



Farley Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109829
LEA Wokingham District Council
Inspection number 278285
Inspection dates 28 February 2006 to 1 March 2006
Reporting inspector Wiola Hola HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Road
School category	Community		Farley Hill
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Reading RG7 1UB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01189 732148
Number on roll	188	Fax number	01189 731549
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Annette Keith
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2000	Headteacher	Helen Batty (Acting)

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is of average size and serves the village of Farley Hill and surrounding areas. Its circumstances are more favourable than average. Attainment on entry is above average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Over nine out of ten pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average and no pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pupils achieve well at this outstanding school, most notably in the way they mature into courteous and confident young people who show caring attitudes to each other and the world around them and beyond. They are encouraged to explore and do so with enthusiasm. Children start the school with above average skills and make excellent progress in the Foundation Stage because of the high quality of provision there. In Years 1 to 6 teaching and learning are good, but include instances of both excellent and satisfactory work. The guidance pupils receive about how to achieve their best in lessons is good but could be better in some cases where teachers' questioning should be more incisive. The school provides pupils with an excellent range of interesting activities so that their enjoyment of learning is highly evident. Care for pupils' well-being is excellent. Academic standards are above average and have been maintained at these high levels in most years since the last inspection, although standards in writing should be higher for the younger pupils. Outstanding leadership and management ensure that the school knows extremely well its own strengths and what needs to be improved further. Its capacity to keep on improving is excellent. The school's view of itself matched with inspectors' views in most respects. Its judgement of 'good' for overall effectiveness was modest and reflected the school's belief that there is still more to be done. This is true, but enough positive features are already in place to merit 'outstanding'. The school is innovative and energetic in seeking to improve facilities, working in excellent partnership with parents and others to do so. Governors are highly effective and a real asset to the school. Records of pupils' attainment are compiled very thoroughly but the way they are stored on paper does not allow for easy analysis to check the progress of specific groups of pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

* Raise standards in writing for pupils in Years 1 and 2* Ensure that more teaching is of the good or excellent quality that already exists; develop further some teachers' questioning skills so that pupils get consistently good advice about how to improve their work but without losing the chance to explore for themselves where appropriate* Managers should improve the ease with which they can analyse data about pupils' performance so as to maximise their progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, so that, by Year 6, standards are significantly above average. In 2005, Year 6 pupils did especially well in the English tests showing how well they achieved since Year 2. Their progress in mathematics and science from Year 2 was broadly in line with what similar pupils make nationally. Standards by Year 2 are also above average. Achievement over Years 1 and 2 is generally good for reading and mathematics but not as good for writing. In

2005, far fewer pupils in Year 2 reached the higher level in writing than did so for reading and mathematics. In the Foundation Stage, children develop extremely well in all areas of learning through a rich range of hugely enjoyable activities. Very few pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities but they achieve as well as their peers. The school sets challenging targets and meets them in the main. Pupils are articulate and even the youngest speak with confidence. Pupils' skills in all subjects across the curriculum are developed well. In particular, pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are good. Beautiful singing enriches assemblies and pupils' work in French lessons, for example, and also in the Foundation Stage.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is a major strength of the school. Pupils' politeness, their ability to engage in conversation confidently but modestly, their positive approach to learning and enquiry and their excellent behaviour and attendance are a tribute to all that the school stands for and provides. At each stage, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps in life and learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school and talk enthusiastically about what it offers them. They learn much from the enterprising spirit in the school which built and runs its own 'Eat Smart Cafandacute;'. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They are taught to collaborate and work in teams and do so readily. They are given and take opportunities to reflect upon important aspects of the human condition in assemblies and at other times. They are thoughtful and considerate to others, as demonstrated in charity work and through the effective School Council. They play together extremely well in the exciting playground and are emphatic that no bullying occurs. Pupils support one another in maintaining good friendships. Relationships are very positive amongst and between pupils and staff.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. Teachers plan their work meticulously and provide varied tasks that match the abilities of the pupils. The best lessons make use of a wide range of resources, are fast paced, and comprise challenging and engaging activities. As a result all pupils are highly motivated and work hard. In the Foundation Stage, children learn extremely well about the world and themselves through very relevant activities. Throughout the school, teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning in many ways. With teachers, they provide effective help for pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers assess pupils' progress diligently and accurately and determine suitable targets that guide pupils' learning. In some lessons, however, teachers' questioning is not sharp enough to check if all pupils are grasping the key skills or concepts being presented and this limits some pupils' progress because they are not guided astutely enough. The checking of how

well children are doing in the reception class is very good, with valuable contributions from volunteer parents. In the main teachers' marking is good. Teaching and learning are enhanced by effective use of interactive whiteboards by both staff and pupils. Excellent assemblies contribute greatly to pupils' learning about important events and about people's values and beliefs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The excellent curriculum enables pupils to flourish. It is highly enriched by a very good programme of additional activities throughout the academic year and for all year groups, adding greatly to pupils' learning and enjoyment of school. The youngest children benefit from a stimulating, well resourced and highly effective Foundation Stage curriculum. The video left for inspectors by Year 6 pupils away on a residential week in Dorset featured their best memories of school which included trips and visits. Wherever possible, links are made between subjects, such as the study of France in Year 3 while embarking on learning French. Visiting musicians enhance the curriculum and all pupils from Year 2 learn to play the recorder. The school provides an excellent programme of personal and social education that effectively promotes pupils' understanding of relationships, healthy living and safety. There are generally very good opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in literacy, mathematics and ICT in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are extremely well cared for. Procedures to protect them are excellent. Staff and governors are highly effective in ensuring that regular and systematic risk assessments and health and safety checks are carried out efficiently. Parents feel welcome and they trust the staff to take care of their children. They are pleased with the information they receive about their children's work and progress, and how they can help at home. Systems to assess pupils' work are good and information is compiled well but data are difficult to analyse and interpret quickly in order to see the 'big picture' of the progress of groups of pupils. The progress of individual pupils is charted well and each one generally receives clear targets. Pupils believe that their learning targets help them to improve their work. A Year 2 pupil said, consulting the front of his exercise book, 'I know my target now', and shared this with his classmate when planning to write a letter.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management including governance are outstanding. The school knows itself well and this is reflected in the high quality of school self-evaluation and planning for improvement that take appropriate account of pupils', staff and parents' views. The trenchant evaluation and development of teaching have ensured that high

standards have been maintained. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are outstanding. At the time of the last inspection there were no specific policies or planning for reception children. The school has successfully addressed this shortcoming. Governors hold the school to account extremely well and provide highly effective support. They monitor very well the school's performance with the headteacher and staff. Governors and other parents contribute greatly to the life of the school, to fund raising and by working on specific projects such as streamlining the way enrichment activities are paid for and building developments. The school states that it 'likes a challenge' and is keen to consider new ways of working. It sees itself as 'a traditional school with a modern outlook'. Resources are of very good quality, including outdoor areas and equipment which create a positive learning environment. Resources for ICT are used very well and this is another significant improvement since the last inspection. The school's track record of improvement shows that it has excellent capacity to improve teaching and to raise standards further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I was pleased to visit your school recently together with another inspector. I write to thank you for your help as we talked to you and looked at your work. You made us feel really welcome. We would like to thank the School Council members who spoke to us and took us to lunch in the lovely new 'Eat Smart Cafandeaacute;'. It is clear that you enjoy coming to this outstanding school.

We think these are the best things about your school:* it helps you to grow up into courteous and considerate young people, keen to work and learn* it provides you with an excellent range of interesting activities in lessons and also in the many clubs, trips and visits* teaching is good and your teachers and other helpers take extremely good care of you so that you make good progress and stay safe* the way that the school is led is outstanding with staff and governors always exploring new ways of making the school even better* the children in the reception class make an extremely good start to school.

Here are three main ways in which the school could improve even further:* we feel that the school could help some of the younger pupils do even better in their writing* we saw some excellent teaching in your school and feel there could be even more of it if teachers asked you better questions about how well you are doing* the school should find an easier way of storing information about what you have learned so that teachers can check on your progress more quickly.You and your parents are right to be proud of this school and of how well you are achieving. I wish you all the very best for the future.