

Farnborough Road Junior School

Farnborough Road, Birkdale, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 3DF

Inspection dates 23–24 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Achievement is good. From their individual starting points pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is usually good and there are examples of outstanding teaching.
- Teachers have an accurate understanding of how well pupils are learning. Interesting activities are provided which enable pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good.
- Pupils have a positive attitude toward learning and they enjoy school, which is reflected in the above-average attendance.
- Pupils feel safe and are kept safe in school.
- The curriculum interests pupils and gets the best out of them. There is also an effective programme for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils are considerate and respectful towards adults and each other.
- The headteacher is ambitious for the school and well supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and a highly committed, well-informed governing body.
- Senior leaders regularly check on how well the school is performing and put actions into place which are successfully improving teaching and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The impact of teaching on pupils' learning is not yet outstanding.
- Achievement in mathematics is not as strong as it is in reading and writing.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise mathematical skills in other subjects and there are few mathematical displays around school to encourage pupils' interest.
- There are times when pupils do not get on with their challenging tasks quickly enough to help them make as much progress as possible.
- Marking does not always provide pupils with advice on how to improve their work. Pupils do not always correct and edit their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 22 lessons, sessions taken by teaching assistants and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed students' behaviour around the school as well as in lessons. They talked with pupils informally about their learning and held two formal meetings with groups of pupils.
- The views of 67 parents who responded to the online parental questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account, as well as information collected by the school about the views of parents, pupils and staff. Inspectors also took the opportunity to talk to parents as they brought their children into school, met with one parent who requested a meeting with an inspector and read an email and a letter from parents.
- A range of documents were considered by inspectors, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan, information about pupils' progress, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, and records relating to attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors also examined work in pupils' books.

Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector
David Halford	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger in size than most other primary schools.
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is slightly below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- Seven new teachers have been appointed to the staff this year, two of them on a temporary basis to cover staff leave.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics, in order to strengthen the drive for outstanding pupils' achievement by:
 - raising the profile of mathematics around the school and making sure that there are planned opportunities to practise mathematical skills in other subjects
 - ensuring all pupils are able to get on with their challenging tasks as soon as they are able so that they can all make as much progress as possible
 - ensuring marking always provides pupils with good advice on how to improve their work and that pupils complete their corrections.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The 2013, national tests results at the end of Year 6 showed that pupils reached standards in reading and writing well-above national levels and broadly average in mathematics. School rightly recognised that standards in mathematics must get better. Staff changes and improved teaching methods have helped to speed up progress. As a result, the gap between English subjects and mathematics for pupils currently in school is closing more rapidly.
- From their individual starting points pupils make good progress overall. Progress in reading was well-above average, and in writing, above national levels in the 2013 tests. Though progress in mathematics was not as strong it has been improving since 2011 and school data and inspection evidence show that improvements are set to continue.
- The ability of pupils to match letters with the sounds that they make is checked and additional well-targeted teaching is put in place for any pupil who would benefit. Though pupils' reading skills are very well developed the school strives for continued improvement. Consequently, a new method of improving pupils' reading skills such as comprehension, prediction and inference has been successfully piloted in Year 4 and will be rolled out across the whole school. Pupils read widely and talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and the range of books and opportunities for reading made available to them at school.
- It is school policy that writing is practised in subjects other than English. The work in pupils' books shows that they can write for a variety of reasons and try hard to include interesting words to improve their descriptions. Pupils take a pride in their work and present it neatly. There is a range of writing displayed around the school which celebrates pupils' achievements.
- Mathematical skills are not routinely developed in other subjects and there are few displays around the school to attract pupils' attention and stir curiosity.
- In Year 6 in 2013, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported through pupil premium funding attained at approximately one year behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. However, a high proportion of eligible pupils had additional needs and the progress made by the group was good overall. Current school data show that any gaps between eligible pupils and others are quickly addressed so that all pupils are helped to make good progress. This reflects the school's commitment to making sure that all pupils are given the same opportunities to succeed.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good and sometimes excellent progress because of the good support and guidance provided for them.
- The most able pupils typically receive appropriate levels of challenge. For example, the most able readers are invited to attend a reading club to enhance their skills still further. Moreover, teachers track pupils' progress carefully so that the most able mathematicians are taught in the highest set.

The quality of teaching is good

- The impact of teaching on pupils' learning is good and there are examples of excellent teaching and learning across the school. This is confirmed by inspection evidence, including lesson observations, work in pupils' books and the school's own records of pupils' progress.
- Pupils are encouraged to share their ideas and reflect on their learning. Teachers question pupils carefully to assess their level of understanding and take great care to include all pupils in whole-class and group discussions.
- A good range of resources are provided to help pupils to learn. For example, prompts are displayed around the classroom and pupils' personal files are kept next to them. This is so that pupils can check the walls and refer to the contents of the file when they want ideas to further improve their work.
- Pupils have an extended one-to-one session with their class teacher each term. This is to discuss

their individual learning and what they need to do to next. Teachers and pupils value this discussion and feel that it makes a really positive difference to the progress pupils are able to make. This discussion is then used to write a report that is sent home so that parents are kept up to date concerning their children's progress.

- In one Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were using trial-and-error methods to solve equations. They had a range of problems available to them and could choose their own level of challenge. Pupils were ambitious in their selection and highly delighted when they worked out the answer to a tricky equation. There are lessons when some pupils spend time engaged in activities regarding aspects of learning that they are already confident with, when they could get on more quickly with challenging tasks.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and praise and encouragement is provided. Additional challenges are set for pupils to help them improve their work. However, this is not consistent across the school and it is more evident in writing books than in mathematics books. Moreover, pupils do not always complete their corrections so that they can learn from their mistakes.
- Teaching assistants provide excellent support to learners. They work together closely with class teachers and the learning support manager to accurately meet the academic and pastoral needs of the pupils that they work with.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. School records show that this is the norm.
- Pupils want to learn and are polite and good humoured. They show great respect for each other and the adults around them. Behaviour is good in and around the school including the dining hall and the playground.
- The pupils really appreciate their teachers and their school, they wear their uniform with pride, and the school building and outdoor areas are kept clean and tidy.
- There are many opportunities available for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility. For example, Year 5 pupils meet Year 2 pupils from the infant school to introduce a friendly face and answer any questions that infants have about junior school. There are always trained pupil mediators on the playground to help other pupils to sort their differences. Moreover, older pupils regularly help their younger friends to learn their times tables.
- Pupils are proud of their fundraising efforts. For example, Year 6 pupils are currently planning activities to raise funds to support the Southport Community, including the local hospice.
- The majority of parents are highly supportive of the school. However, a very small minority raised concerns regarding the management of behaviour and its impact on pupils' progress. Inspectors carefully investigated aspects of behaviour management and found that the school manages behaviour well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel very safe in school because they know adults care for them well.
- Pupils can explain different forms of bullying and the difference between bullying and falling out. What is more, pupils confirm that there is no bullying and are confident that staff and pupil mediators would help them to deal quickly with any problems that did occur.
- The primary school sport funding is being used to further develop staff expertise so that an even wider range of sporting activities can be taught to a higher standard. Pupils also benefit from the provision of a variety of before- and after-school activities, with a programme of lunch-time events in development. The school takes care to provide something for everyone to enjoy and get involved with, regardless of skill levels.
- Attendance rates are consistently above average, which reflects how much pupils enjoy the Farnborough Junior School experience.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows how successful the school can be. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and governors and together they have the skill and determination to improve the school still further.
- School leaders have effectively steered the school through a period of significant changes in staffing and have built an enthusiastic, cohesive staff team.
- The school's evaluation of how well it is doing is accurate because it is based on careful analysis of the work that it does.
- Targets set for teachers are linked to the school's planning documents and both focus purposefully on improving standards.
- Systems to check how well pupils are learning have been improved. As a result, additional support can be put into place more quickly and this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress, especially for those pupils who have additional needs.
- Senior and middle leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and learning. There is a commitment toward developing teachers and teaching assistants through training, peer support and the sharing of good practice. Newly qualified teachers are well supported by more experienced staff.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is well developed. For example, pupils have the opportunity to learn how to play a musical instrument and the school has a successful band and choir. Staff take that extra step to prepare pupils well for their next experience. Lower Key Stage 2 pupils are having a sleepover at school to prepare them for the residential that they can attend in Upper Key Stage 2.
- The curriculum meets all requirements and includes a wide range of enrichment activities. For example, a visiting science teacher captivated pupils by using water and light to display a rainbow across the school-hall ceiling. Themed curriculum weeks also inspire pupils, when, for example, *Doctor Who* and the TARDIS visited school there was much excitement and lots to talk and write about.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school.
- Statutory requirements including safeguarding and financial management are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are extremely supportive of the school. They know its strengths and priorities because they visit school as often as they can and receive accurate, comprehensive reports from school leaders. The governing body provides additional expertise to the school and is able to appoint governors that complement their existing skills. They engage in training and are fully equipped to analyse pupils' progress data so that they can challenge school leaders even more. Governors check the progress of pupils eligible for pupil-premium grant to confirm that their spending is successful. They know about the quality of teaching and make sure that teachers' progression through the pay scale is linked to how effective they are.

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	104862
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	444287

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	464
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Iain Brodie Browne
Headteacher	Adrian Antell
Date of previous school inspection	7 January 2010
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