

Inspection of an outstanding school: Farnham Primary School

Stratford Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD7 3HU

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 September 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to Farnham Primary School's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. Pupils work hard and behave well. They enjoy attending school and achieve well. Pupils understand what bullying is but say that it does not happen in their school. Pupils say that adults are kind and always help them.

It is important to leaders that pupils leave the school as well-rounded individuals and they put the right things in place to make this happen. Leaders ensure that pupils respect people's differences. They are taught about people of different faiths and backgrounds. Pupils know that everyone should be treated equally. One pupil told inspectors: 'Don't judge people because of their differences; we are all human and should all be treated the same.'

Visits to interesting places enhance the curriculum and deepen pupils' understanding of the subjects they are learning about. Many of these visits are to local places, for example Cartwright Hall and the Brontë Parsonage Museum. This helps pupils to understand more about Bradford, a city they are clearly proud of.

Pupils understand democracy; they talk confidently about how the City Hall is where decisions are made that affect them. They also know that they can contribute to decisions made in school. For example, school councillors have recently worked with leaders to refresh the school rules. These are understood by all pupils and contribute to the calm and settled feeling in school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have introduced a curriculum that clearly identifies the subject knowledge that pupils should learn as they move from Year 1 to Year 6. Pupils use a range of strategies in lessons to recall what they have learned before and make connections with new learning. This helps them to remember the important knowledge that leaders want them to know.

The early years curriculum is not included in curriculum plans for subjects in the wider curriculum, such as history and design technology. As a result, subject leaders do not have a clear picture of how the curriculum for early years provides a foundation for what pupils are learning in later years.

Leaders provide teachers with regular training to give them the expertise they need to teach the curriculum well. For example, teachers have recently received training about using equipment in mathematics to help pupils understand new concepts. In lessons visited, pupils were seen using place value counters to help them learn how to complete addition problems. Pupils told the inspector that using the new equipment was helping them to feel more confident and remember what they have been taught. Some teachers have reorganised the way they teach mathematics to make up for learning that has been lost during the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders have arranged catch-up support for these pupils to get them back on track with the mathematics curriculum.

Leaders have introduced a new programme to teach pupils to learn to read. Phonics lessons are well taught and help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to read new sounds in words and sentences. Leaders have introduced additional short phonics sessions throughout the day that help pupils to remember the sounds they are learning. The books that pupils read in phonics lessons are matched to the sounds they already know and help them to read fluently. Pupils take these books home to practise reading. In addition, pupils are given a book that is not as well matched to the letters and sounds that they know. This book does not help pupils develop confidence and fluency in reading. Leaders check what sounds pupils have remembered regularly. They provide effective support for those pupils who need help to catch up in regular extra reading sessions.

Leader's expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Weekly reward sessions encourage pupils to behave well and work hard. Calm classrooms enable pupils to learn without disruption. Some pupils do not attend school as often as they should. Leaders have systems in place to work with families to improve pupils' attendance. However, rates of absence remain high.

A range of opportunities support pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy taking part in after-school sport and cooking clubs. Visits to different places of worship help pupils to understand about different faiths. Some pupils are currently being trained as peer mentors so that they can offer emotional support to other pupils in the school.

Trustees and local governors have a good understanding of the school. They provide effective challenge and support for school leaders. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, are considerate of staff well-being. Staff say that they feel well supported and that their workload is considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is strong leadership of safeguarding from a well-trained team of safeguarding leaders. Leaders provide training for all staff so that they understand how to identify if a pupil is at risk of harm. Safeguarding leaders respond quickly and keep thorough records of their actions if they are concerned about a pupil's safety.

Pupils are taught to manage the risks they may face online and in the community through the curriculum and in assemblies. They are able to explain some of the rules they follow when working online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject plans do not include what pupils will learn in the early years. As a result, the curriculum in key stage 1 and key stage 2 does not build on pupils' learning from the early years. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is planned carefully from early years through to Year 6 so that teachers can build on pupils' prior knowledge.
- Rates of absence and persistent absence continue to be high. This means that some pupils miss out on important learning alongside their peers. Leaders should ensure that pupils' attendance improves and the number of pupils who are persistently absent reduces.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Farnham Primary School, to be outstanding in March 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144862
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10201089
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	489
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Briggs
Headteacher	Baljit Bains
Website	http://www.farnhamprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Farnham Primary School converted to become an academy school in May 2018. When its predecessor school, Farnham Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of the Pennine Academies Yorkshire multi-academy trust.
- The headteacher became headteacher at the start of this academic year, having previously been a co-headteacher at the school.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also looked at the curriculum plan for design technology.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and members of the school's leadership team.
- The inspector held meetings with members of the local governing body and the board of trustees.
- The inspector scrutinised documents, including the school's single central record and spoke to the school's designated safeguarding leader and deputy safeguarding leaders.
- The inspector considered 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 8 free-text parent comments. The inspector also reviewed the 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Tim Scargill-Knight, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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