

Farndon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111107
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	310501
Inspection date	10 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Paul Bamber

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jane Bulkeley
Headteacher	Miss Janet Davies
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2005
School address	Churton Road Farndon Chester Cheshire CH3 6QP
Telephone number	01829 270736
Fax number	01829 271417

Age group	5-11
Inspection date	10 January 2008
Inspection number	310501

© 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.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement, especially in Key Stage 2; the quality of provision for pupils with learning difficulties in Key Stage 2; and the quality and impact of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from: nationally published data; the school's own documentation; observation of the school at work; discussions with senior leaders, parents, governors and pupils; and the parental questionnaires. 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 in the self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Pupils who attend this smaller than average-sized village school come from a wide area. Many come from relatively advantaged backgrounds. A slightly lower than average proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils are not evenly spread through the school resulting in high numbers in some year groups. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is broadly average. Currently the majority of pupils are from a White British background. The school has a number of awards or special status. It is a Healthy School, has an Activemark, Basic Skills Quality Mark, the International School Award and is a designated Extended School. Farndon has been without a deputy headteacher for a year, but a temporary deputy headteacher took up post on 7 January 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that is well led and managed. Because teaching is consistently good, pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. Children enter the school with a wide range of ability and make good progress in the Reception class because of well directed teaching and sensitive support. Standards in both Key Stage 1 and 2 are above average in English, mathematics and science. In Key Stage 1, pupils read well, develop effectively as writers, increasingly use numbers accurately and recognise common mathematical shapes and their properties. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on their successes from Years 1 and 2. For example, they develop further fluency and read with feeling and good understanding. Some of their descriptive writing is of high quality. Most master the basics of punctuation and know spelling rules. They have a good ability to investigate in mathematics and in science, ensuring that results are accurate and make sense.

Much of pupils' good achievement is based on the effective and often imaginative teaching they receive and the good quality of care and support provided for them. They enthuse about their lessons, highlighting the fun that they have as a result of teachers making sure the work is interesting. This was exemplified well when Year 6 pupils thoroughly enjoyed inventing the terrain of an imaginary planet and describing the life forms to be found there. The boys were particularly motivated to write imaginatively about this topic. Pupils also appreciate the many opportunities for them to discuss their work together and to learn from each other. In most cases, more able pupils are suitably challenged to achieve high standards. Those who find learning more difficult have well directed support to enable them to achieve well, often to the point where they no longer need prolonged individual attention. The quality of relationships that prevails in classrooms and around the school contributes significantly to pupils' good progress and to their effective personal development. Pupils respond very positively to praise and to being set challenging targets.

Pupils' good personal development is exemplified by their willingness to take on responsibility, in older pupils looking after younger ones - particularly effective for Reception children joining the school - and in the respect pupils have for each other, adults and their environment. Pupils have opportunities to join clubs, to meet challenges on residential visits, to eat healthily and to exercise regularly. They develop into mature and concerned young citizens. Behaviour is good and pupils' excellent attendance is testament to their enjoyment of school.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy a rich curriculum that meets their needs well. They have an extensive menu of out-of-school activities to choose from. Key Stage 2 pupils have swimming and French lessons. Partly as a result of the links forged with a school in India, the school has International School status. The school's leaders have also successfully gained Healthy School Award and the Activemark. All of these contribute well to pupils' physical, personal and cultural development. By contrast, the curriculum for children in Reception class is limited because there is no dedicated outside area for them to work and play in.

The headteacher works successfully and tirelessly to ensure good teaching, an effective curriculum and that pupils are well looked after and supported. She keeps her finger on the pulse, addressing any relative weaknesses with vigour and determination. As a result of detailed analysis and rigorous checks, followed up by effective advice and training, aspects of teaching, assessment and pupils' standards have improved. The headteacher is well supported by key subject coordinators and by governors to accurately evaluate the school's performance and to

implement actions for improvement. Since the last inspection good improvements are evident and the school continues to have the capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class from a variety of pre-school settings and with a wide range of ability. An increasing proportion of children has speech and language difficulties and/or finds it difficult to settle in quickly socially.

Parents speak highly of the sensitive way in which their children are introduced to the Reception class. They especially praise the practice by which Year 6 pupils make contact and pair up with their children both before they start school and during their Reception year.

Because they are taught and supported well, children make good progress in most areas of their learning. This is particularly noticeable in reading and in their creative and personal development. Their development is not as strong in their knowledge and understanding of the world partly because of the lack of opportunity for them to work and play outside.

Children enjoy an interesting range of activities, some of which adults choose for them and others that they select themselves. This develops both their awareness of the need for routine, but also encourages their independence. Whilst providing well for children's development within the school building, the lack of a special outside area in which children can extend their learning, places restrictions on the school's ability to provide a full early years curriculum. This represents a weakness in provision. Despite this, most pupils achieve the targets set for them in all areas of their learning with a significant minority exceeding those targets. Overall standards are in line or just above national expectations. Progress in learning is assessed regularly and carefully, which enables staff to devise activities that reflect well the children's stage of development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that children in the Reception class have a well equipped outside area in which to work and play.

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2

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	2
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

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I was always treated politely and in a very friendly manner.

You go to a good school that helps you to learn well and to develop into mature young members of the community. I was very impressed with your behaviour and the excellent way in which you responded to your teachers in lessons. I know this is because you all get on so well together and that you find your lessons interesting and, as you were keen to tell me, fun. There are lots of clubs for you to join, which many of you do and these and the visits you go on help you considerably with your personal and physical development.

The adults who run the school know what needs to be done to improve it even further. There is one thing that I have asked them to concentrate on in particular to make your education even better and that is to provide a special area outside the Reception classroom in which the children can work and play.

Thank you again for your help.