

# Farndon Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111107
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	356864
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Frank Carruthers

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

---

<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>	174
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mike Shearman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Janet Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Churton Road Farndon, Chester Cheshire CH3 6QP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01829 270736
<b>Fax number</b>	01829 271417
<b>Email address</b>	head@farndon.cheshire.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 November 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	356864

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eleven lessons or parts of lessons were observed involving nine teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, school assessments, planning and school policies, including those concerning the safeguarding of pupils. Seventy-seven questionnaires were returned by parents and carers and 101 pupils' questionnaires were completed, read and analysed.

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

- How well pupils of all levels of ability and different needs are progressing.
- What the quality of teaching is, given recent staffing changes.
- Whether links between subjects are used well to promote pupils' skills in English.
- Whether the school's capacity to improve continues to develop, despite the absence of the deputy headteacher, and a change of leadership of the governing body and of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How children are progressing in the Reception class.

## Information about the school

Farndon Primary School is slightly smaller than the average primary school. Almost all pupils are White British. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below the average of primary schools nationally. The school provides an after-school club. The school is host to Strawberries pre-school, which is subject to a separate inspection.

The school has gained several awards, including the Basic Skills Award, the Inclusion Quality Mark, Healthy School status, the Activemark, the Eco-schools award and International School status. At the time of the inspection the deputy headteacher had been absent since early in the term. There is a newly appointed Chair of the Governing Body.

**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

The school provides a good education for pupils who achieve well. They enjoy lessons and reach above average standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. All elements of provision are good. The school has maintained the quality of its provision and outcomes for pupils since the time of the last inspection. School leaders and the governing body successfully continue to drive forward improvement, based on accurate self-evaluation. As a result, the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

Children make good progress in the Reception class. They are inquisitive learners and this quality continues as they get older. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the very few learning English as an additional language, make good progress from year to year. By the time they are in Year 6, they are articulate and show maturity for their age. They reach good standards in literacy, numeracy and science. A trend in recent years in the Year 6 national assessments has been for the more-able pupils to do better in reading and mathematics than in writing. This disparity is a continuing problem and recognised by senior staff in the school improvement plan as a key area to eliminate. Pupils' personal development is good. Of particular note is their outstanding understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They are keen to come to school and this is evident in their high attendance, which is well above average.

The quality of teaching is consistently good across all year groups. The curriculum is good and offers much to enrich pupils' experiences. The international dimension to the curriculum, the programme of visits, themed weeks and the residential experiences for Years 4 and 6, all contribute much towards the pupils' enthusiasm for learning. One aspect that is underdeveloped is the way in which information and communication technology (ICT) is used to support pupils' work across the curriculum. All aspects of care, guidance and support are good.

Despite the absence of the deputy headteacher and the very recent change of leadership of the governing body, the school continues to be well led and managed. A particular strength is the way in which staff track the performance of pupils through the year and set challenging targets for them to reach. This, coupled with good monitoring of teaching, through lesson observations and sampling pupils' work, means that all staff have an accurate impression of how well the school as a whole is performing. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Increase the proportion of pupils who reach Level 5 in writing by reviewing the effectiveness of current practice, selecting and then embedding the best.

**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

- Make best use of the planned improvement to hardware to ensure that information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning in all subjects of the curriculum.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' achievement, enjoyment and learning in lessons are good. The overall attainment of children on entry to school varies from year to year and is broad in range, although slightly below expectations in the current Reception class. During their time in school, pupils make good progress. In lessons they pay attention very well and are keen to answer questions. They work together well, sharing ideas and tasks. They take pride in their work and most complete written work carefully and neatly. All groups of pupils, such as boys, girls, the very few from minority ethnic groups and those more able and talented, make good progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do well, thanks to careful assessment of their progress and effective programmes of intervention. Standards of reading and mathematics in Year 6 are frequently well above average. Standards in writing are above average overall, but have not significantly improved since the time of the last inspection. Although the quality of written work produced by pupils in lessons in Year 6 is often very good, too few pupils have been achieving the higher Level 5 in assessment tests. The school has introduced several measures to address this but has still not achieved significant improvement. These have included the use of opportunities in other subjects for pupils to practise their writing skills. Senior staff are currently reviewing provision with an external consultant, in order to seek best practice.

Pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe in and out of school. They have a good awareness of how to be safe using the internet. They demonstrate good, responsible behaviour in all that they do. Pupils report that bullying is rare and is not a concern for them. They are considerate towards one another. Older pupils have strong links with the children coming into the Reception class and even earlier when they are attending the privately run nursery on site. All this helps the pupils to feel part of a school family. This level of cooperative behaviour is also evident in the pupils' attitudes in lessons. The school council has a strong voice in school and there are several other roles that pupils take on, for example, as road safety officers, eco-school leaders and charity organisers. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

**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

*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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>	1
<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?

In the lessons observed, teaching was never less than good. Some lessons had outstanding features. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons to stimulate pupils' interest. For example, they often use drama, role play and video to very good effect to engage pupils. Their questioning skills are good and all staff, including classroom assistants, monitor how well pupils are achieving in lessons. Lesson plans take good account of the different levels of attainment among pupils, especially in mathematics. Classroom assistants generally make a good contribution in lessons, especially when working with groups of pupils or individually. Marking of pupils' work helps pupils to understand how to improve, especially in English, and often refers back to pupils' targets. However, not all class teachers match the best practice in these respects. The curriculum has significant strengths and these are evident in several awards the school has gained. The wider opportunities the school provides, for example, in music and performance, enhance the pupils' experiences very well. The profile of ICT in school is being lifted with the purchase of additional equipment. At the moment, its use in other areas of the curriculum is limited. There are a number of regular ways in which the pupils take their skills into the wider community and the school plays a full part in inter-school events. Clubs, both before and after school, specialise in interesting activities, such as fencing and video production. All aspects of care, guidance and support are good. The role of the parent support worker has had a very positive impact on helping families during times of stress. The school runs a successful after-school club which is popular with

**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

parents and carers and pupils, and is well managed. Arrangements for the transition of pupils into school and on to secondary education are thorough and mean the pupils face change with a positive outlook.

*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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The good quality of leadership and management has been maintained since the last inspection. In the absence of the deputy headteacher, who has key responsibilities for English and the Early Years Foundation Stage, the headteacher has made sure there has been no reduction in the overall quality of provision and has taken on extra roles in the interim. School improvement planning and the setting of challenging targets for pupils continue to be central to the drive to take the school forward. The school is generally successful in reaching these targets, though has fallen short in the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 in writing. Thorough monitoring of pupils' progress means all pupils achieve well over time and promotes equality of opportunity effectively.

The governing body meets its responsibilities satisfactorily and is in the process of transition. The vice-chair has stepped up to the role of Chair of the Governing Body and, supported by the good range of expertise among other members, both new and experienced, has begun to build on the strengths reported in previous inspection reports. Plans to improve the school's accommodation are well under way and include a new classroom linked to the main building to replace one of the ageing temporary buildings. Regular risk assessments and thorough child protection measures, including the safe recruitment of staff, mean safeguarding procedures are good.

The school's engagement with parents and carers is good and is being improved through a recently established forum called, 'The parents' and carers' well-being and health and safety group'. Effective partnerships with other schools and agencies help to enrich the curriculum and to support those pupils with additional needs well. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good and continues to be improved by its links with schools in Italy, Poland, India and Finland and in this country. These help pupils' wider understanding of global issues.

**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

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>3</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>2</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**

Provision and outcomes are good. Children develop warm relationships with adults. Parents and carers report that there has been no disruption to the children's enjoyment and learning in spite of the recent changes to staff. Children become independent learners quickly and they behave well. They are confident and explain what they are doing to adults clearly, for example, when a group were building a den outside. Children make good progress in all areas of learning. The newly appointed teacher has good knowledge and experience of working with children of this age. The classroom is welcoming and interesting for children. The available space in the secure area outside is used well, though at times the large wheeled toys dominate too much. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. At times, some of the independent activities do not have sufficient challenge to promote thinking and problem solving. The classroom assistant makes a good contribution to the children's learning. Assessment procedures are thorough and planning is detailed and takes account of children's interests. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have continued to be effective despite recent changes. Partnerships with parents and carers are particularly strong with workshops for them to become familiar with the curriculum for the age group. Links with the private nursery and the role of older pupils to buddy the children, mean the transition into school is excellent. Plans to develop the setting further are well under way.



**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

*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

In terms of the number of questionnaires returned, the response was broadly in line with that of most inspections of primary schools. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children enjoy school. Almost all report their children are safe and that the school helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle. A very large majority have positive views of the school and how well their children are doing. A small minority of parents and carers consider the school is not led and managed effectively. Inspection findings show that the school's leadership team continue to drive forward improvements to provision and standards, despite recent absence and change at leadership and governance level. A few parents and carers do not consider their children are making enough progress. However, almost all pupils reach or exceed the standards expected of pupils nationally in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. A few parents and carers consider the school does not take account of suggestions and concerns. The school has a parent/teacher association, as well as two consultation evenings in October and March, and there is an open invitation to make appointments with teachers in order to maintain good communication. In addition, there is the recently established parents' and carers' forum, an increasingly useful website and a texting service to keep parents and carers informed. These developments indicate the school's commitment to a positive partnership with parents and carers. A few parents and carers consider unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and bullying is not a concern for them. Records indicate that procedures are appropriately followed using the school's behaviour policy. Nevertheless, the staff are keen to make improvements where necessary to ensure pupils' well-being.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Farndon 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 174 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	69	24	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	58	30	39	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	29	45	58	9	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	27	47	61	7	9	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	28	36	43	56	6	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	30	44	57	9	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	32	48	62	2	3	1	1
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	35	37	48	5	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	25	47	61	11	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	29	35	45	7	9	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	19	40	52	13	17	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	27	35	45	13	17	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	38	43	56	3	4	2	3

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.**



24 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Farndon Primary School, Chester, CH3 6QP**

It was a great pleasure to inspect your school. You were all extremely friendly and helpful and we enjoyed finding out from you how you are getting on. We particularly enjoyed the meeting we held with the school council and other pupils. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to share with you what we found.

Your school is providing you with a good education. Your behaviour in and out of lessons is good and this means you learn well. You told us bullying is rare and if it happens, the staff deal with it promptly. You take on responsibilities well and we were very impressed with how older pupils take care of the youngest children as they start school, helping them to feel part of a big family. Your knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle is excellent. You make good progress in lessons and, by the time you leave at the end of Year 6, most of you reach above average standards in English and mathematics. This is because the teaching you receive is good and you work hard. You told us how much you enjoy the activities in school, the themed weeks, residential visits and other visits you make to places of interest. School leaders do a good job. The staff are constantly finding ways to improve your progress and increase your enjoyment of learning, for instance by linking up with schools overseas.

Part of my job is to identify how the school can be even better. There are two improvements for staff to make.

- There are not enough pupils achieving Level 5 in writing in assessment tests in Year 6 so the school is going to continue to focus on this. You can help by knowing your targets for writing and doing your best to improve your work.
- The school is adding more equipment to help your computer skills. We want the school to give you as much opportunity as possible to use ICT in all subjects and topics that you study.

Please continue to work hard and enjoy school. I send you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Frank Carruthers

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**