

## Farnham Church of England Primary School

### Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115189
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326146
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Richardson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	26
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Hayley-Louise Harper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen O'Brien
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 July 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Farnham Bishop's Stortford Hertfordshire CM23 1HR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01279 771339
<b>Fax number</b>	01279 771339

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The school serves the village of Farnham and the surrounding rural area, and some pupils come from further afield. The school is much smaller than average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the September when they are four, progressing from part time to full time during their first term in Reception. Children start school with skills that are broadly in line with expectations for this age. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. All the pupils are White British and none speaks English as an additional language. It is a Healthy School and has the bronze eco-award. The school's Investor in People award has been recently renewed. Since 2007, the school has been federated with Rickling CofE Primary School. The headteacher and deputy headteacher oversee both schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school with some distinctive strengths. This confirms the school's view of itself. Since the last inspection, the school has emerged from a period of turbulence in its leadership and staffing that affected the progress of pupils. The school is now moving forward confidently, benefiting from the opportunities provided by its federation with another school, while maintaining its identity and family atmosphere. Pupils value the one-to-one attention they receive. The school has a growing reputation and parents are highly satisfied with its provision and care for their children.

Pupils make satisfactory progress over their time in school. Standards, as shown in national test results at the end of Years 2 and 6, are around the national average. The school has correctly prioritised the need to raise writing standards by improving pupils' range of ideas through greater use of oral work. The school has developed a clear system for tracking the progress of children each term. This shows where pupils are making less progress than they should. Action is being taken to clarify expectations and to secure a steady path of progress through the school. The school's leadership recognises the need to set sights consistently high in all year groups, and to raise standards further in writing.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school and have an extremely strong sense of belonging to a community where their contribution matters. They are active in serving on committees and take their responsibilities seriously, for example, when choosing hymns for assembly, looking after the environment and raising money for charity. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living. They tend the school's vegetable garden and take great delight in eating its produce. Pupils behave well and attendance is good.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships are good and teaching is well planned. Teaching often excites and challenges pupils, but it does not always take full account of what pupils are capable of doing. Pupils have individual targets to work towards, though the use of targets to guide learning is not consistent through the school. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is imaginatively enriched by extra activities. Pupils enjoy and gain much from an afternoon spent at Rickling each week, working with other children on a variety of activities. Pupils are well known as individuals and the quality of care is good. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are nurtured and supported effectively. Pupils are helped to settle quickly when they join the school.

Leadership and management are satisfactory with some notable strengths. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, with the support of governors, are skilful and innovative in managing the school within the federation. A stable staff team has been established. Systems are now being developed to secure greater consistency in pursuing high standards. The school is planning to extend the involvement of all staff in developing the curriculum and evaluating the quality of learning. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress in Reception from their different starting points. Most reach the early learning goals set nationally for the end of this stage, in all the areas of learning. Children thrive in the school's family atmosphere and their personal, social and emotional development is good. They are happy and secure. They know the routines and cooperate well

with adults and with other children. They enjoy a wide range of activities, indoors and outdoors, and are independent and imaginative in their play. The school is continuing to develop its approaches to reading and writing, to strengthen children's achievement in these areas. Staff work well together, carefully planning work and grouping children so that the needs of Reception children are met within the mixed-age class. The teaching assistant provides valuable continuity for children. Children's welfare is promoted well, in close partnership with parents. Home visits and introductory sessions pave the way for a good start when children join the school. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed, although this information is not always used fully to set sights high for the future.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Strengthen the use of target setting to accelerate pupils' progress.
- Raise standards further in writing by improving pupils' range of ideas through oral work.
- Extend evaluation of the quality of learning across the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they make sound progress from their different starting points. Numbers are very small in each year and results vary as a result. Pupils typically reach standards in national tests that are close to the averages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils do well in reading, but progress is slower in writing. Since the last inspection, changes in staffing have affected the pace of pupils' progress and there was a slight downward trend in results. This has been recognised and is starting to be reversed. Standards are above average this year in Years 2 and 6. Information and communication technology (ICT) standards are showing particularly good improvement.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and their all-round personal development is good. There is plenty of opportunity for them to express their ideas, and their views are sought and listened to. Pupils behave well, show good manners and relate confidently and sociably to adults and other children. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are very aware of the importance of looking after the environment, and the school council and the eco council are working on ideas for raising money at a 'sustainability fair'. Older pupils help out younger children as 'buddies', aware that they must set a good example. They are looking forward to training as playleaders. Pupils have a mature sense of responsibility about contributing to the community and everyone knows that they have a part to play in this. Pupils help to sponsor a child in Uganda. The school is developing opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of other cultures and traditions. Pupils have a good awareness of where food comes from and what is involved in healthy eating. They participate regularly in physical exercise, in lessons and clubs, and at playtimes. Pupils are thoughtfully aware of keeping themselves and others safe. Pupils gain satisfactory skills in literacy and numeracy and good skills in ICT to prepare them for later life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Children enjoy learning and make progress in line with national expectations. The teachers and teaching assistants who work in each class plan carefully and liaise closely when working with small groups of pupils. Teachers share an enthusiasm for learning that often inspires pupils to explore, investigate and solve problems. Teachers have recognised that pupils need to rehearse their ideas orally before they write them down. The best lessons challenge and extend thinking, as when pupils in Years 5 and 6 discussed imagery in preparing a performance of Macbeth. Pupils concentrate well in small groups guided by an adult, but the pace of learning sometimes slows when they are working independently. Expectations about the quality of presentation of pupils' work are not consistent through the school. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and plan the next steps to be taken, although teaching does not always explore fully how far pupils are capable of going.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school provides an appropriate curriculum that is significantly enriched by participation within the federation, and by a range of clubs, visits and special activities. It draws widely on the expertise of staff, parents and other partners to increase the opportunities available to pupils, for example in sports, music and languages. Pupils swim weekly. Older pupils all learn to play the guitar. French and Spanish are taught. The school is an Eco and Healthy School and is working towards the Activemark award. The school is developing its curriculum to foster creativity and to strengthen pupils' learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given every opportunity to have access to the whole curriculum. This helps them to make similar progress to others.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Each child is well known and valued as an individual by all the adults in the school. As one parent said, 'Personalities and qualities are given the chance to flourish here.' Pupils are supported well by good partnerships across the two schools in the federation, and by the school's excellent relationship with parents. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff are very accessible and any concerns are rapidly resolved. Parents are kept well informed through daily personal contact, the website, parent handbook and pupils' planners. Parents are invited to many events, including the termly class assemblies. Pupils with particular learning needs are supported well through individual education plans. The school takes good care of pupils' health and safety, and safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Staff are developing the use of individual targets to guide pupils' work. Older pupils have a good understanding of targets, which they help to formulate, but the system is not embedded throughout the school.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

In the last two years, the school's leadership and management has steadied the school, built a new staff team and developed innovative ways of working within a federation. The headteacher and deputy headteacher each share their time equally between the two schools. They are highly committed and hardworking in ensuring that the school thrives in its own right while taking advantage of the opportunities offered by federation and other external links to support agencies. The leadership honestly evaluates the school's performance, though staff are not widely involved in evaluating learning and planning action for improvement. Although much has been achieved, there is more to do in establishing shared expectations in pursuit of higher standards. The school recognises the need to share curriculum leadership more widely. Opportunities for professional development are being extended, within and beyond the federation. Governors provide satisfactory oversight of the school, and strongly support its leadership. The school provides a climate of respect for each child as a unique individual. It contributes much to the well-being of the local community and the families within it, and is exploring ways of reaching out more widely, following its evaluation of community cohesion initiatives.

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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

24 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Farnham CofE Primary School, Farnham, CM23 1HR

I enjoyed visiting you this week. You told me that yours is a 'very special small school' and I agree. You all know each other well and help each other. You really appreciate the one-to-one attention that the staff give you with your work.

The school gives you a satisfactory education and helps you to make progress. You do particularly well in reading and it was good to see you enjoying stories, from 'The Magic Porridge Pot' in Class 1, to 'Macbeth' in Class 2. I was interested to hear about all the clubs, and the activities you do at Rickling.

I was impressed by the way that you all contribute to school life. You behave well and concentrate in lessons. You come up with interesting ideas on your committees, and you care a lot about looking after the environment. Thank you for showing me round the vegetable garden. It was a treat to have some of the beans and strawberries for lunch. They were delicious.

Mrs O'Brien and all the staff want each one of you to do as well as possible. We have been talking about how you could do even better, especially in writing. Some of you have targets that you are working towards and it will help if these are clear right through the school. All the staff will be looking closely with you at how well you are learning, to help you improve and make all the progress you can each year.

I hope that Class 2 enjoyed singing in the music festival, and that all your plans for the 'sustainability fair' work out well.

Thank you again for welcoming me to your school.

Yours faithfully

Joy Richardson

Lead inspector