

Farnborough Grange Nursery Infant Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116148
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326339
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Jo Curd

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	188
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alice Heskins
Headteacher	Ms Jane Armstrong
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Moor Road Farnborough Hampshire GU14 8HW
Telephone number	01252 541879

Age group	3–7
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2009
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Fax number

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school's Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery with 72 part-time places and a Reception class unit. The Nursery includes local authority specialist provision on a part-time basis for 12 children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These children can start at the age of two years and nine months. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including physical, communication, learning and social difficulties, is higher than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than is typically found. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who have English as an additional language has risen significantly and is now above average. About a sixth of all the pupils are at early stages of learning English. A very small proportion of the pupils are looked after children. The school is affiliated to the Guildford diocese of the Church of England. The school runs a breakfast and an after-school club each day of the week.

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 an effective school, where achievement is good and pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils enjoy school, particularly visitors and visits out, and parents appreciate the excellent care and support that they and their children receive. As one said, 'The school has the children's well-being and learning at the heart of everything that they do. A real community has been developed over the years and all staff work to make a difference to the lives of children and families.'

The headteacher and the leadership team are well qualified and experienced. They know the school well and act strategically to improve any weaknesses. For example, they have successfully addressed some less effective practice so that teaching and learning are now good and have created a nurture group for some pupils in Year 1 who are still at the Early Years Foundation Stage in their learning. Recorded self-evaluation is overly modest, however, because judgements are based on standards rather than achievement. In addition, the headteacher and the leadership team do not always fully take into account the skills, hard work, insights and views of other staff and governors. Monitoring is frequent and thorough. While the actions taken contribute very well to pupils' outstanding personal development, well-being and care, they do not always focus sufficiently on how the good achievement can be further improved.

Children start in the Nursery with knowledge, skills and experience much lower than those generally expected for their age. Although they make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of effective provision, few reach the levels of attainment expected of them by the time they leave the Reception class. The good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, standards overall are broadly in line with the national average. These standards, together with their good achievement, good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning, mean that pupils are well prepared for later life and learning.

Personal development and well-being are outstanding because care, support and relationships are excellent. This contributes to the very happy and settled environment. A strong emphasis on praise and reward successfully fosters very positive attitudes and behaviour. However, although pupils are motivated and keen to learn, the tasks they are given are not always sufficiently well matched to individual learning needs or styles. The consequence of this is that their overall enjoyment and progress are limited. Pupils have a very strong commitment to healthy lifestyles, including balanced diets and exercise, because the subject is extremely well covered in the school's broad and relevant curriculum. They play and work very safely together. Pupils make a significant difference to the school and community, showing responsible attitudes to people and the world around them.

Links with others, including parents and health and welfare professionals, are excellent. These have an extremely good impact on helping parents develop the confidence and skills to support their children at home, on pupils' personal development and well-being and on community cohesion. A quote from the church diocesan education officer sums up the views of many when he says, 'In this area the school is a beacon of good practice and hope.' Improvement since the last inspection is good. This successful track record, the commitment and skill of all staff and effective provision indicate that capacity for further improvement is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start the Nursery with a wide range of knowledge, skills and experience. Overall, these are well below those expected for their age. As a result of good teaching, highly inclusive practice and a very broad practical curriculum, children make good progress in both Nursery and Reception classes. Despite good progress, levels of attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage remain below those in most other schools. Spacious indoor and outdoor accommodation is used well, even though some parts have become rather worn. Resources are well organised, inspiring and accessible. There is an effective balance between activities which are planned, structured and led by adults and those which children choose and pursue themselves. Children enjoy both. For example, they were happily engrossed in work with cars on a series of sloped guttering and laughed with glee at using puppets to illustrate stories told by staff. Although both of these approaches are contributing well to children's achievement, activities are not always adapted sufficiently well to meet the needs of all. Leaders and managers are effectively using their deputy and assistant headteacher and experienced supply teachers to ensure adequate teaching input into provision in the absence of a substantive Nursery teacher. The experience and training of other staff also contribute to ensuring that this remains effective.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the impact of leadership and management on provision and achievement by ensuring that evaluation focuses on achievement and including the views of others.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that tasks are consistently well matched to pupils' different learning levels and styles.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From very low starting points, all groups of pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with the national average. Standards in writing have risen markedly recently, largely because of improvements in the curriculum, including an increased emphasis on verbal skills. Standards in science are relatively strong because the school places a great emphasis on practical learning. Pupils who have English as an additional language make particularly good progress because of effective support and the practical curriculum. The school's high levels of care and support also contribute to the good progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Although successful teaching contributes well to good achievement, progress is no better than this because tasks are not always well matched to individual learning levels and styles.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils respond very well to the close community of the school, excellent relationships with staff and the balanced, stimulating environment. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils learn about a diversity of cultures and faiths successfully through very close links with the church, by celebrating festivals and through art, music and story-telling. Considering the emotional, social and developmental challenges some children face, behaviour is extremely good. This is clearly seen in the way pupils respect and care for each other. Pupils

respond extremely well to effectively planned opportunities for reflection and spiritual development such as acts of collective worship and periods of relaxation and gentle music. Pupils are happy and settled. Although they enjoy school, they are less keen when work is occasionally too easy or too difficult for them. Despite concerted efforts to improve attendance, including the introduction of a successful subsidised breakfast club, attendance rates remain below the national average. Pupils feel extremely safe and have a very strong commitment to health. They contribute extremely well to their school and community. They participate eagerly in initiatives to regulate traffic speed near the school, help care for the local environment, raise money for charity, use energy responsibly in the hope of their class winning the 'frugal frog' each week and get involved in Global Citizenship. They are well prepared for later life and learning through good achievement and the school's practical curriculum, which includes visits and visitors such as the community police officer.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good monitoring and support have successfully addressed past weaknesses in teaching. Consequently, teaching and learning are now typically good throughout the school. This contributes well to pupils' positive attitudes and good progress. Teachers plan and prepare lessons carefully. They build successfully on pupils' previous learning and ensure that all pupils are well supported. Many tasks are open-ended, providing the scope for pupils who learn more quickly or easily to progress. However, tasks are not always sufficiently challenging or well matched to pupils' various learning levels and styles and occasionally slow the progress of some. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enjoy the support of warm, positive, well-qualified learning support assistants. An imaginative use of visual resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), contributes well to the good progress of pupils who have English as an additional language.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy a broad and relevant range of work. An effective thematic approach successfully links different subjects in interesting and helpful ways. The well-developed programme for personal, social and health education contributes well to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Visits from other professionals, including health and welfare specialists and the local police, contribute to their outstanding understanding of health and safety. Visits to places of interest and education, including the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum and Queen Elizabeth Country Park, add to their enjoyment and progress. The use of outdoor areas near the school adds to pupils' understanding of the natural world. Effective use of ICT supports work in many subjects and enhances pupils' learning. Although excellent support ensures that all pupils have access to the whole curriculum, the school is aware that there is scope to tailor it more finely to meet pupils' individual learning styles and needs better.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Excellent care, guidance and support are embedded in the ethos of the school. These contribute well to pupils' good achievement and outstanding personal development. Support for vulnerable

pupils and their families is outstanding because of strong specialist provision in school and very close links with various agencies, including the educational psychologist and the education welfare officer. Parents appreciate this and one said, 'Both my children are well cared for at school and both love going.' Parents and pupils both appreciate the friendly breakfast and after-school clubs which offer high-quality care and a range of healthy foods. The school is very committed to safeguarding pupils' health and safety. Systems for this are securely in place. Close links with the nearby junior school ensure a smooth transition to the next stage in education. Assessments and tracking of pupil progress have developed well and academic guidance is very good. Marking includes praise and useful comments on how pupils can develop their learning further. This helps all pupils to progress in learning, confidence and self-esteem.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and leadership team successfully support and motivate all the staff ensuring a happy, stable and calm place for all. A real strength of the leadership and management is the very strong impact the school has had in bringing together the local community and ensuring that pupils have a very strong sense of shared values. Parents, local community governors and the local police officer all commented on the very positive impact this has also had on the wider community. Governors are very involved in, and supportive of, the school and are ready to question or challenge whenever necessary. Day-to-day teamwork is strong. Monitoring is thorough and effective but does not always focus sufficiently on how well developments impact on pupils' achievement. Lesson monitoring has improved the quality of teaching but has not yet addressed the fact that work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' individual learning needs or styles. Middle managers are assuming their responsibilities well. They are now keen to be even more involved in monitoring, evaluating and developing provision and the effect this has on the progress of all.

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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?	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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

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

03 April 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Farnborough Grange Nursery Infant Community School, Hampshire, GU14 8HW

Thank you for being so friendly and for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed chatting with you, eating lunch with you and seeing you work. All the things you told us about your school really helped us in our work.

We agree with you that you have a good school. You are all making good progress, especially in writing - well done. Your personal development, that is your attitudes and behaviour and the way you relate to others, is extremely good. You do a lot of interesting things and particularly enjoy your visits out and visitors. You all try hard with your work even when it is a bit too difficult or too easy for you. The way you and many of your families are cared for and supported is excellent.

We have asked school leaders and managers to do two things which we think will improve things even more. These are to:

- include more views, experiences and insights in thinking about how good the school is and how it could help you all to achieve even more
- make sure that activities in lessons are suitable for you all.

Perhaps you could help by telling staff the things that really help you in your learning and when you find activities too easy or too difficult.

We wish you and your families all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Jo Curd

Lead Inspector