

South Farnborough Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116144
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	290433
Inspection date	16 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs K Wrenn
Headteacher	Miss H Fletcher-Davies
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001
School address	Queen's Road Farnborough GU14 6JU
Telephone number	01252 543727
Fax number	01252 513193

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized infant school. There is very high mobility of pupils which results from military moves and also changes as parents in social housing move on. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are a few pupils that are an early stage of learning English. Pupils come from a wide range of economic backgrounds several of which are disadvantaged. The percentage with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Attainment on entry is much below average particularly in children's personal, social and emotional development.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

South Farnborough is an excellent school that provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The key to its success is the dynamic leadership of the headteacher who is supported well by the rest of the staff. Teamwork is very strong. Working closely together, all the staff have created a powerful atmosphere of support and care in which pupils are helped to believe in themselves and to have the motivation to do their best. The pupils make outstanding progress in both their personal and their academic learning. As one parent said, 'There is high quality teaching and learning combined with a caring, child-centred approach'. Pupils love school though this is not always reflected in high attendance. Despite the school's appropriate procedures attendance levels are below average and are adversely affected by families taking holidays during term time.

Pupils love lessons! They say 'Learning and lessons are fun because we are given lots of exciting things to do'. This is recognised by parents who are unanimously supportive of the school. One parent's remarks summed up the many very positive comments that parents made. 'My son is thriving. He is settled, happy, enthusiastic and working very well. He always goes in with a smile and comes out with a smile'. Pupils' behaviour is excellent; they have very positive attitudes and even during lunchtime want the bell to go so they can get back to their learning! They particularly enjoy the circle times. These lessons are organised so that they include children from all three age groups and provide an important means through which pupils learn about taking responsibility. It also helps them to develop the strong moral and social values that are prevalent in all classes. Pupils know about living healthily and they feel safe and well cared for. The school does exceptionally well in providing them with the skills needed for transfer to junior school.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils. They provide them with interesting and exciting activities that capture their imagination such as with the moving toys that were made in Year 2. Lessons are stimulating, challenging and carefully planned. Excellent use is made of assessment information for future planning. The outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage means that children get off to a flying start. Teachers build very well on the children's natural curiosity and this helps them to achieve exceptionally well. Although their attainment on entry is well below expected levels, their excellent progress ensures that about one third of pupils gain the expected goals when they enter Year 1. This excellent progress continues in both Year 1 and 2, and by the time that they leave the school, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been significantly above average for the past three years.

The staff and governors know their school extremely well as a result of the careful checking of provision and pupils' progress. They constantly seek to do better and are conservative in their own estimation of their achievements. Governors are excellent in the support that they provide and also in their questioning of the work of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise levels of attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children's personal, social and emotional and mathematical skills are particularly weak when they enter the school. However, the excellence of the provision ensures that children are helped to overcome this. A very strong and appropriate emphasis is placed on making sure that the children develop a love of learning and school. This is reflected in their rapid progress particularly in their personal and communication, language and literacy skills. Pupils continue to achieve exceptionally well in both Year 1 and Year 2. This is due to the consistently high quality of teaching and the exciting and extremely well-adapted curriculum. There are excellent procedures in place to identify the learning needs of all pupils. Curriculum teams track pupils' progress exceptionally well across all subjects and careful analysis helps to complement the teachers' own assessments. This is particularly the case for those at risk of not meeting their potential. These pupils are identified early and appropriate support is put into place. All groups of pupils achieve exceptionally well, including those that are learning English. These pupils benefit from the good support provided by the local authority team.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. They are keen to learn, are proud of all aspects of their school and delight in pointing out all the exciting things that are provided for them that help them to develop extremely positive attitudes to each other and to school. They work harmoniously and show respect for different cultures. They delight in taking responsibility such as by helping at the 'friendship stop' in the playground and by checking the 'job board' that identifies different responsibilities that Year 2 pupils can take. In addition, the school makes an important and positive contribution to the local community. They support and benefit from the 'Rushmoor in Bloom' and pupils were delighted to see that their design suggestions for a new park next to the school came to fruition. Their knowledge about healthy lifestyles is excellent. They are aware of the importance of regular exercise and healthy eating and also have a good understanding of their own safety. In addition, pupils discussed very seriously the importance of lots of sleep for young children to ensure that they keep healthy!

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching consistently excites and motivates pupils to want to learn. Both teachers and their assistants use a wide range of methods to make lessons exciting, including asking pupils to discuss ideas in pairs and small groups. Teachers have incorporated a highly structured scheme for teaching reading and this enables pupils to make rapid progress. They ensure that parents have a clear understanding of how they can help their children in this approach by providing well attended, regular afternoon workshop presentations. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills and activities are often organised so that pupils learn together, share their experiences and support each other. For example, in an excellent Year 2 literacy lesson when pupils were writing about their visit to a local military hospital museum to learn about Florence Nightingale, they constantly helped each other with

spellings, and delighted in reading their extended writing to each other. Here work was of an exceptional quality because the teacher provided a strong learning context, made high demands on what the pupils were to produce and provided excellent support to meet the challenging targets and high expectations that she had.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum provides excellent provision for pupils' differing needs and has a very positive impact on pupils' achievement. It deals exceptionally well with basic skills' development but also provides much more. Notable features include excellent work in the arts and good enrichment opportunities. The excellent artwork on display contributes extremely well to the vibrant and language rich environment which oozes quality in every classroom. In addition, much care and attention has been paid to ensuring that the outdoor play environment is of high quality. This helps children in the Foundation Stage to make particularly good progress in their physical development in their dedicated space. In addition, there are excellent outdoor facilities for pupils in Years 1 and 2. There is effective extra provision both for pupils who find learning hard and those that are gifted and talented. As a result of the high quality curricular provision, the school has been involved in a national development group.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. The school's provision for health and safety and safeguarding pupils are excellent and thorough. All the latest government guidelines are met in full and all staff are thoroughly trained and aware of child protection procedures. The securely fenced site provides a very safe environment for lunchtime and breaks. There are outstanding arrangements for checking pupils' progress by tracking and monitoring achievements in all subjects. This enables the school to provide excellent support and guidance as seen in the excellent learning records that commence from when the children enter the Foundation Stage. The school has excellent induction processes to help the larger than normal number of pupils that join the school during the school year. This includes providing a 'buddy' for the pupil, and extensive assessment procedures and parental discussions. This helps these pupils to settle quickly and well into the school and has a very positive impact on their attitudes to the school and their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The leadership of the headteacher in particular, is excellent. Her determination and high expectations of everyone associated with the school sets the tone. She is deeply committed to the school, has a very clear vision for the future and takes great care to ensure that all are included and valued in the decision-making process. This collaborative approach ensures that all staff, including non-teaching staff, are involved effectively in the school's continuing development. Staff morale is high and the close teamwork is appreciated by both teaching and non-teaching staff. The checking of the quality of teaching and learning is particularly good. This is undertaken by the leadership group and governors, as well as external consultants and teachers with subject responsibilities. This is rigorous and very supportive. The school's self-evaluation processes are perceptive but too modest as the

inspection judges the school to be higher than the school judges itself. Governance is excellent. Governors are keenly aware of the strengths of the school. They keep themselves up-to-date, have regular and substantial contact with the school's curriculum teams thus ensuring that they have a pin-point knowledge of the school's development. They challenge the school in positive ways as well as supporting it. The few issues identified as development points have been tackled very well and the school has excellent capacity for further improvement.

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Annex A

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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help when I visited your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit because everyone was so welcoming and friendly. These are the things that I think are best about your school:

- your parents believe that the your school is good and does some brilliant things for you and I agree with them
- you really enjoy school because you are happy and safe and all the adults look after you extremely well
- your behaviour is excellent
- your teachers give you many exciting and fun things to do
- you learn very quickly and well
- your headteacher is brilliant!

Your school is excellent and the one thing that I have asked your headteacher to do is to encourage your parents to make sure that your attendance is better.

I hope that you will always enjoy your time at school.

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector