

Farley Hill Primary School

Church Road, Farley Hill, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 1UB

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching over time have not been good enough.
- Some pupils do not make as much progress as they should across the school or reach the higher levels some are capable of, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Sometimes there is too little challenge for pupils because the work is too easy, and pupils are not always clear just what it is they are learning.
- Work in pupils' books shows that some teachers have low expectation of what pupils can do and pupils do not know how they can improve their work.
- In some classes teachers do not consistently express high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Consequently, pupils become restless, take time to settle and chat when they should be working and so their behaviour is not good.
- The support for pupils provided by some teaching assistants does not ensure good progress from the pupils they work with.
- School governors have not held school leaders sufficiently to account for the dip in pupils' progress over recent years or rigorously carried out their statutory duties.
- Leaders', including middle leaders, checks on pupils' progress over time have not been thorough enough and the strategies used to improve all groups of learners' progress have had limited effect.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy school and attend school regularly.
- Most parents and carers are positive about the work of the school and say that their children are safe.
- Teaching in some classes is good and pupils achieve well.
- Music is promoted very effectively throughout the school. Large numbers of pupils learn an instrument and enjoy performing.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She has acted swiftly to bring about improvements, sharing her vision for the school with staff, parents and carers.
- Almost all staff and members of the governing body, including some new to their posts, share a focused commitment to raising standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 20 lessons or part lessons led by both teachers, teaching assistants and specialist teachers and coaches. A third of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders to discuss the progress that groups of pupils make throughout the school. They analysed the school's information on attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with other leaders, staff and with seven governors. The lead inspector met with the local authority representative and reviewed its reports from recent visits to the school.
- Inspectors considered parents' and carers' views of the school through informal discussions at the start of the inspection, the 80 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and considered the issues raised by one parent.
- The inspection team listened to pupils in Years 2, 3 and 6 read individually as well as hearing pupils from other year groups reading during lessons. They chatted to pupils informally throughout the inspection. Pupils' behaviour was observed in lessons, during lunchtime and at various times around the school.
- The team examined a number of documents, such as policies, including those relating to safeguarding and behaviour, the school's development planning, minutes of governors' meetings and information on disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They looked at attendance figures and pupils' work as well as looking at the school's website.

Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sandra Teacher

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- In this slightly smaller than average sized primary school the vast majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils receiving the pupil premium is below average and in some year groups only a very small number of pupils receive this support. The pupil premium is extra money given to schools by the government to support pupils in the care of the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and receive support through school action is average. The proportion being supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection there have been a number of staff changes. The headteacher took up her role in Autumn Term 2013 along with the Year 6 teacher and English leader. Since then three new teachers have been appointed and a new teaching assistant in the Early Years Foundation Stage is due to start soon.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is constantly good or better in order to secure good progress over time for all pupils by making sure that:
 - every teacher sets work which challenges all pupils to do their best and make the progress of which they are capable
 - additional adults have the skills to support pupils' learning effectively and are carefully deployed to make the most of this support
 - teachers and teaching assistants are consistent in their management of pupils' behaviour and express high behaviour expectations so that pupils are always ready to learn in lessons.
- Improve pupils' achievement so that they make good progress across the school and in all subjects by:
 - quickly moving pupils, especially the most able, on to more challenging work once they have demonstrated their understanding of what is being taught
 - making sure pupils are clear about what they are learning and that teachers' marking and feedback give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Build on the headteacher's expertise and skills in order to improve leadership and management of other leaders by:
 - developing the skills of leaders at all levels, including governors, so that they are more effective in checking the quality of the work of the school and the difference their actions are making
 - ensuring middle leaders use assessment information increasingly effectively to accelerate pupils' progress and their checks on the quality of teaching are more rigorous and regular.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress in classes across the school is patchy. Too few pupils make good progress over time, particularly in mathematics and writing. In the past the proportion of pupils making the expected gains both during Key Stage 1 and between Key Stages 1 and 2 was not high enough.
- The headteacher has acted promptly to tackle the inconsistent quality of teaching across the school and ensure all staff use information about pupils' levels and progress to plan work and set high expectations. Improvements have been made and current assessment information and work in pupils' books shows progress is accelerating and many pupils have achieved well since the start of the year. However, this improvement is not yet consistent in all classes or subjects.
- Children enter Reception with skills that are above those expected for their age in all areas of learning. They make at least expected progress because the resources and activities engage them and some adults use questioning effectively to deepen their understanding.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has been broadly average over the last three years though this has fluctuated year on year. Few pupils have reached the higher levels of which they are capable, especially in mathematics and writing, because teachers' expectations have not been high enough and opportunities to challenge the more able pupils to fulfil their potential have been missed. Teachers' increasing understanding of pupils' targets through better use of pupil progress information is beginning to ensure that more pupils are now working at these higher levels.
- Leaders identified that progress in 2013 for some disabled pupils and those with special educational needs were less strong than their peers. An increased focus on closely tracking the progress of this group and improvements to the support they receive in class and in small groups have ensured they now make similar progress to their peers, and for some progress is good.
- Pupils enjoy reading and most read often at home. However, leaders identified that pupils' phonic understanding (the sounds letters make) was less secure. Some pupils struggle to attempt unknown words when they read because there are gaps in their phonic knowledge. Training for teachers and teaching assistants and a more structured programme of teaching phonics have begun to address this issue well.
- Pupils make adequate progress in writing. Opportunities to encourage pupils to write at length are increasing and in some classes they receive effective, detailed help in understanding how to improve their work. However, this is not yet consistently of the same quality across the school and this hinders some pupils making accelerated progress.
- The extra money provided for those pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used to offer these pupils additional support with their learning and, particularly for those pupils from forces families, to support them settling into the school life. In 2013 only a very small number of Year 6 pupils were supported through the pupil premium. As a result of more rigorous checks on how well they are doing leaders have managed to ensure pupils in receipt of the funding are making similar progress to their peers so far this year.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching over time requires improvement because there is not enough good and better teaching in the school to make sure that all groups of pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Senior leaders have tackled inadequate teaching successfully but inconsistencies remain.
- Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not consistently high enough. Occasionally, work is pitched at too low a level and is too easy for pupils. This is because teachers do not make careful use of assessment information when planning to set work that will

challenge all pupils, especially those who are more able, to do their best and make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils' progress is most rapid where teachers check regularly how well pupils are doing and promptly adapt activities to increase the challenge or provide support where needed.

- In some classes pupils make good progress because additional adults are used well to support different groups of learners. In others, pupils' progress is not as strong because the support provided by some teaching assistants is less well planned or they lack the skills and training to move on pupils' learning, for example when leading phonics teaching.
- Most teachers question pupils and provide opportunities for pupils to discuss and share their ideas. This helps pupils to understand what they are learning. However, at times pupils cannot explain what they are learning because teachers have set their tasks without saying how it builds on their previous learning.
- Where learning is best, pupils work hard because teachers provide tasks that are challenging and make them concentrate. For example in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils had to work out a set of co-ordinates and place them in one of the four quadrants based on their knowledge of the properties of different shapes. This prompted much discussion because there were several different shapes which could be possible. From the start the most able were challenged further to use their knowledge of co-ordinates and graphs to work out a series of complex problems.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and they increasingly provide helpful comments to show pupils how they can improve their work. However, the best quality marking seen in some classes is not yet consistent across the school. In some classes this advice does not extend pupils' learning and there are too few occasions for pupils to respond to teachers' marking by correcting and improving their own work. Consequently, they continue to make the same mistakes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because although pupils are friendly and polite their attitudes to learning are not always so positive.
- Where teaching requires improvement, pupils sometimes become distracted, fidgety and lose concentration. Pupils waste time moving from one activity to another, spend too long getting their books and pencils ready or putting them away and carry on chatting when asked by the teacher to stop. This is because some management of behaviour by teachers and teaching assistants is not effective and they do not consistently set high expectations of how pupils should behave.
- Although there are a few instances where pupils do not consider others when moving around school and can be boisterous, they are typically sensible when walking around the school and at playtimes and lunchtimes. Older pupils say this has improved since the headteacher arrived and they were enabled to take responsibility for how pupils behave in the corridors. They proudly explained that they encourage good behaviour by praising others when they have behaved thoughtfully.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The site is safe and secure with care taken when pupils walk to the field for physical education lessons, and the increased security for children in the Reception class with the new fencing in place.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They say that incidences of bullying are rare but when pupils fall out or call names they know an adult will help them to sort it out. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and how to keep safe when using technology, including the internet.
- The vast majority of the parents and carers who spoke to inspectors and those who responded to Parent View said that their children are safe.

The leadership and management**requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because in the past leaders and managers have not carried out frequent enough checks to ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school and that all pupils are making the progress of which they are capable. Systems to check the work of the school and ensure all aspects are effective have not been regular or rigorous enough.
- Leadership of the headteacher is good. Since arriving at the school she has quickly identified the key areas for improvement and promptly taken action to address these. For example, although some weaker teaching remains she has tackled the weakest teaching and ensured that pupils' progress this year is accelerating. She has shared her vision with not only staff, leaders and governors but also the parent body and as a result all are clear what the school needs to do to improve.
- Leaders, including governors, and other staff support the headteacher in the drive to bring about improvements and raise pupils' achievement and promote equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils. They acknowledged in their written comments: 'the difference in the short time the headteacher's been here'; and that the school now has 'a clear direction and vision' and is 'on a positive upward journey'.
- The key focus in the school's improvement plans is to help senior and middle leaders to secure greater consistency and accountability and to provide more high quality teaching. Checks on pupils' progress are already becoming more rigorous and regular. They are beginning to hold staff to account for the progress pupils make and check that actions they take are bringing about the desired improvements. However, although teaching is improving and increased proportions of pupils are making better than expected progress, some inconsistencies remain and not all pupils' progress is good.
- The curriculum is generally broad and balanced with opportunities for enrichment through a wide range of visits and extra-curricular clubs. The teaching of music is strong with skilled music teaching and tuition. Pupils all have the chance to learn an instrument and enjoy performing with their instruments wherever possible. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps to support their learning and foster their caring attitudes towards each other.
- Leaders have planned their use of the primary school sport funding and, as well as using the skills of sports coaches to teach physical education, have increased pupils' participation in a range of sports and tournaments. The 'Eat Smart Café' is very effective in promoting healthy eating and through this and other initiatives pupils have a very good understanding of the importance of keeping fit and healthy and make these choices enthusiastically.
- Over the last year the local authority has provided increasing support to the school. Prior to September 2013, it successfully supported the governors in their appointment of a new headteacher and since then has been able to support the school and leaders, for example, confirming the headteacher's judgements on teaching and pupils' progress.

The governance of the school:

- Governors are supportive of the school and keen for pupils to do well. Working with the headteacher and local authority they have become aware that improvement is required to make the governing body more effective and are keen to develop their roles further. Until recently their understanding of pupils' achievement and the impact monies such as the pupil premium were having on raising achievement relied too much on information from leaders. This has hindered their ability to challenge leaders about how well the school was doing. Since the headteacher's appointment they have become increasingly aware of how pupils progress and the quality of teaching. This increased level of information is enabling them to make more informed decisions, for example when awarding additional money for teachers' performance. Although governors know that they have responsibility for ensuring safeguarding requirements are met, they are not fully aware of all their responsibilities in this area and have at times relied on leaders too much rather than checking for themselves.

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	109829
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	431458

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather Spencer
Headteacher	Emma Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2009
Telephone number	01189 732148
Fax number	01189 731549
Email address	admin@farleyhill.wokingham.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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 123 4234, or email 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 information 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'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

