

Inspection of Farnborough Primary School

Farnborough Hill, Farnborough, Orpington, Kent BR6 7EQ

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The executive headteacher of this school is Angela James. This school is part of the Nexus Education Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Paula Farrow, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ann Golding.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Farnborough Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Farnborough Primary School to be outstanding before it opened as an academy. Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since November 2012.

What is it like to attend this school?

Farnborough Primary School is a welcoming and friendly community. From their first days in Reception, children learn how to share in their play and collaborate in their learning. Parents and carers appreciate the dedication of the staff team. One parent, reflecting the views of many others, commented, 'My child runs into school.'

Pupils said that bullying is not tolerated in the school, and that they can talk to an adult about any worries. They are taught how to stay safe online and out in the community. Older pupils are supportive of and caring towards younger pupils. As a result, pupils feel safe and are kept safe.

The school has high ambitions for its pupils, including the above-average proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These ambitions are mostly realised. Pupils are learning a carefully considered curriculum and developing positive attitudes to their learning. However, on occasion, some pupils are not learning knowledge as securely as the school intends.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences at school beyond the academic curriculum. This includes the school's popular breakfast and after-school clubs. Pupils take part in a wide range of educational visits, sporting events and clubs. They are encouraged to come up with their own ideas for fundraising and are proud to support a wide range of charities.

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

The school has thought carefully about its curriculum to make sure that pupils securely understand and remember the most important knowledge in a subject, step by step. For example, in mathematics, teachers use physical resources to help pupils see and understand mathematical structures. The approaches used in teaching are effective for all pupils, particularly those with SEND. They help pupils to build on and connect what they are learning over time. For instance, once they understand accuracy in measurement, pupils learn about adding different measurements together and practise this in real-world contexts.

Across the curriculum, teachers check on pupils' understanding regularly. They adapt lessons as they teach if some pupils have not securely understood important knowledge, and sometimes plan additional teaching for any pupils who need it. They also teach and regularly use new vocabulary with pupils. However, on occasion, some of the procedures to check on pupils' understanding are not fully effective. For example, in a few instances, there is a lack of clarity about the support and teaching strategies that will be provided for some pupils with SEND who have gaps in their learning. On occasion, children in early years are asked to complete work, like writing sentences, when some of them do not yet know how to spell words or form letters correctly.

The school prioritises reading, and pupils consistently talked about their love of books and story times in class. Staff are well-trained to deliver the school's phonics programme. Starting in Reception, children learn the sounds that letters make and have plenty of time for repetition and practice. Pupils who are falling behind have extra lessons and support. To practise reading, pupils regularly take books home which match the sounds that they have been learning. The school uses effective approaches to ensure that parents know how well their children are progressing, and what they can do to help. Older pupils continue to develop their fluency as they read a wide range of thoughtfully selected books. A carefully structured approach to teaching vocabulary further enhances pupils' language development and reading comprehension.

Children get off to a strong start in Reception. In a safe, stimulating and caring environment, children make strong progress in developing their communication and physical skills. Many are engrossed in their play for long periods of time, and they listen attentively and respond eagerly to adult teaching. Building on this positive start, pupils across the year groups are happy in school and enjoy their learning. They are polite and considerate to adults and to each other. Pupils respond promptly to adult guidance and instructions, although there are a few occasions when some pupils disengage briefly from their learning. This is managed well by staff so it does not disrupt the learning of others. The school has clear and effective procedures to ensure that pupils attend regularly and on time. Where pupils' attendance needs to improve, the school supports families very well.

The school prioritises pupils' wider health, well-being and character development. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sport and dance, and are taught about looking after their physical and mental health. Pupils are also taught to treat everyone with respect and to look after the school's resources. They can apply to be 'Eco Councillors' and lead the school's work on protecting the environment.

Staff are highly appreciative of the way that leaders provide them with ongoing support and opportunities to improve their teaching through professional development. They are proud to work at Farnborough Primary School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, checks on pupils' understanding of important elements of the curriculum are not fully effective. As a result, pupils' understanding is, at times, not secure enough to prepare them well for their future learning. The school should ensure that checks on pupils' learning enable teachers to address identified gaps in pupils' knowledge.

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 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

Unique reference number	140449
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10296646
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ann Golding
Headteacher	Angela James (executive headteacher)
Website	www.farnboroughprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Nexus Education Schools Trust.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other leaders. Inspectors also met with the chair of trustees, the chief executive officer, the trust’s senior education lead, and the vice-chair of the local academy committee.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work. Inspectors also reviewed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents provided by the school, including behaviour logs, bullying records, attendance records, school development plans and school policies.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke with parents as they arrived at school.
- Inspectors also took into account the responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire for school staff. Inspectors also met with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

Julian Grenier, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
James Canniford	Ofsted Inspector
Sam Johnson	His Majesty’s Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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