

# Inspection of a good school: Farnham Common Junior School

Sherbourne Walk, Farnham Common, Buckinghamshire SL2 3TZ

---

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 November 2023

## Outcome

Farnham Common Junior School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Farnham Common Junior School. Staff and governors share a passion that learning should be centred in real-world contexts, enriched through learning outside the classroom and focused on helping pupils to see their place in society. The school's values of respect, resilience, innovation, empathy and integrity underpin pupils' everyday experiences. Pupils develop consideration, tolerance and genuine respect for each other and the wider community. Most parents enthuse about the provision. As one parent said: 'We feel so lucky to have a lovely local village school. My child is thriving here.'

Staff know the pupils well, fostering warm relationships so they feel safe and secure. Pupils behave particularly well here and any unkindness or inappropriate behaviour is rare. Pupils respect the school's rules and rewards and know what is expected of them. They value how trusted adults will listen to and resolve any worries they may have.

Pupils develop a love of reading, enjoy their learning and like discussing their work. They are supported to develop a sense of curiosity. The curriculum is enriched through regular outdoor learning opportunities, specialist teachers, guest speakers and a huge range of clubs, activities and trips. Skilled staff share their infectious enthusiasm, helping pupils to relish school.

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

Highly effective working relationships exist between staff at all levels across the two schools of the federation. These underpin the continuous improvement across the school. Working together, staff have made sustained advances in pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics over recent years. They deliver an exciting and engaging curriculum. Pupils develop a broad range of knowledge, together with self-confidence as learners, which equips them well for future learning and success. As one Year 4 boy rightly enthused to the inspector, 'I think we are educated well!'

The ambitious curriculum ensures all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well. Staff make increasingly good use of published research and collaboration with other schools to boost their subject knowledge. The curriculum in some subjects, such as mathematics and history, identifies the key concepts and skills pupils need to know and how these build on prior learning. This means pupils develop highly secure knowledge and skills. In writing and some foundation subjects, these developments are at an earlier stage. In subjects such as geography, science and design and technology, the curriculum needs further refinement so that pupils achieve as well as they could.

The school works with infant school staff well to ensure consistency in the teaching of phonics and early reading when pupils transfer into Year 3. Well-trained staff assess pupils' reading skills and coordinate bespoke support for any pupils requiring it. The school ensures that reading books are carefully matched to pupils' reading skills. Teachers and pupils clearly share a love of reading. Pupils delight in recalling their favourite stories and characters. Over time, pupils are supported to become fluent readers and develop a rich vocabulary.

Staff prioritise pupils' mental health and well-being and nurture pupils' all-round development particularly well. The impressive extra-curricular provision fosters a love of sports, the arts and the local community across all years. Pupils broaden their interests through the huge array of clubs, trips, charity fundraising and community events. The curriculum promotes respect for diversity and inclusion and ensures pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including when online. The school knows that, while most recognise the many strengths of the school, a significant minority of parents want more frequent or consistent communication from the school.

Pupils' behaviour is, typically, first class. Leaders work well with families to promote high levels of attendance. Pupils socialise well and play happily at breaktimes. They move around the school sensibly and are polite to visitors. Any disruption is rare. Pupils show genuine empathy and respect for each other and to different members of their community.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum for writing and for some foundation subjects does not sequence the precise knowledge and skills that pupils should learn as well as it does in other areas. As a result, learning does not always sufficiently revisit and build on the knowledge pupils gain in previous years. The school should continue to provide training for staff focused on writing skills and refining the curriculum in targeted foundation subjects, so that the essential knowledge and skills pupils need build over time very securely.

- A minority of parents expressed frustration as they feel that there have been occasions when their worries have not been heard. The school needs to continue to refine its new communication systems. This will ensure all parents feel more fully involved and informed about the high quality of education and support on offer for their children.

## Background

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

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

## 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.

## Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110265
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10287836
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	220
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Diana Blakemore
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Masters
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.farnhamcommonvillageschools.co.uk">www.farnhamcommonvillageschools.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Farnham Common Village Schools Federation.
- The headteacher joined the federation since the previous inspection and is responsible for both schools in the federation.
- The leadership of the school was restructured last year.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Deep dives were conducted in early reading, mathematics and history. As part of these, the inspector met with subject leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, visited lessons, talked to pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of their work. A meeting

was also held with the headteacher to discuss curriculum planning and provision in science.

- The inspector met with school leaders, staff and those with responsibility for governance, and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector scrutinised documents, including those relating to behaviour, attendance and governance.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school and to talk about their work. Informal conversations were held with pupils during lunchtime.
- The views represented in the Ofsted surveys of parents and staff were considered. The inspector also spoke to a small number of parents when they were collecting their children at the end of the day.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

### **Inspection team**

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023