

Farnham Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102801
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	355263
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Gordon Ewing

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	500
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jackie Hardie
Headteacher	Mrs Erica Quirk
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 20 lessons, observing 18 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, governors, members of staff and groups of pupils. Informal discussions were conducted with some parents, carers and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, including the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, pupils' work in their exercise books and teachers' planning and marking. Inspectors took account of separate questionnaires completed by 323 parents and carers, 47 staff and 47 older pupils.

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

- How much progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage from their starting points.
- The relative rates of progress of all pupils, especially boys, as well as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in English and mathematics through different parts of the school.
- How effectively leaders at all levels monitor the quality of teaching and ensure that assessment information is used effectively so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- The effectiveness of senior leaders and governors in driving and sustaining improvement over time.

Information about the school

Farnham Green is a large primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average. The largest groups of pupils are those from Asian and Asian British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English is well above average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is close to that found nationally. Predominantly, these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at expected times is very high. There has been a significant turnover of teachers in the last two years.

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

Farnham Green is a satisfactory school, where pupils are happy and clearly enjoy being part of an inclusive and cohesive community. Some features of the school's work are good. Its effective partnership with parents and carers is reflected in the high regard in which the school is held within the community. As one parent affirmed, 'It's a good listening school'. Another confirmed, 'Links with parents are strong and we are kept well informed'. Pupils' personal and social development is good, they behave well and are very polite and courteous. They report confidently that they are well cared for and feel safe. They undertake roles such as school councillors and Eco Rangers conscientiously and with apparent pride. The school works hard, and with clear impact, at promoting community cohesion and is justly proud of its successes in engaging with 'hard to reach' families and communities locally.

Most pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Children make sound progress in the Nursery and Reception classes so that they move to Year 1 adequately prepared for the challenges ahead. At the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, though broadly average overall, has been variable in recent years. This was particularly so for boys in mathematics. In recent times, the school has taken concerted action to improve the overall performance of boys, with some evident success. However, it is too early to gauge the degree to which these improvements are sustainable throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress as their needs are met appropriately in lessons and through additional support. The school faces considerable challenges in meeting the needs of a significant number of pupils who join the school at unexpected times. The effective induction and support for these pupils and their families ensure that most of these new entrants make up for the lost ground in their education. Pupils are set targets in English and mathematics but their progress towards these targets is not checked with sufficient rigour. Consequently, day-to-day lesson planning does not consistently meet the current needs of all learners.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, though improving. Improvements in the teaching are due to the senior leadership team's recent drive to improve attainment and rates of progress for all pupils. Most staff have benefited significantly from an impressive range of additional training, the impact of which is now being seen in improved outcomes for pupils. The effective practice of a few teachers, in using the detailed tracking data available to cater for pupils' current learning needs, is not duplicated in all classes. In addition, the analysis of pupils' progress is not rigorous enough and, consequently, opportunities are frequently missed to accelerate learning consistently. In a few lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work independently and to use self-checking strategies to improve their accuracy. This is not a common feature across the school.

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Teachers' marking is positive and praising, but rarely gives pupils effective guidance in how to take the next step and to increase their independence.

Strategic planning is satisfactory. Leaders have a sound grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses but self-evaluation lacks rigour and precision. Consequently, it is difficult to evaluate systematically the impact of the school's actions on outcomes for pupils. Some aspects of its evaluation, for example in judging the quality of teaching and learning, are over-generous. Governors are committed and bring a broad range of skills and experience to the school. However, they are too reliant on the school's leadership for improvement information and, as a result, are not systematic and robust enough in holding the school to account. Though there are evident weaknesses, it is clear that recent steps taken by the school to improve teaching and to secure higher levels of progress, particularly for boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are having early impact. Consequently, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2011, build on recent successes in improving the attainment and progress in mathematics of all pupils, and especially boys, by:
 - giving targeted support to teachers so that they more accurately identify and address the learning needs of all pupils in mathematics
 - extending the range of activities, especially for boys, that match pupils' learning styles
 - targeting boys' learning through real-life learning situations in mathematics and within the creative and enterprise curriculum.
- By July 2011, improve the use of assessment to support learning and, as a result, improve attainment and levels of progress for all pupils, by:
 - providing further training so teachers understand how to make rigorous use of assessment information to plan work that is better tuned to pupils' day-to-day learning needs
 - involving pupils in the setting of learning targets, to develop their skills in checking their own and others' progress and increase their independence
 - monitoring lessons systematically, scrutinising pupils' work and improving teachers' marking and feedback so that pupils are better prepared for the next step in their learning.
- By December 2011, increase the school leadership's capacity to plan strategically for improvement and its rigour in monitoring the impact of the school's work by:
 - refining the school development plan so that it sets precise and measurable targets
 - establishing rigorous systems to monitor the impact of school policies and practices on outcomes for pupils
 - scrutinising data about pupils' progress more frequently and precisely to ensure recent improvements are extended and sustained

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- involving governors more effectively by ensuring that they work more strategically with key personnel to increase the level of challenge to the school's leadership.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils exhibit very positive attitudes to learning, although their overall attendance remains broadly average. The parent support adviser plays a pivotal role in reducing absence and improving punctuality, even though some parents continue to arrange family holidays in school time. Pupils understand the dangers of alcohol, drug taking and smoking but are less vigilant in following a healthy diet. They work and play well together and they report that, though incidents of bullying and racism are rare, staff respond swiftly and effectively in dealing with any problems.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are inconsistencies in pupils' rates of progress as they move up through the school, due to variations in the quality of teaching. When teaching is good, pupils behave particularly well and are responsive learners. In a good mathematics lesson, for example, pupils learned effectively how to convert pounds sterling to euros, using a line graph. They responded enthusiastically when the teacher tested their agility in calculation and they used a range of strategies to work out the answers. Learning is less effective in lessons where teachers talk for too long, activities are not sufficiently challenging and when teachers do not effectively use day-to-day assessment to tune lesson activities to pupils' different rates of learning.

Pupils take on additional responsibilities with vigour and purpose. Through a range of special events such as 'Heritage Month', fundraising events and environmental projects, they make a valuable contribution to their school community and beyond. Pupils demonstrate sensitive appreciation of other cultures, and the evident harmony across the school is a testament to their cultural awareness. Pupils have sound basic skills and can apply these in a range of contexts. However, they do not have a confident grasp of how to take the next steps in their learning or to evaluate their own progress effectively. As a result, the preparation they receive for their future lives is no more than satisfactory.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Relationships across the school community are good, ensuring that pupils are keen to learn and want to make the most of their lessons. When these qualities are tapped fully by good teaching, their learning is vibrant and purposeful. For example, in a good literacy lesson, pupils developed a range of impressive vocabulary linked to writing an account of a recent lesson, using photographs taken at the time. They used powerful time connectives such as 'eventually', 'firstly', 'finally' and 'penultimately' with great understanding and accuracy. This effective practice is not replicated across the school. Teachers use 'talk partners', sometimes to good effect, but opportunities are missed to develop pupils' skills in assessing their own work and that of their peers. This limits the development of key independent learning skills. Teachers make good use of the wide range of resources available such as visualisers, computers and interactive whiteboards, though the unreliable internet connection diminishes their impact on learning.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs and visits. It is adequately matched to most pupils' needs, interests and aspirations but does not cater well enough for the learning needs of boys, especially in mathematics. It is effectively personalised for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English and for the numerous pupils who join the school in mid-year. There is an appropriate range of intervention activities for pupils with speech and language difficulties.

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Staff know the particular needs of pupils well. They take good care of pupils because safeguarding procedures, alongside the strategies to protect vulnerable pupils, are thorough and robust. The early identification of vulnerable pupils plays a key role in ensuring that they attend school regularly and receive targeted support in lessons. Links with parents, carers and external agencies are good, for example in the way Somali and Gypsy Roma families are effectively supported.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The strong partnership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher has been a stabilising force during a period of turbulence in staffing in recent times. Their steady hand has ensured that the impact of this disruption has been limited. The effective induction of new teachers and a comprehensive programme of training are beginning to bear fruit in improvements in teaching and more secure rates of progress for pupils, especially for boys. Teachers themselves report that they are increasingly confident in their teaching, particularly in English and mathematics, and feel more empowered to continue the trend of improvement in the future. Target-setting across the school and at strategic planning level is not sufficiently rigorous. Self-evaluation is over-generous in some respects because it is sometimes based on perception rather than rigorous analysis. Leaders and governors do not make sufficiently rigorous use of the good range of accurate data available to inform strategic and day-to-day planning or to monitor the work of the school and evaluate its impact on the attainment and progress of pupils.

Governors and senior staff ensure that there are rigorous procedures for child protection and for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff. Regular risk assessments ensure the site is secure. The school is fully committed to promoting equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination. However, some issues over lack of challenge in lessons and the inadequate progress of boys in mathematics are only now beginning to be addressed. The school gives good attention to community cohesion and parents fully appreciate the efforts made to engage with all the cultural groups represented in the community. The impact of the school's work can be seen in the harmonious relationships between pupils and families from a range of different backgrounds.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in Nursery and Reception and reach broadly average levels by the time they join Year 1. Staff manage the children effectively and the children quickly settle into the well-established routines. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They feel safe, learn to lead healthy lifestyles, behave well and share sensibly with each other. Children receive good support in developing their speaking and listening skills so that they are able to discuss aspects of their work with confidence. However, opportunities to develop children's writing skills, for example in the outside learning environment, are underdeveloped.

Adults observe and assess children's learning throughout the day and keep appropriate records of the progress made. Planning and assessment procedures are not sufficiently robust and accurate. Consequently, the tracking of children's progress is not always based on precise starting points. Adults do not use this information systematically enough to shape the planning of learning activities on a day-to-day basis. Staff have appropriate training, and safeguarding procedures are secure. Leaders have accurately identified areas for development, but the subsequent action plan lacks precision. It does not include sufficient information about what needs to be done, who is responsible for implementing the action and how its impact will be evaluated.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Approximately three-fifths of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. This is well above average. The responses of the very large majority were positive about their child's overall experience at school. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about the school's management of misbehaviour and the leadership team's response to their suggestions and concerns. With regard to the former, inspection evidence showed that pupils reported convincingly that any misbehaviour was dealt with effectively and swiftly. Behaviour in lessons and around the school was judged as good and, even when teaching was insufficiently stimulating, pupils' behaviour was never less than satisfactory. Regarding the latter, in discussions with parents and carers at the start and the end of the day, inspectors heard very positive views about the school's response to their suggestions and concerns. Parents and carers reported convincingly that any issues brought to the attention of the school were always dealt with promptly and effectively. In written responses and in discussion, a few parents and carers were also sensitive to the fact that the school has experienced significant staff turnover in recent years. In discussions, staff reported that morale was high and that the school was well placed to build on recent successes because teamwork was strong and they had gained much from recent training opportunities.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Farnham Green Primary 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 323 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 500 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	173	54	143	44	5	2	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	157	49	155	48	11	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	118	37	182	56	16	5	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	96	30	185	57	28	9	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	113	35	183	57	18	6	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	107	33	181	56	30	9	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	125	39	181	56	5	2	1	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)	93	29	197	61	12	4	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	85	26	203	63	22	7	4	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	100	31	203	63	22	7	4	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	75	23	197	61	31	10	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	105	33	190	59	11	3	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	133	41	161	50	19	6	4	1

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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">■ 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.



18 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Farnham Green Primary School, Ilford IG3 8UY

The whole inspection team enjoyed its recent visit to your school to see you at work. Thank you for warmly welcoming us to your school and talking to us about your learning and school life.

You informed us that you enjoy school and that you all get on well together. Most of your parents and carers are also happy with the school. These are the things that we found to be good.

- You behave well, especially when lessons are interesting; you share your ideas with each other and work and play as part of a strong school community.
- Most of you feel safe and secure and thoroughly enjoy lessons.
- You are keen to improve your school and you play your part by taking on responsibilities, such as being a school councillor or an Eco Ranger.
- The staff take good care of you and you are confident that they are always available to help if you have any worries.

We also found:

- you make sound progress through the school, though we know you can do even better, especially in mathematics
- you know how to lead a healthy lifestyle, for example in exercising regularly, though we were concerned that at lunchtimes you do not always choose foods that are healthy.

Everyone at Farnham Green Primary wants the school to be even better and to achieve this we have asked the staff and governors to improve these things:

- your attainment and rates of progress in mathematics, particularly that of boys
- teachers' marking, target setting and advice to you so that you know what you have to do to improve your work
- the way the staff check on how the school is performing so that they can plan more accurately how to make the school even more successful.

You can help by continuing to work as hard as you can. We wish you all every future success.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Ewing

Lead inspector

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