

North Farnborough Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116145
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	290434
Inspection date	11 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Steven Hill

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	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Gill Hartley
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Moore
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2002
School address	Rectory Road Farnborough GU14 8AJ
Telephone number	01252 544 606
Fax number	01252 541 181

Age group	4-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- pupils' achievement and personal development
- the quality of teaching
- how well the school keeps track of pupils' progress
- how well the school is led and managed.

gathering evidence from observing lessons and break-times; talking to pupils and staff; checking the school's records of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and the results of questionnaires returned by parents and pupils.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small infant school serving a relatively prosperous area of Farnborough. Most pupils are of White British origin, with a few from a range of other ethnic heritages. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

North Farnborough Infants is an outstanding school where pupils consistently achieve very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Standards in information and communication technology are also high. The excellent provision starts in the Foundation Stage and is maintained throughout the school.

The school has many strengths but the tracking of pupils' progress is of exceptional quality. This helps ensure that achievement is excellent across the school. Frequent assessments of each pupil's attainment are carefully analysed and used very well to plan future work for individuals and to modify the curriculum for groups or classes. Even though targets are challenging, they are usually exceeded. Any pupils who are not doing as well as expected are quickly given extra help and support, and consequently improve. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities do particularly well, helped by the many skilled learning support assistants employed. Equally, results from assessments are also used to give the most able pupils work that is challenging.

The school gives equal weight to encouraging pupils' personal development, which is outstanding as a result. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school, greatly enjoy learning and their behaviour is outstanding. The work that the school has done recently on healthy lifestyles, and on learning about the environment, has greatly enhanced their understanding of these issues. Pupils have very positive relationships with each other and with staff. They take a very full part in the school and the wider community, and show exceptional maturity in taking on responsibilities, such as being school council members or 'playground buddies'. They take a very active part in helping to support and care for each other. Year 2 pupils show a genuine concern and liking for the 'little ones' who have just started in Reception.

Underpinning much of the school's success is the outstanding teaching. Virtually all lessons are at least good and a large and increasing proportion is excellent. A major strength of lessons is the excellent management and organisation of classes. Well-understood routines and high expectations together with very positive relationships ensure outstanding learning. Year 2 pupils agreed that one of the best things about the school was '...the teachers'. Because they like and respect their teachers, pupils work hard, show exemplary behaviour and are keen to succeed. Teachers make very good use of the high quality assessment data to plan work that closely matches the needs of different pupils, ensuring that rapid progress is maintained for all. The data are used also to set individual targets for pupils, who strive hard to achieve them. Pupils who have just started in Year 2 could remember their targets from last year, and felt they had helped them to improve, one adding 'We are learning a lot!'

Outstanding leadership and management support all the school's work. The headteacher, working closely with her deputy, gives a very strong steer to colleagues. She has moulded a very effective team by dint of demanding that colleagues take full responsibility for their pupils' success, 'grilling' them regularly about results, but also fully supporting them in putting action in place to help pupils succeed. A similar approach to managing subjects, a weakness at the last inspection, has been equally effective. Subject leaders are held accountable for their subjects, but are given time and facilities to monitor standards and practice across the school. They have thrived in this approach, having a firm hold on what is happening, and taking effective action to bring about improvements. Staff collaborate in setting each other and their pupils challenging targets, and then work hard together to ensure they meet them.

A significant feature of how the school works is a lack of complacency. For example, it has judged that the curriculum is excellent overall. The exceptionally good match to pupils' individual needs, a very wide range of extra-curricular clubs, outstanding provision for enrichment, and the recent introduction of French lessons across the school all bear this out. However, staff have judged that in the creative arts curriculum, particularly dance, music and art, is currently just good, and have determined to make it outstanding. Similarly, they have decided that speaking and listening skills, whilst strong, could be better, and are working to raise these skills further this year.

Other strengths of the school include its very close links with parents, seeking their views and taking them fully into account in planning. As a result, they are overwhelmingly appreciative of the school, typical comments including, 'The support is fantastic...the school treats our child as an important individual...extremely friendly and professional environment...communication is excellent'. The role of the governors is very well developed, so they hold the school to account and are fully involved in its management. A fall in attendance was addressed rigorously by the school last year, so that attendance has risen to above average, having previously been below.

Self-evaluation is excellent. As well as high quality assessment, there are extensive systems to monitor everything that is happening in school. The school is meticulous in using this information to drive improvements. Therefore, there is also excellent capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get off to an excellent start in the Reception class. Letters from parents confirm how well they settle in. During the inspection, after only a week in school, children were working and playing happily and independently, and had already developed very good relationships with the adults. The classes are very well organised, with a wide range of exciting activities to enthuse and interest children. Staff monitor each child's progress very carefully, and plan tasks and experiences that closely meet their academic and social needs. A major strength is how well the adults intervene in children's play, questioning them and discussing things to move on their thinking. As a result, their learning is excellent. By the time they move into Year 1, they have achieved very well and standards are much higher than average, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. One parent wrote that his son 'had a fantastic first year...his confidence has grown...cannot fault anything!'

What the school should do to improve further

Although there are no major issues, the inspector agrees that the school should implement the priorities in the school improvement plan, particularly in developing the creative arts, and in raising standards in speaking and listening.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

21 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of North Farnborough Infant School, Farnborough, GU14 8AJ

Thank you so much for all your help and your warm welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you and watching you hard at work in class. I thought that your school was outstanding. You told me how much you like school and I could see why. I think the best things about it are: You are very good at reading, writing and maths because your teachers are very good at helping you to learn. Your behaviour is excellent, you work hard and get on very well with each other and with your teachers.

The staff keep a very careful eye on how you are getting on, and make sure you get work that is just right for you. There are lots of interesting things to do, in class, in clubs and in the special weeks you have. The headteacher, governors and other staff organise the school really well, and are always trying very hard to make things even better. I have agreed with them that, to make things even more exciting, they are going to do lots more work with you on dance, drama, art and music. They are also going to help you to get even better at speaking and listening. You can help by carrying on working hard, behaving well, and enjoying school. Thank you again for your help, Best wishes,

Steven Hill (Lead inspector)