

The Friars Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105896
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	367371
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2011
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Burke
Headteacher	Miss Patricia Arnold
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed 10 teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation evidence, the school improvement plan and internal and external monitoring reports of the school's work. The inspectors also analysed 31 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and also questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

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

- How well pupils achieve, particularly boys and in writing.
- How effective the quality of teaching and the curriculum are in engaging and challenging all pupils in order to raise attainment.
- The effectiveness of outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

The school is a little smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has gained Healthy School status and the Activemark for its sports provision. The governing body runs and manages extended provision in a daily breakfast club.

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

This is a good school. Outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils make a significant difference to their lives. They thrive in the close attention to their academic and personal needs because of the clear-sighted vision of leaders and governors that is shared by all staff. A very welcoming, attractive environment is festooned with pupils' exceptional art-work in clay, textiles and pictures. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance has improved significantly. They feel very safe in school and this view is echoed by their parents and carers. A deliberate and highly successful focus on pupils' health is reflected in pupils' ardent commitment to sport and a balanced diet. Their emotional development is supported exceptionally well by a very effective personal education programme.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and boys, make good progress and their attainment is broadly average by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. Challenging targets and an unequivocal expectation of success set the tone for this vibrant school. Standards in writing, however, are below average; pupils' spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence construction are weak. The school has accurately identified this as a priority for improvement. Good quality teaching is based on positive relationships and the detailed subject knowledge of staff. Lesson planning is mostly carefully planned to raise pupils' standards, especially in writing. Occasionally, this is not specific enough and opportunities are missed, for instance, to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills in English and in other subjects.

Children settle down quickly in the Nursery class because they are well prepared for school life. They make satisfactory progress and enjoy learning and playing in the setting. The range of activities outdoors has improved. The school is aware of the need to develop this further in order to provide children with a broader variety of learning experiences. While lesson planning and assessment have also improved, both indoor and outdoor activities are not yet consistently challenging or stimulating in all areas of learning.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of their school; they know what the strengths are as well as what they need to do to improve the school's performance. The school has raised pupils' attainment and has been successful in improving behaviour and attendance. Excellent partnerships with other providers and services make a very strong contribution to pupils' outcomes. Consequently, the school's capacity to sustain improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, especially in writing, by:
 - focusing more on improving pupils' spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence construction

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- developing pupils' speaking and listening skills in English and in other subjects.
- Improve outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring indoor and outdoor activities are constantly challenging and stimulating in all areas of learning
 - further developing the outdoor provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children's starting points vary but overall are well below expectations for their age when they join the Nursery class. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and most pupils begin Year 1 working at well-below average levels. Pupils' attainment is broadly average overall by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 and they achieve well. In lessons pupils want to learn and welcome the chance to develop their thinking through talking and challenging each other's ideas. In one class, individual pupils were eager to discuss their ideas for writing a letter based on their enjoyment of reading *The Black Book of Secrets*. This debate developed their speaking and listening skills, their enjoyment of meaningful discussion and their ability to produce interesting and knowledgeable writing. Pupils' skills in writing are beginning to improve, although some writing in their books shows that they have not had enough opportunities to become more adept in grammar and spelling. The school's successful promotion of mathematics has resulted in pupils' joy and sense of achievement when applying problem-solving and investigational skills to their work.

Pupils' good behaviour, and their courtesy and sense of fairness, reflect their positive spiritual, social, cultural and social development. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and appreciate the many opportunities to enrich their cultural development through, for example, art, music and sport. The school accurately identifies the need to further develop pupils' understanding and awareness of a diverse society. Pupils thrive when given positions of responsibility; most noticeably when representatives from Year 5 pupils lead the daily 'Move It' fitness and dance programme for children and pupils from the Nursery class to Year 6. Pupils are very involved in the local area and the community is made very welcome in school. Pupils help to improve the local environment through picking up litter and gardening and are keen and generous when raising money for charity. The school is, rightly, held in high regard by the local community.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
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?

Teachers' determination to raise pupils' aspirations and their good use of assessment information enables them to set work at the right level to challenge all pupils. This helps them reach their challenging targets by the end of Year 6. Lessons are mostly, carefully planned to meet the needs of the different abilities and interests of pupils in each class. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils in small groups and individually because they share in planning lessons with the class teacher and are committed to challenging pupils' performance. Occasionally, when the teacher speaks for too long, pupils' engagement in their learning slows. Most pupils know how to improve their work because of careful and thorough marking but, on occasions, opportunities are missed to ensure that pupils know precisely what they need to do in order to make the next steps in their learning.

Leaders have concentrated on providing a curriculum that is based on improving pupils' basic skills and knowledge and allowing pupils to be creative and enjoy learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to help improve pupils' computer skills and increasingly, to improve their work in other subjects, particularly in English. Provision for art and sport are excellent and pupils enjoy these aspects immensely. Artists and sports coaches are regular visitors to school and provide practical and specialist tuition. The Manchester United Foundation focuses on training and developing pupils' physical education skills to great effect. Enrichment activities are

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numerous and very well attended. The daily breakfast club is popular and much appreciated by pupils as well as their parents and carers.

The care of pupils is at the heart of the school's character. This commitment reflects the significant strides that are made in pupils' academic and personal development. Pupils believe in themselves and have high expectations for the future because they are nurtured and their achievements are celebrated. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are confident because of the good personal support they receive from committed teachers and teaching assistants. The school works extremely effectively with other agencies to support the potentially most vulnerable families to ensure their child's good achievement and well-being. Pupils settle down very quickly when they move into each new class from Year 1 through to Year 6, because they are very well prepared and welcomed to each new stage in their education. Their transition to secondary school is exceptionally and thoughtfully planned. Pupils are reassured and well informed because they are taught lessons by secondary school teachers and have the opportunity to visit their chosen secondary school. Their attendance and behaviour have improved significantly because of outstanding care and support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders provide the school with clear direction and a strong sense of purpose. All staff subscribe to the school's core values and are united in their determination to improve pupils' outcomes. Differences in pupils' attainment in writing and for boys, for example, are beginning to narrow, reflecting the school's successful commitment to equality of opportunity. A strong focus on tackling discrimination is based on the promotion of respect for people from all walks of life. Leaders are working hard to improve this further by developing pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of the area. Safeguarding arrangements exceed national requirements and the governing body has been instrumental in the shrewd use of funds to help make the site secure. Training for safeguarding pupils is extended to include advanced courses for administrative and site-supervisory staff as well as teaching staff. The governing body is very involved in school self-evaluation and regularly challenges the school's performance. The management of finances is astute and carefully managed.

The promotion of community cohesion is reflected in the wide contribution to a range of activities, particularly at school and local level. Partnerships with the local authority, specialist support for the potentially most vulnerable families, sports and art specialists and local community groups make an excellent contribution to improving pupils' outcomes.

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Parents and carers have responded positively to the school's efforts to encourage regular attendance and, consequently, attendance rates have improved. They welcome the regular newsletters and the vast majority attend regular meetings to discuss their child's progress.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are warmly welcomed to the setting and enjoy taking part in the many activities available. They enjoy activities to stimulate their imagination such as sand and water play, art, music, ICT and role play. Children's suggestions for activities about the royal wedding prompted enthusiastic cake-making and imaginative role play. Teaching quality is satisfactory overall and is particularly effective in promoting children's personal and physical development. Children are eager to take part in specialist sports teaching lessons and make good progress in their physical skills. Occasionally, children are not sure exactly how to play and learn effectively, especially outdoors, because activities are not always challenging or stimulating enough. The school has accurately identified the need to develop outdoor and indoor play and learning for all children to develop their writing, speaking, listening and number skills. Positive relationships between children and adults reflect the attention to children's needs that is evident in this welcoming setting. Children are looked after carefully and welfare requirements are fully met. Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. Staff work well as a team and there are good links with parents and carers, who are very supportive of their children's learning both in school and at home.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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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

Almost a sixth of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. Of these, the vast majority were happy with the school's provision and all indicated that their children enjoyed school. All parents and carers agreed that the school helped keep their children safe and inspection findings confirm that pupils feel exceptionally safe. A small number of parents and carers had concerns about being involved in their child's learning. The school has planned further opportunities to involve parents in their child's learning in school and at home.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Friars 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 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 209 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	73	9	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	76	8	24	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	64	9	27	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	58	12	36	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	76	7	21	0	0	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)	21	64	10	30	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	67	10	30	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	70	9	27	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	58	13	39	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	64	12	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	82	6	18	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



28 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Friars Primary School, Salford, M3 7EU

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to us when we inspected your school recently. We listened carefully to what you had to say and looked closely at the questionnaires you completed. You were all very polite and helped to look after us very well.

Yours is a good school. You are cared for exceptionally well and, in turn, you become caring and thoughtful young people. Your work and your attendance and behaviour are much improved. Congratulations.

You feel exceptionally safe in school. Your behaviour is good and you are very enthusiastic when welcoming visitors. You love sport and you are excellent role models for being fit and healthy. Well done to all of you! Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are warmly welcomed into school by staff and older pupils and enjoy playing and learning.

You make good progress in your work and your standards have risen. We have asked your school to concentrate on improving your work in writing by concentrating more on improving your spelling, punctuation, and grammar and sentence construction. We also want you to have more opportunities to develop your speaking and listening skills. We would also like the school to provide more stimulating and challenging activities for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. You can all help by continuing to work hard because we know how keen you are to do your best.

We wish you all the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Marie Cordey

Lead inspector

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