



Farnham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107294
Local Authority Bradford
Inspection number 287784
Inspection dates 11–12 September 2006
Reporting inspector Roger Gill

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Stratford Road
School category	Community		Bradford
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Yorkshire BD7 3HU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01274 573297
Number on roll (school)	492	Fax number	01274 521745
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rev Paul Bilton
		Headteacher	Mr Richard Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	11–12 September 2006	287784

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school is situated in an area of marked economic disadvantage. The vast majority of children are from Asian British backgrounds; only a few are from other minority ethnic groups. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Nearly all pupils are learning English as an additional language and over half are at an early stage. A small group of children is looked after in public care. The school has recently appointed a second deputy headteacher to augment the newly formed leadership team. The school was accommodated on a split-site until September 2003.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards in English, mathematics and science, and pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics and science.

Farnham became a primary school, following first and middle school reorganisation, just before the time of its last inspection in 2001. Since then, it has suffered a great deal from problems caused by split-site working and ineffective teaching, which slowed progress in learning and created large gaps in children's knowledge. The governors, headteacher and key staff have struggled hard to pull things together, but until recently the school has often been diverted from the main task of raising standards.

Consequently, standards are exceptionally low and children's achievement is inadequate, particularly in mathematics and science. Inadequate teaching and assessment, in the past, provided only a weak idea about how well children were doing. So the satisfactory teaching that exists now struggles to maintain sound learning.

The school does not give value for money particularly because children are not given a head start in the academic skills needed at the high school and in the workplace later on.

Some good aspects of leadership have produced a climate of improvement. The headteacher, staff and governors are beginning to have a positive influence on teaching and learning now that some of the basic problems associated with re-organisation have been tackled. Everyone in the school is enthusiastic about the way forward and has a clear idea of what to do. Parents are pleased that pupils are making adequate progress in reading and writing because the teachers have benefited from training and are more confident in these aspects of pupils' learning. By contrast, the school has not fully tailored learning in mathematics and science to suit the children's needs. It is only relatively recently, with the support of the local authority, that the school has produced a curriculum containing the right kind of lessons in these subjects. Some progress has been made, but this is not substantial.

Despite the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning there are differences between lessons. Some lessons bounce along, because children revel in snappy, challenging and exciting tasks. Others get the job done, but lack drive and sparkle. This prevents learning from being good. It is often boys, in general, and children capable of higher attainment that need to do the most catching up. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, but it is in Years 1 to 6 that progress slows. Teaching is checked up on in a reasonable way, but the school's methods of observation are not rigorous enough to generate the rate of progress needed.

After the recent formation of a new leadership team, a sensible range of initiatives has been implemented to tackle the problems. For example, children enjoy being given well-designed targets to aim for in lessons. Any short bursts of progress, which occur

from meeting individual targets, are not harnessed strongly by teaching to advance achievement evenly across the school. The headteacher and the leadership team have improved assessment well to help pinpoint difficulties, but analysis of this kind is at too early a stage to have full impact on standards and achievement.

The school works well with parents, the community and colleagues in the local authority. As a result, children enjoy what they do, treat each other considerately and want to be healthy. They work together in helping the staff to make the school a better place and feel a moral responsibility towards those less fortunate than themselves in the community and around the world.

Despite some encouraging and tangible advances, the overall effectiveness of the school is inadequate. It has shown that it can improve, but the school has slipped back from being satisfactory in 2001. The inspectors believe the senior staff and governors demonstrate a satisfactory capability of doing what is needed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Address the slow rate of progress and raise standards and achievement ensuring that all pupils do as well as they can.
- Ensuring that the monitoring of teaching and learning is fully effective - in improving the pace of learning and eliminating lessons where progress is too slow.
- Making better use of information from assessment to improve teaching and learning, and to raise achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

On entry to the nursery, children have very weak skills compared to those typically expected of a three-year-old. They find it hard to socialise, communicate in English and complete basic tasks in mathematics. Nevertheless, progress is good and by the end of Reception children have gained some valuable skills and knowledge.

The persistently low standards, by the end of Year 6, mean that achievement is nowhere near good enough throughout the school. By the end of Year 6 children have progressed at an average rate in English, over the last two years, but standards remain well below where they should be. Moreover, writing, at the end of Year 2, is getting better year-by-year. Children are beginning to make sound progress in individual lessons, but this is often not fast enough to make up for shortcomings in their learning. There are some instances where children do better than expected, for example, in science, owing to the impact of the school's new programme of work. Overall achievement by the age of 11 is inadequate as it has been for at least three years.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Children have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and they act safely around school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils'

enthusiasm is demonstrated by the way in which, for example, they relish opportunities to raise funds for people in need. There is a strong spiritual aspect to their selflessness in this respect. This shines through in the way that they speak about their contribution to the world community in providing, for example, assistance to victims of the earthquake in Pakistan. Moral and social aspects in provision fuel a strong bond of friendship between pupils. Cultural development is not quite as good as the rest because, as the school readily admits, the creative curriculum is in need of development. The informal and formal links of friendship are effective in tackling bullying and improving behaviour. Attendance was below average, but it has improved to satisfactory lately: children's increasingly positive attitudes to school are bound up in this improvement. By contrast, their economic well-being is affected adversely by weak achievement in some key academic skills, which makes personal development satisfactory rather than good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The weak achievement which exists is largely due to some inadequate teaching in the past. This is particularly true in mathematics and science. In science, for example, lessons were, until quite recently, dull and mechanical. The quality of teaching and learning is currently satisfactory. As a result, children are beginning to make sound progress in lessons, but there are still inconsistencies where learning is too slow. All groups of children make similar progress including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In the best lessons, teaching is lively and learning more investigative. The assessment of children's progress has been radically up-graded since the arrival of the second deputy headteacher. Teaching has a clear idea of where children are up to and what needs to be done next. There has not yet been time for this fresh look at assessment to have worked fully in improving learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory in the way that it enables many children to make steady progress in lessons. It also helps to nurture their sound personal development. Pupils' achievement has been adversely affected by weaknesses in the curriculum, typically in mathematics and science, where the programme of work was ill suited to children's needs. These weaknesses have been dealt with, but only very recently. There are some good aspects. Visits and visitors provide beneficial stimuli for learning and personal development, as do the many clubs and opportunities in information and communication technology. There are some good activities for gifted and talented children. Themed weeks, for example, in art produce some in-depth work of which the children are justly proud. Despite the exciting aspects of the curriculum, its effect on academic achievement and breadth, in terms of creativity, is still hampered by previous difficulties.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are well supported and staff are committed to their welfare, health and safety. Child protection procedures are in place and working. Governors follow the correct procedures in vetting staff who work in school with the children. Guidance about road safety is a priority to which children respond enthusiastically. The school works well with other agencies to care for the most vulnerable, particularly those with emotional or behavioural difficulties. Sometimes the school is particularly focused in the way that it guides children in their learning. For example, in 2005/6 Year 6 pupils received beneficial one-to-one tutoring in mathematics and science before their national tests. However, academic guidance is not always so effective. Thus provision is satisfactory and not good. Children are given targets to aim for in English and mathematics. They know these well, but teaching does not always make sure that success in these targets produces better progress overtime.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, deputy headteachers, senior staff and governors have taken action and recently placed the school back on track following some significant barriers to progress. They are still faced with echoes from the past that thwart their efforts, so leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership, including that provided by governors, is not blinkered as to the enormous task ahead; it is realistic about the problems and faces them resolutely. The school's current position is evaluated satisfactorily. Inspectors agree that the school is not good enough yet. Achievement, standards, teaching, leadership and management are judged accurately. However, the school is a little optimistic about its general effectiveness because it overestimates the influence that the curriculum, children's personal development and care have on standards and achievement.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit because everyone was so helpful and friendly. We would like to share with you what we thought.

These are some of the things that we enjoyed:

- seeing how the older children care about people and the world around them
- finding out how you get on well together and know how to keep fit and healthy
- understanding how all the adults in the school and people in the community are working hard to improve the school
- knowing that even in your large school you are all cared for as individuals.

There are some very important things we want your headteacher and teachers to do:

- make sure that you do as well as you can in all lessons
- make sure that when you reach a target that you use that knowledge later on
- check on lessons, more closely, to make sure that all teaching is helping you to do your very best.

We are confident that your headteacher, other staff and governors can do what is needed. You can help them by continuing to work hard and behave well. Remember that when you reach a target you need to keep using it. Boys, in particular, need to try and beat their previous best.