

Faringdon Infant School

Lechlade Road, Faringdon, Oxfordshire, SN7 8AH

Inspection dates 21–22 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress from low starting points to reach average standards at the end of Year 2.
- Leaders and managers are constantly refining teaching, which ensures that teaching is good with an increasing proportion of high quality.
- In particular, the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they make) now meets pupils' needs exceptionally well because it is taught in small, highly individualised groups.
- Teachers make useful comments when marking pupils' English work, which helps them to improve.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and behave well both around the school and in lessons.
- Leaders at all levels ensure that pupils make good progress in the subjects for which they are responsible. For example, pupils learn an increasingly complex set of drawing skills in art lessons.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, make careful checks on the progress pupils make. They are vigilant in identifying where pupils may be making less than expected progress and put in appropriate measures to get them back on track.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The quality of teaching is not yet good enough to ensure pupils make and sustain rapid progress in all subjects.
- Teachers' marking and feedback are not as helpful in mathematics in helping pupils to improve as it is in English.
- Teachers' questions do not always encourage pupils to explain what they know in detail or to justify their opinions.
- Work to improve attendance has been effective, however, similar efforts have yet to have a strong impact on improving the punctuality of some pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons or parts of lessons, including the teaching of phonics and guided reading. Two of these were joint observations with senior staff. All teachers were observed.
- Inspectors attended assemblies, listened to pupils read and held meetings with staff, pupils and representatives from the governing body and the academy board.
- Inspectors took account of the 55 responses to the online Parent View survey and other communications from, and conversations with, parents and carers during the inspection as well as questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors looked carefully at pupils' work in lessons, as well as the work pupils have completed over time in their books.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, data relating to pupils' academic performance, documents showing how senior leaders evaluate the quality of teaching, logs relating to behaviour and attendance figures.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Colin Lower	Additional inspector
Christine Bennett	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly larger than average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is in line with the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for looked after children, those entitled to free school meals and the children of service families, is equal to the national average. There are a few children from service families but none who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. A range of minority ethnic groups is represented in smaller numbers, very few of whom speak English as an additional language.
- Faringdon Infant School converted to become an academy school in April 2012. When its predecessor school, Faringdon Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted in February 2011, it was judged to be satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding so that pupils make rapid progress across all subjects by:
 - ensuring teachers' questions encourage pupils to provide more extended responses which explain what they know and justify the answers that they give
 - making sure teachers provide helpful feedback in their marking in mathematics so pupils know what they need to do to improve their work, as they do in English.
- Ensure punctuality improves by using similar strategies to those that have been effective in improving rates of attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below the expected levels for their age, especially in communication, literacy and mathematics. They get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception because there is a range of activities available to them that build on their interests and existing skills. For example, the woodland area is used to good effect to fire children's imaginations and help them learn about nature and the environment.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2 in 2012, their attainment was in line with all pupils nationally in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are confident at using their phonic skills to read and enjoy the range of books provided.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because the school thinks carefully about how to meet their needs. Staff are trained well to provide specialist teaching that ensures that these pupils are well supported and make equally good progress as other groups in school.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families funded through the pupil premium both achieve well. Leaders carefully evaluate their attainment and progress in English and mathematics against, among other measures, the average point scores gained in national tests. This shows leaders that the interventions they provide with the extra funding are effective in accelerating progress for these groups of pupils compared to other groups in school.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because speaking and listening are an important part of all lessons. This supports familiarity with the structures of spoken English and helps to develop confidence in both oral and written work.
- Pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well because the school is committed to ensuring that all members of its inclusive community have an equal chance of gaining success.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because leaders and managers make astute decisions about recruitment and value and develop the staff working for them.
- Good provision for the teaching of phonics sits well alongside the promotion of reading as a worthwhile and enjoyable activity. Pupils are confident using a range of skills to tackle unknown books. They understand how important it is to know how to read and realise this is a lifelong skill. One boy who read with inspectors said he valued learning to read because he wants to be able to read with his own children.
- Communication skills are an important feature of most lessons. Pupils are given the opportunity to discuss what they are learning about as well as to complete written work. Computers are used well to support pupils' learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They plan exciting activities and adapt them accordingly so that all pupils can participate fully.
- Teachers assess pupils' understanding carefully during lessons and clarify their explanations where they find pupils have not understood fully. For example, in an outstanding phonics lesson, the teacher spent some time showing pupils exactly how to place their tongues to produce the sound 'th' correctly because she had noticed that some were saying 'f' instead.
- Some teachers ask questions that require detailed responses. However, opportunities are often missed to encourage pupils to elaborate on their answers by either explaining them more fully or justifying their opinions.
- In pupils' English books, teachers use a clearly understood marking system which pupils understand and respond to well. Teachers make useful comments which show pupils how to

improve their work and this clearly leads to better progress. For example, comments about using punctuation more carefully lead to pupils always putting a full stop and using a capital letter. This is praised, then followed by encouragement to try more sophisticated punctuation. Subsequent work has examples of commas and speech marks. However, marking in mathematics books is not so detailed and carefully linked to targets so opportunities to promote rapid progress are more limited.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. This means they listen carefully to instructions in lessons and take part thoughtfully in discussions about the work they do. Lessons therefore proceed without delay or interruption so learning time is maximised for all.
- Pupils move around the school really sensibly. For example, lunchtime is calm and well ordered and pupils are considerate when arranging themselves in the hall for whole-school assemblies.
- The school fosters good relationships well. Pupils say they feel very safe in school because staff look after them well. Almost all of the parents and carers who completed the online survey agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe including on the internet. Messages about bullying are very clear so pupils feel confident in saying that it does not happen in their school. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in school.
- Behaviour is well managed. As a result, instances of poor behaviour, including for pupils with particular behavioural needs, have reduced since the school opened.
- The strategies employed by the school, including the use of a home-school liaison worker, have been effective in increasing rates of attendance. Similar efforts have not yet had an impact on improving punctuality so not all pupils have as positive a start to the school day as they could.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders at all levels, including governors, have an accurate view of the school's strengths. Expectations of both behaviour and academic excellence are high and the school is clear about the values and qualities it wants to instil into its pupils.
- Senior leaders manage the performance of individual staff well, including setting appropriate targets and providing detailed feedback so that teachers know what they need to do to improve. Teachers who completed the questionnaires were unanimous that the school provides well for their training needs. These measures have ensured that teaching is good. Leaders are aware they need to do more before teaching is consistently outstanding so as to raise achievement even further.
- Leaders at all levels are becoming more adept at measuring the exact progress pupils are making and in comparing this to individual starting points in order to establish how well pupils are doing and where accelerated progress is needed.
- The provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The vibrant, aspirational and relevant curriculum, delivered through carefully planned topics and imaginative use of resources, ensures pupils develop a breadth and depth of understanding across all subjects that will stand them in good stead as they move on to junior school.
- The academy board works well across the three schools, reinvigorating staff and targeting resources strategically to meet pupils' needs.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has an accurate view of how the school's performance compares to similar schools' nationally. Governors ensure they access all the training they need in order to

perform their roles to maximum effect. Governors make sure that funding, including additional monies received for the pupil premium, is spent effectively to drive good progress for all pupils. Governors know, for example, that a specialist mathematics programme supports pupils for whom the pupil premium applies to double the rate of progress they make compared to other pupils in school. Governors take an active involvement in supporting senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching and set performance-related targets for staff. Governors are adept at analysing information about pupils' academic performance and use this to gauge where teaching needs to improve. They are very clear about the link between good practice and financial reward and, conversely, would be prepared to withhold pay increases where targets were not met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	137992
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	406692

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Cox
Headteacher	Heather Hambidge
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01367 240655
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