

Farrington Gurney Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109192
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	309920
Inspection date	13 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Tom Simpson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Gianella
Headteacher	Sue Jones
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2004
School address	Church Lane Farrington Gurney Bristol BS39 6TY
Telephone number	01761 452419
Fax number	01761 452419

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	13 May 2008
Inspection number	309920

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: • standards and achievement in the Foundation Stage • achievement throughout the school, particularly for higher ability pupils in mathematics • the quality of assessment procedures and their impact on academic guidance and on pupils' achievement • the role of school management at all levels in raising standards and promoting school improvement. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, analysis of the school's tracking and assessment data and discussions with the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils. The views of parents were gathered from the returns of Ofsted's questionnaire. 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 were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a very small primary school serving a rural area. Nearly all the pupils come from a White British background. Recent awards received by the school include the Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This school provides a good education for its pupils. It has several outstanding features and few significant weaknesses. Visitors cannot help but be impressed with the warm and welcoming atmosphere and the purposeful ethos. Academic standards are good and are supported well by the provision of a broad and stimulating curriculum and exceptional pastoral care. Most parents are satisfied or very satisfied with the provision the school makes for their children. Typical of the observations written on questionnaires was the comment, 'We are extremely happy with the education our daughter is receiving. She is happy at school and always enjoys it. Not only is the standard of teaching she receives good, but the extra activities she is able to do are fantastic.'

A major reason for the school's success is the high quality leadership and management provided by the headteacher and other senior staff. They have successfully managed to combine a very strong commitment to raising academic standards with an enthusiasm for enabling the pupils to develop a love of learning. The pupils are very well known as individuals to all staff and their varied needs are very well catered for. Self-evaluation is robust and shared by all members of staff. For example, subject management is well adapted to the needs of a very small school through the effective use of curricular teams which meet regularly to monitor standards and provision in groups of different subjects. Individual teachers also produce weekly written evaluations of the work that has gone on in their class. As a result, the school is clear about its strengths and weaknesses and has a good capacity to improve further in the future. The governing body is very supportive and has developed its capacity to provide constructive challenge well. It monitors the work of the school well in a number of ways through, for example, a 'governor of the month' system and its committee structure. However, its monitoring cycle is still too informal to be fully effective.

There are thorough systems in place to enable the school to assess and judge the performance of individual and groups of pupils. The analysis of assessment is used well to produce individual academic targets for pupils and to provide extra support where this is needed. For example, groups of pupils across different year groups are being provided with extra help in specific aspects of mathematics, and skilled teaching assistants are regularly giving good quality support to pupils with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). As a result, achievement, including that of pupils with LDD, is good throughout the school.

Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly at the expected levels, though the small numbers mean this can vary from year to year. Children get off to a good start and make good progress in the Reception class. By the time they reach Year 1, they are well prepared for the rest of their schooling. They continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and reach standards which are above average. The school continues to build well on this during Years 3 to 6 and pupils regularly leave the school with above or well above average standards. For example, the results of national tests at the end of Year 6 have been improving steadily over the past few years and were significantly above average overall in 2007. Standards in English are a particular strength. On the other hand, some more able pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, are not doing as well as they could in mathematics. The school is not certain about the reasons for this, but its analysis indicates that pupils tend to lack confidence in their skills in the subject. However, a number of strategies for improvement have been put in place to improve the situation and these are already having some impact. Further developments planned for the near future include mathematics workshops for parents to help them assist their children's progress in the subject.

Pupils are exceptionally well behaved and have very positive attitudes towards their work. They really love coming to school and the latest attendance figures are well above average. The pupils enjoy being able to contribute to the school and wider community, with older pupils 'buddying' younger ones, for example. Pupils feel that their views are listened to by the school management. Members of the school council, for instance, are proud of their role in initiating a school website. Pupils enjoy contributing to charities such as an orphanage in Kenya and are successfully gaining an appreciation of other cultures through visits, visitors and events such as an international 'theme week'. They have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and confirm that they feel very safe at school. They are confident learners who have a strong sense of spirituality and self-awareness and a well developed capacity to empathise with others. Consequently, they are well prepared for their future lives.

One of the specific strengths of the good curriculum is the way that it is made meaningful and interesting for the pupils. The provision of enrichment activities is outstanding. The school has recently modified the curriculum to make it even more creative and relevant for the pupils by further developing cross-subject links and by giving the pupils more say over the direction of their learning. They are encouraged, for example, to devise their own research questions when planning a topic. Good links with other local schools include the involvement of the local secondary school in French and games lessons.

Teaching and learning are good overall and there are examples of outstanding teaching. Pupils learn at a good rate in lessons because teachers provide them with work that is challenging and well matched to their needs. Teaching methods are varied and the pupils themselves told the inspector that teachers make their lessons 'exciting'. Teachers manage their pupils exceptionally well. This contributes significantly to the excellent behaviour and the very good relationships seen in lessons. Further developing independent learning skills is appropriately a current school target, and pupils' excellent personal guidance is complemented well by the very strong academic guidance and support they receive. Overall, the pupils have an excellent understanding of what they need to do next to improve their work. Members of the school council, for example, confidently discussed their academic targets with the inspector. Occasionally, however, teachers' marking does not help them enough in this, and teachers sometimes do not focus sufficiently on learning objectives in lessons. Vulnerable pupils, including those with LDD, receive outstanding support, including that gained from good links with external agencies such as the school health service. Rigorous procedures are in place to safeguard pupils and ensure safe staff recruitment.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effectively managed provision gives the children a good start to their education. There are strong induction procedures and the children soon settle into the Reception class, quickly developing positive attitudes and high self-esteem. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of children of this age and provide them with an interesting and relevant curriculum which is well tailored to their needs. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities, for example. The children are well taught and they are cared for exceptionally well. They make good progress overall and reach above average standards by the end of Reception. There are particular strengths in their personal, social and emotional development. However, their creative development is relatively less well developed. There is an attractive and well resourced outside play area which is used effectively to support all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in mathematics, particularly for more able pupils in Years 3 to 6.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

13 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Farrington Gurney CE Primary School, Bristol, BS39 6TY

Thank you for making me so welcome at your school. I enjoyed meeting you and hearing about your work. I want particularly to thank those of you who gave up part of your lunch break to speak with me. I found that your school provides you with a good education. There are some outstanding features.

Here are some of the things I found:

- You are exceptionally well cared for by the adults at the school.
- Your personal development is outstanding; for example, you are exceptionally well behaved.
- You make good progress in your work.
- The staff who run the school do a good job in making sure you have a good education and are working hard to make the school even better.
- Lessons are good, which is why you enjoy school so much, and staff provide lots of interesting activities for you.

Here is what I have asked the school to do now:

- Ensure that pupils in Years 3 to 6, especially those who are quicker to learn, do as well as they can in mathematics. This is important because it is really useful to be good at mathematics throughout life. Thank you again for your help. By continuing to work hard, you can help keep Farrington Gurney a good school, or even help to improve it further.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Tom Simpson Lead Inspector

Annex B



13 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Farrington Gurney CE Primary School, Bristol, BS39 6TY

Thank you for making me so welcome at your school. I enjoyed meeting you and hearing about your work. I want particularly to thank those of you who gave up part of your lunch break to speak with me. I found that your school provides you with a good education. There are some outstanding features.

Here are some of the things I found:

- You are exceptionally well cared for by the adults at the school.
- Your personal development is outstanding; for example, you are exceptionally well behaved.
- You make good progress in your work.
- The staff who run the school do a good job in making sure you have a good education and are working hard to make the school even better.
- Lessons are good, which is why you enjoy school so much, and staff provide lots of interesting activities for you.

Here is what I have asked the school to do now:

- Ensure that pupils in Years 3 to 6, especially those who are quicker to learn, do as well as they can in mathematics. This is important because it is really useful to be good at mathematics throughout life.

Thank you again for your help. By continuing to work hard, you can help keep Farrington Gurney a good school, or even help to improve it further.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Tom Simpson
Lead Inspector