

South Farnborough Infant School

Queen's Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 6JU

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils achieve extremely well in this school. By the end of Year 2 attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The outstanding provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables them to make excellent progress.
- Consistently high quality teaching ensures that pupils make the most of their learning opportunities and make outstanding progress through the school. Pupils are set clear and challenging targets and know what they need to do to achieve them.
- Teaching assistants make a very significant contribution to the high quality learning taking place in the school. They work in very close partnership with teachers and bring an additional range of helpful skills and experiences into the classrooms.
- Communication skills are developed extremely well, especially talking and listening, so that pupils are able to express their ideas clearly before committing them to paper.
- Behaviour around the school is exemplary and pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning. They say that they feel very safe and know how to stay safe.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is outstanding.
- The school makes excellent use of the pupil premium to support those pupils for whom it is intended and the gap between the attainment of this group and other pupils in the school has closed.
- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and senior team together with a very effective governing body ensure that leadership and management are of the highest quality.
- The school has a very accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and uses this information extremely well to guide school improvement.
- A rich, broad and balanced curriculum provides pupils with a wealth of experiences that enrich their learning and development.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- The excellent example set by all adults in caring for the pupils and respecting each other provides a wonderful role model for pupils to follow. As a result the school is a highly cohesive caring community in which all groups show respect for each other.
- Close links with parents and carers and with grandparents are exemplified in the 'Reading Champions' who come into school frequently and regularly to help pupils with their reading.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made visits to 24 lessons or parts of lessons, including some small groups, and observed 10 teachers and some adults other than teachers teaching. Some of the visits were carried out together with the headteacher or assistant headteachers.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, teachers and support staff, and a discussion was held with the school’s improvement advisor.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, looked at the school’s self-evaluation and the school improvement plan and evaluated samples of pupils’ work alongside senior staff.
- Other documents looked at included: curriculum planning; documents relating to attendance, safeguarding and child protection; records of pupils’ attainment and progress; records of behaviour; records relating to the monitoring of teaching; and minutes of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 91 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Some parents and carers were spoken to at the start of the school day and others were spoken to during a coffee morning held to raise funds for charity. Questionnaires received from 36 staff were analysed.

Inspection team

Stephen Lake, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Fiona Robinson

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than most primary schools and has increased in size since its last inspection.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or who have statements of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (which is funding to support children in local authority care, children of service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above the national average. The vast majority of these are pupils from service families and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals are below average.
- At the time of the inspection, building work was under way to extend part of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review the systems for communications with parents and carers at all levels, including the way in which parents and carers are kept informed of their child's progress, in order to identify ways in which this aspect of the school's work can be further improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below the levels normally found, and often well below in communication and number skills. They make outstanding progress and start Year 1 well prepared for learning, although their low starting points mean that their attainment at this point is usually broadly in line with what is expected at that age.
- However, achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved considerably over the last few years and many of those children who started Year 1 this year have skill levels above those normally found at that age.
- More pupils than found nationally are making better-than-expected progress. Pupils achieve well in all subjects and by the end of Year 2, attainment is high in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a considerable and significant improvement over the last three years.
- Pupils are confident writers and often use their strong information and communication technology skills to support their writing.
- Achievement in mathematics is strong across all aspects. Pupils have very good number and calculation skills. They have a good understanding of shape, and activities such as the regular opportunities to cook enable them to develop a strong understanding of capacity and measure, especially weight.
- Reading skills are improving rapidly. In the 2012 national check on phonics skills (the linking of letters and sounds) fewer pupils than average achieved the expected level. A review of the way in which phonic skills were taught resulted in almost immediate improvement, with almost every pupil achieving the expected level when re-assessed by the school. In 2013 almost twice as many pupils achieved the expected level as in 2012.
- Pupils build well upon this good start and by the end of Year 2, attainment in reading is well above that found nationally, representing significant improvement year on year since the last time the school was inspected.
- The achievement of pupils supported by the pupil premium has improved over the last year and in the 2013 national assessments, their attainment matches that of other pupils in the school.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make at least the same progress as other pupils and many make accelerated progress. This indicates very clearly that the school is closing the gap between the attainment of these pupils and others.
- Pupils achieve well in many other subjects. For example, they recently won an award for the best dance performance in the area, demonstrating the high commitment of the school to sport and physical education.
- During the inspection the building work meant that only a limited amount of computer use could be observed, but that was of high quality, with pupils working above age-related expectations.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View and those spoken to were very positive about the quality of teaching. Governors, staff and pupils expressed similar views. Inspection evidence supports these views and indicates that the quality of teaching over time is outstanding. Observations of current teaching confirmed that this is being maintained.
- Pupils are engaged and motivated by the way teachers present and teach the high quality and extremely well-planned curriculum. This not only ensures that excellent learning takes place but makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are given many high quality opportunities to develop their curiosity and creativity. They are encouraged to use their imagination, for example when imagining their journey to the moon as an astronaut, and are taught to respect the feelings and viewpoints of others.
- Teachers work and plan together very closely to ensure that all pupils in a particular year group

receive the same curriculum. This continuity is important to the school's success in ensuring equality of opportunity across the school and avoiding discrimination.

- In all lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. A strong focus is placed upon assessing pupils' progress and setting challenging tasks matched closely to what they already know, can do and understand. Clear targets for improvement are set for all pupils and all adults explain carefully to pupils, through the high quality marking and feedback, what it is they need to do to achieve their targets.
- Higher-attaining pupils receive additional challenges that extend their learning even further. For example, more-able pupils in Year 2 made outstanding progress in a small-group session that explored their understanding of number and patterns through a challenging exercise to solve a number acrostic.
- In another high quality lesson, pupils made outstanding progress in developing their higher-order reading skills as they learnt how to use the computerised library system to identify where books on particular subjects are kept. These pupils show a well-above-average understanding of how non-fiction books are classified and chose books linked to their topic or interest with ease. The help given in school by parents, carers and grandparents makes an excellent contribution to developing pupils' reading skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive very good support that keeps them engaged in learning and making similar progress to all pupils. Those with particular difficulties receive highly focused teaching that breaks their learning down into very small, easily achievable steps. This promotes the rapid and sustained progress made by many of these pupils.
- Teaching assistants are well trained, work in very close partnership with teachers and make a valuable contribution to the high quality learning taking place.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- All of the parents and carers who expressed an opinion in the Parent View survey feel that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved. This view is shared by the pupils, staff and governors. Inspection evidence confirms this extremely positive view. Pupils say that behaviour is usually extremely good and it is rare for any disruption to lessons to occur. There are several pupils who find self-discipline difficult but these are managed extremely well by adults to ensure that they do not disrupt learning.
- In most situations behaviour is exemplary, with pupils settling to tasks extremely quickly and sustaining concentration very well. Pupils are polite and friendly. They show respect for adults and each other and the school is a very calm, orderly community where learning and working together are highly valued. Adults provide excellent models for pupils through their polite and considerate behaviour towards one another as well the pupils.
- Pupils are very positive about the way the school looks after them and helps them feel safe and learn how to stay safe. This view is strongly endorsed by parents. Pupils say that 'bullying doesn't happen'. They have a strong understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and that related to discrimination. Pupils trust adults to support them and to deal with any bullying that that might occur.
- Attendance is above average and the proportion of pupils with poor attendance is low. Absences have fallen every year for three years because the school monitors attendance carefully and works very hard to ensure that those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable attend school regularly.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The inspirational headteacher has a strong ambition to improve the school even further and the vision to see how this might be achieved. All staff and governors share this vision and ambition

and contribute very well to school improvement.

- The large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that the school is led and managed well.
 - The senior leaders enable effective training and support of teachers to take place, linked closely to performance management. Much of this training comes from teachers within the school or in other schools in the local cluster sharing good practice. Additional support is provided by the local authority through a light-touch approach.
 - The very well-planned curriculum makes excellent links between areas of learning and makes subjects meaningful for pupils. For example, Early Years Foundation Stage children made excellent progress in many areas of learning as they followed a teaching assistant in a 'detective activity' to find key people and key places around the school site.
 - The school looks after pupils very well. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding meet requirements. Training in safeguarding and child protection is up to date for staff and governors.
 - Leaders and managers, including the governing body, make very good use of a wealth of data to judge the school's performance and compare the performance of different groups within the school.
 - The school has very strong links with parents and carers and many ways of keeping them well informed about what is happening in school, such as the regular newsletters outlining what topic pupils are following and how parents and carers can help them at home. The school even lends out notebook computers so that parents from service families who are posted overseas can keep in touch. Nevertheless, a few of the parents and carers who responded to Parent View and some of those who spoke to inspectors were concerned about the quality of communication from the school, especially the way in which they are kept informed about the progress made by their children. Leaders recognise the need to investigate ways of further developing systems for communicating with parents.
 - School self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. Areas for development are clearly identified and the school development plan sets out well how these will be addressed. The steady improvement in attainment over the last few years, together with maintenance of high quality teaching and learning and very effective leadership and management, indicate a strong capacity to improve further.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides very clear direction to the work of the school. Governors ask direct questions about how well pupils are learning and why. Regular reports about the quality of teaching from the headteacher supplemented by information gained on the frequent visits to the school ensure governors have high quality information about the quality of teaching. Governors check upon the achievement of pupils rigorously through analysis of national assessments and school assessments of pupils' performance to obtain a clear view on school performance. As a result governors have a very good understanding of where improvement is required. Regular checks are made on the quality of teaching and learning. This helps to maintain the high quality and enables any underperformance to be addressed. Information on school performance is linked closely to the performance management of the headteacher. The budget is monitored well. On visits to the school, governors check on the impact of spending, especially the pupil premium funding, and hold the headteacher and staff to account for raising pupils' achievement. They also check rigorously the impact of spending decisions relating to how teachers are rewarded for good performance. They are well aware of what is being done to reward good teachers and tackle areas for improvement. Governors are active in ensuring that pupils are kept fit and healthy through the many sports activities and by checking that school meals provide a healthy diet. The use of the grant to improve sports opportunities is being very carefully planned to ensure the greatest impact from the money. Governors make good use of the training offered by the local authority and independent providers to improve their skills.
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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	116144
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	426660

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Phippen
Headteacher	Helen Fletcher Davies
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 March 2010
Telephone number	01252 543727
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