout of school reports. Parents and

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carers are kept very well informed. For example, regular newsletters keep them abreast of activities in the school and the school's website is accessible and friendly in tone. Links and partnerships with agencies ensure exceptional support for pupils who have specific needs. Fleetville Junior is the 'hub school' for a local authority consortium of 17 schools. The work undertaken has enabled the school to develop a wide range of high-quality services, such as parent and carer support, counselling and mentoring.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are outstanding. They are reviewed regularly, so that adults and pupils have an excellent understanding of safety issues. Risk assessments are exceptionally thorough and considered by the local authority to be a model of excellent practice. Very careful checks are made of the suitability of adults to work with children. Community cohesion is promoted well. Following a thorough audit, the school has rightly assessed that community cohesion could be improved further by building links with a wider range of schools. Plans are in hand to develop this aspect.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire is similar to that in most primary schools. The very large majority of responses were positive about most areas of the school's work. Very few parents and carers expressed written concerns, but there was no common theme among them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fleetville 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 121 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 351 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	64	43	36	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	88	73	33	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	43	36	76	63	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	43	65	54	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	64	53	56	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	62	51	57	47	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	45	65	54	1	1	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)	82	68	37	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	52	43	65	54	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	42	64	53	3	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	49	40	67	55	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	73	60	47	39	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	81	67	39	32	0	0	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fleetville Junior School, St Albans, AL1 4LW

Thank you for your welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our time with you. A special thank you goes to those of you who shared your views with us through questionnaires and in conversations. You told us that you feel extremely safe and very well cared for and we found evidence to support this view.

We judged that your school is outstanding. You work very hard. Many of you make excellent progress and you behave exceptionally well in and out of lessons. You listen to one another and look after one another. The things you learn about are interesting and the teaching is outstanding.

Your headteacher and all the staff do an excellent job in leading and organising the school. We have asked them to help you do even better in mathematics by giving you opportunities to become more confident in using mathematical ideas. We have also asked them to help you to learn more about how pupils work in other schools. You can help by continuing to attend regularly and doing the best you can in all of your lessons.

Congratulations on what you have achieved and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Brown
Lead Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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