

# Furley Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132235
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	360413
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Hutchings

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	412
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Ketley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Reed Crescent Ashford TN23 3PA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 30 lessons involving 14 teachers, and held meetings with the chair of the governing body and representative governors, staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, attended assemblies, and looked at school development and curriculum planning documents, assessment information and pupils' work. In addition, inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 61 parents and carers, and scrutinised others from staff and pupils.

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

- How much progress do pupils make through Key Stage 2?
- How well does the school help children settle into the Reception classes and make progress?
- How effectively does the school use assessment information to monitor the impact of its provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- What is the impact of senior leaders' evaluation of weaknesses and the action taken to bring about improvement?

## Information about the school

Furley Park School is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, and a range of other ethnic backgrounds are represented in small numbers. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school serves an area of rapidly expanding housing and population so that an above-average proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school part-way through their primary education. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and represents a wide range of needs. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. The school works in an informal partnership with two other primary schools locally. A children's centre is due to open on the school site early next year.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Furley Park is a good school. Since its last inspection, staff have built well on the strengths identified at that time. As a result, the school has moved on in important aspects of its work and outcomes. For example, pupils' behaviour is now excellent, which makes an important contribution to their consistently good progress. The school now also has other outstanding aspects to its work, including its partnerships with other establishments. Its work with two other primary schools contributes exceptionally well to pupils' well-being and achievement. Pupils visit each other's schools, share work and go on trips together, which all has a considerable impact on their social development. Staff work closely with families to ensure that pupils are outstandingly well cared for. As a result of the emphasis placed on promoting pupils' emotional and physical well-being, pupils manage themselves very well and respond keenly to the school's guidance. They have an excellent awareness of how to stay safe because personal safety is emphasised strongly in the curriculum. They are entirely convinced about the benefits of healthy lifestyles and have extremely well-developed habits to help their future health.

Pupils achieve well across a broad and interesting curriculum. Children have a good start to their education in Reception and develop a strong foundation for later learning. All groups of pupils make consistently good progress through the school because of effective teaching, so that attainment is above average overall by the time pupils leave the school at Year 6, with the strongest picture in English. At the time of the last inspection, although good overall, pupils did not make consistent progress through Key Stage 2, as they did at Key Stage 1. This is no longer the case. The focus on achievement in writing has increased the proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels by the end of Year 6. This success has been achieved through giving pupils good opportunities to talk about their work, and staff are now working to develop this approach further. The school has recently embarked on a new approach to teaching numeracy, which is proving equally successful in improving pupils' confidence and attainment in mathematics, but has yet to make a full impact. Teaching engages pupils well and pupils usually find their work challenging, although occasionally the start of the lesson does not take learning for higher-attaining pupils forward quickly enough. Teachers regularly value and display examples of pupils' work, which pupils find motivating. However, this stimulating approach is not yet used consistently across the school, thus missing opportunities to create interest and provide useful background information for current learning.

The headteacher's very effective leadership motivates and inspires everyone in the school. There is a real sense of shared responsibility and commitment among staff, who feel valued and empowered in their roles. The school's good track record is accurately identifying the most important areas for further development and seeking innovative solutions. Its success in embedding new initiatives shows its good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Take every opportunity during lessons for pupils to develop confidence and raise their attainment by:
  - providing more activities for pupils to talk about their work and develop their speaking skills
  - ensuring that work always provides enough challenge for all groups of pupils, particularly in mathematics and for higher-attaining pupils.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Pupils have an excellent attitude to learning and their self-management is strong. They concentrate and sustain collaborative or independent work for long periods because teachers make learning interesting. These good learning skills were used to good effect in Year 5 lessons, where pupils reflected on and showed genuine interest in what remembrance meant to individuals in preparation for the school's Remembrance Assembly. Pupils know about the quality of their work and what they have to do next. They regularly refer to their individual targets, and because these are frequently reviewed and amended, pupils find them motivating. Pupils are keen to do well and appreciate that teachers make learning fun, shown when Year 3 pupils were enjoying new ways to master multiplication.

Such positive working habits and pupils' exemplary behaviour have had an important impact on their achievement and helped to secure consistently good progress. Attainment on entry to the Reception classes is a little below expected levels and from this point onwards all groups of pupils progress well. For example, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who join the school through the year meet or exceed the challenging targets set for them each year. As a result, attainment has lifted at Year 6 to above-average levels, and especially so in English, where improvements to provision have had greatest impact. Attainment in mathematics is fast catching up as a result of recent changes to the teaching of this subject. Pupils practise and apply their basic skills, including their computer skills, well in other subjects, preparing them well for secondary education.

Pupils respond extremely well to the opportunities given to learn about aspects of safety and their health. They have a very strong awareness of the benefits of exercise and a healthy diet and participate enthusiastically in sports activities. They take on a wide range of responsibilities, for example as prefects or school councillors, contributing well to the smooth daily running of the school. They have a strong sense of moral purpose and good social skills, often developed through joint activities with pupils from the partner schools. Pupils know that their views are valued and the school is now seeking to give them an even stronger contribution, for example about how they learn best.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Consistently good teaching is a key factor in the improvement in pupils' attainment. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, which they use well to respond to pupils' views and understanding. Teachers ensure that the needs of all learners are met, focusing teaching assistant support well to those pupils needing additional help. For example, effective use is made of work in small groups at Key Stage 1 to embed pupils' understanding of letter sounds and accelerate reading skills. In most cases teachers make learning interesting, for example illustrating ideas and information using well-chosen software and computerised whiteboards. They make good use of key questions to extend and enrich pupils' vocabulary. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils developed higher-order reading skills of deduction and inference well because they discussed their ideas and opinions about the text in pairs. Just sometimes, however, pupils are not always given that extra push to develop their confidence to move their learning further forward. For example, pupils are sometimes not required to articulate their ideas to the whole class, as they do to their 'talk partner'. Pupils receive good feedback on their learning and understand the next steps in their learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Staff have worked in closely with partner schools to develop the school's new 'irresistible curriculum'. Planning is based on cross-curricular topics, with a focus on enrichment to broaden pupils' experiences and aspirations, and often begin with a question to encourage

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exploration and investigation. Its implementation is at a relatively early stage and staff acknowledge that it requires further evaluation to ensure that pupils' subject skills are developed systematically. The local area is used well for visits. Enrichment activities, such as 'The Day the Alien Landed', add further enjoyment and challenge by requiring pupils to apply their knowledge and skills in a different context. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a good range of clubs, including sports, gardening and music.

Pupils and teachers are courteous to one another, leading to a highly positive school atmosphere. Pupils indicate that they feel free from concerns such as bullying or racism at school and their parents endorse their views. Staff know pupils' needs very well and are persistent and sustained in their efforts to promote their well-being by providing a welcoming, supportive environment. This high level of commitment is shown in the provision of before- and after-school clubs, introduced to support working parents and to broaden opportunities for pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher's drive and ambition to provide the best possible learning experiences and promote high expectations are important in the upturn in pupils' attainment and increased levels of progress. The same high degree of commitment and energy is apparent, too, at other levels of leadership. Senior and middle leaders are knowledgeable in their areas as well as effective in their leadership roles, so that teamwork is strong and staff morale high. Self-evaluation is effective and accurate, and clearly identifies strengths to build upon and areas for further improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning is extremely rigorous and has led to important improvements being made, which are steadily accelerating the progress pupils make through the school.

Governance is supportive and its strategic decisions take into account the needs of the community. For example, the project to establish a children's centre shows the school's determination to ensure that all families are fully supported. The governing body holds the school to account, and there is an increased involvement in evaluating the impact of the school's work. The school works well with parents and carers. Channels of communication are strong and varied, and information about children's progress and their targets is shared on a regular basis, including through a secure website.

Staff, and therefore pupils, benefit enormously from the innovative collaboration with two local primary schools, as teachers share training, good practice and planning. The inclusive ethos drives the school's promotion of equal opportunities, and any discrimination, should it occur, is tackled effectively to ensure that all pupils have every chance to achieve well.

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Leaders have developed the school as a cohesive community in which pupils show tolerance and respect for others. Staff work very hard to bring the local community to the school. Some exciting links are being developed with schools abroad, for example in America and Ghana. The school is now working to extend the national dimension of community cohesion.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Good quality provision in the Reception classes ensures that children settle quickly and make good progress. Children join in activities willingly and enthusiastically, and share and cooperate well. They happily make choices about their learning, developing their decision-making skills, consolidating earlier learning and independence.

Children make particularly good progress in developing positive attitudes to learning and early literacy and numeracy skills, so that attainment as they join Year 1 is a little above average. A strength of provision is the promotion of purposeful play, with an effective balance between independent activities and learning led by an adult. The classrooms and outdoor areas provide children with rich and varied experiences. During the inspection, for example, children benefited from a long walk around the site in wet windy weather, used well for children to reflect on the experience and develop their language.

Joint leadership effectively ensures that there is a shared approach, and all staff work well together as a team. Children are cared for well, and their needs understood clearly by Reception staff. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in ensuring that children's progress is accurately assessed and recorded, and shared with parents through children's 'learning journals'.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. The response to the inspection questionnaire was lower than average. However, the school had sent out a similar questionnaire the week prior to the inspection, which had a much higher response and the views expressed in both were similar. Parents feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and that their health is promoted well. Comments made by parents of pupils with additional needs indicate that they are pleased with the school's care and ongoing support. Inspection evidence fully endorses these views. A very few parents raised individual concerns, but these did not show any common areas of concern.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Furley Park 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 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 412 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	67	20	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	57	25	41	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	46	32	52	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	51	27	44	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	54	25	41	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	49	28	46	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	48	29	48	1	2	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)	27	44	28	46	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	48	31	51	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	41	30	49	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	34	31	51	2	3	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	33	54	22	36	3	5	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	62	21	34	1	2	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	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](http://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"><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 pupils' 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.**



15 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Furley Park Primary School, Ashford TN23 3PA**

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and seeing how much you learn in school. You go to a good school and these are some of the positive things we found out about it.

- Adults look after you and care for you exceptionally well so that the school is a very happy and safe place for you to work and play together. ♦
- You know how to look after yourselves extremely well and to stay safe, fit and healthy.
- All the staff help you to make good progress in your learning, particularly in your writing.
- Most of you are enjoying the new way of improving your numeracy skills.
- You have a good range of exciting and interesting activities and these help you to enjoy your time in school.

You also told us that you find your lessons interesting and usually challenging. To make them even better we are asking your school to make sure that your work is always set at the right level, particularly making it challenging for the most able pupils and in mathematics. Sometimes you speak very quietly when giving your views in lessons and we have asked your school to make sure that you have more opportunities to become more confident in doing this. We saw that good work is often on display and that special displays such as those on Ancient Egypt make learning really fun, and have asked that there are more ways to make learning interesting in this way and to give you lots of information.

We are sure that you will continue to work hard, and remember to ask if there is anything you do not understand. Please thank your parents or carers for returning the questionnaires. It was very helpful for us to know their views.

We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Helen Hutchings

Lead inspector

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