

# Friars Primary Foundation School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100855
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	335606
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	220
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Shearman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Justin Burt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Webber Street London SE1 0RF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, observed nine teachers and held meetings with the headteacher, senior leadership team, teaching staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' exercise books. They checked documents including the school improvement plan, systems for tracking the pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation and school policies. They also analysed information from the 62 questionnaires from parents and carers, in addition to those received from staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether the current trend of improvement in attainment is continuing and if pupils make consistently good progress across all year groups
- whether the most-able pupils are challenged effectively, and whether the school ensures that they achieve as well as they can
- how effectively leaders and managers ensure that good teaching is moved towards outstanding teaching.

## Information about the school

Friars is an average-sized primary school. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes. Pupils come from predominantly Black African and White British backgrounds with the remainder coming from a wide variety of other heritages. Approximately half the pupils speak English as an additional language. About one in five pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is a lower-than-average proportion. Their needs are mostly related to moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social needs and speech and language difficulties. There is a breakfast and after-school club.

The school has gained a number of awards, some of which are related to the promotion of healthy lifestyles and community cohesion.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Friars is an outstanding school where pupils enjoy and achieve well. Parents are particularly pleased with the education their children receive and praise the work of the school highly. For example, parents wrote, 'Friars is doing fantastic work with my child'; 'I am extremely happy with the school'; and 'We feel each child's unique strengths have been appreciated and celebrated.' Many other parents echo these views.

The headteacher, appointed since the time of the last inspection, and his leadership team have been spectacularly successful at galvanising commitment to school improvement. Staff appreciate the way leaders practise what they preach and the vision for the future of the school is clearly evident. An attainment dip following the last inspection has been tackled well and as a consequence provisional results for 2010 have rallied and are just above average. This represents at least good and sometimes excellent progress from below-average starting points. The school's own tracking data show that a further substantial rise in attainment is expected next year. Consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching contributes significantly to this raising of achievement, although the most able are not always challenged as well as they could be in every lesson. The school's drive for excellence in all areas is evident and it has identified that attainment can be driven up even further in English and mathematics through raising good teaching to outstanding teaching. The exceptional leadership and management of teaching and learning is clearly paying dividends. Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils has improved tremendously and has had an excellent impact on the progress they make. This was an issue identified at the last inspection. Written comments combined with short-term goals through the school's 'passport to success' ensure pupils know their progress towards meeting long-term challenging targets. The self-evaluation carried out by leaders at all levels is accurate; areas for development are prioritised, monitored and evaluated. Systems are robust and effective. This is clear evidence of the school's continuing excellent capacity to make further improvements.

The innovative curriculum has ensured that work is increasingly matched to the needs of pupils. The creative learning journey makes the most of linking areas of the curriculum together to make learning engaging and motivating. This has had a marked effect on the quality of writing, especially that produced by boys. Excellent care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel safe and secure in school and that good attendance is a top priority. This, alongside pupils' above-average basic skills, good teamwork seen in classrooms and mature attitudes means that pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education is good. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary and go well beyond statutory requirements.

Community cohesion is promoted exceptionally well and pupils' contribution to the

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community is outstanding. Many and varied projects and extensive links with the local, United Kingdom and global communities contribute very well to pupils' well-being and their achievement. For example, links with other schools develops pupils' understanding of global issues such as malnutrition and poverty. A group of talented pupils worked alongside international architects who exhibited pupils' work in Sweden. Long-standing links with cultural institutions such as the Globe Theatre have enhanced pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Build on the significant improvements in attainment in English and mathematics by:
  - increasing the proportion of consistently outstanding teaching to 50% by December 2011 and extending the already good practice in place to raise the challenge for the most able, so that at least 35% of Year 6 pupils attain the higher level (Level 5) in English and mathematics by the end of the next academic year.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Good behaviour and highly positive attitudes to learning ensure that pupils make at least good and sometimes excellent progress in their lessons. Pupils get on well with each other, with their teachers and other adults in their classes. Well-planned lessons run smoothly and ensure that pupils are engaged and motivated by the activities provided. Group and paired work is enhanced by good teamwork and the camaraderie demonstrated by the pupils. In a good mathematics lesson there was a buzz of excitement and pupils could be heard giving each other advice about how best to use a protractor to measure angles accurately. In another, young pupils were challenged to work independently and to develop their thinking skills. As a result they worked diligently to find an increasing number of ways to sequence numbers and made excellent progress in their learning. Teachers' feedback is exemplary and has an excellent impact on improving outcomes for pupils. Pupils' books show that they reflect on teachers' comments made and put advice into practice. They are keen to do their best and refer to their targets while working. They know the level at which they are working and are clear about what they need to do to make progress. Less-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and they too have opportunities to shine. Those with challenging behaviour are managed well and also make good progress in their learning.

Pupils have an excellent understanding about what keeps them safe and how this links with leading a healthy lifestyle. They speak knowledgeably about the dangers of smoking, for example, and how eating healthy food is important. Pupils know what to do if they have a concern and they talk warmly about the headteacher as being 'funny and approachable'. Because staff foster a love of learning, a number of pupils want to become teachers when they grow up and know that punctuality is important at work and school. Pupils assume a variety of responsibilities in school as monitors and school

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councillors and take pride in this. All these factors demonstrate good preparation for the next stage of education. The school's core values of right conduct, non-violence, peace, love and truth are at the heart of its work and contribute well to the outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural outcomes for pupils.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Consistently good teaching is constantly improving and has begun to make the move towards being excellent. Teachers are driven by a desire to ensure that pupil outcomes become outstanding. Some outstanding lessons were observed during the inspection and in these, pupils made exceptional gains in their learning. In a superb Year 5 literacy lesson, the teacher's clear passion for her subject shone through as she went into role to stimulate pupils' writing. When asked, pupils wrote furiously on their whiteboards producing some excellent sentences describing mood and attitude. The teacher went on to evaluate the quality of their work, prompting contributions from pupils. 'Inspector Dave', visually displayed on the interactive whiteboard, gave feedback about the pupils' letters from the previous lesson. The teacher said, 'How do we add detail to our

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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sentences so that Inspector Dave is happy?' Responses were exceptional.

A good feature of many lessons is the way teachers challenge all pupils to provide answers to questions. However, in a small minority of lessons more-able pupils are not always challenged as effectively as they could be to reach the highest levels of attainment. In the majority of cases teaching assistants provide good support for pupils, but sometimes they do not participate effectively during directed teaching sessions.

The school's innovative curriculum design is excellent and is having a real impact on raising achievement. The 'creative learning journey' facilitates skill development through a number of central themes. This ensures that learning becomes more meaningful and pupils can make links between subjects. Each theme begins with a 'wow' factor to motivate pupils and engage them immediately. For example, Year 4 pupils began to understand archaeology by acting as 'rubbish detectives' at the beginning of their work on Egypt. This promotes outstanding enjoyment and pupils had memorable experiences. Pupils' enthusiasm has also been captured by 'mathletics' where pupils can play games and compete with children around the globe. The school gained valuable feedback on the success of this initiative when one parent said, 'All my child wants to do at home is mathletics, he won't stop nagging me about it.' Enrichment weeks, for example art week, enable pupils to develop talents and connect with their cultural heritage.

Excellent care, guidance and support for pupils are based on a commitment to meeting the individual needs of every pupil and their family. Those with moderate learning difficulties and speech and language difficulties are provided with effective support, and extensive links with external agencies are highly beneficial and enhance provision. The move to the next school for Year 6 pupils is very well organised. Good attendance and punctuality is encouraged, and as a result is continually improving.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher and his leadership team have ensured that the significantly below-average attainment of 2008 has been moved in two years to be above average. This is the result of an unrelenting focus on achievement and a drive for excellent teaching. Leaders and managers believe that nothing but the best will do in this school. A number of initiatives introduced since the time of the last inspection have successfully accelerated progress. The parental questionnaires showed an extremely high degree of satisfaction with the way in which

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the school is led and managed. Levels of parental engagement are good because the school listens well to their concerns and views. Subject coordinators have developed their roles well and they are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work, using well-written action plans as a starting point. They too have a clear focus on teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.

The governors share the headteacher's vision and participate in a number of activities to raise attainment. The pupil committee meets regularly to negotiate targets based on teacher assessments and are not afraid to ask difficult questions when the need arises. The school's excellent array of partnership links has a highly positive impact on the opportunities provided to enhance learning. Partnerships with various sporting organisations have promoted a better understanding of the importance of exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. Partnerships with other schools in the United Kingdom and abroad have ensured that pupils understand what life is like in regions other than their own. The school is acutely aware of the progress of different groups of pupils and as a result has analysed the achievement of Black African pupils further. Consequently it is now able to put in finely tuned support to ensure equal opportunities for all to do as well as possible. This is also promoted through the school's excellent procedures for safeguarding.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

When children start in the Nursery or Reception classes, their skills are significantly below those typical for their age. Good teaching and a wide range of well-planned,



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exciting activities ensure that they make at least good progress. Levels at the end of the Reception year are rising and are recently close to national expectations. This is a direct reflection of improved provision and improved leadership and management, both of which are already good and becoming increasingly effective. Children are very happy and secure and behave well. They learn to share and play together well.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good overall with some outstanding teaching seen during the inspection. In these sessions teachers set high expectations for children and supported their learning with well-designed resources and stimulating activities. For example, children developed their early writing skills by using photographs of a previous practical activity to write instructions on how to make a 'smoothie'. There is a wide range of activities across all areas of learning. The outdoor area is used well with opportunities for children to develop their learning through physical activities such as riding bikes and climbing on large apparatus. Most adults are very skilled at supporting children's learning through play. They join in and encourage children to use new vocabulary and help them to understand new concepts.

The current Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has improved the use of shared space and resources both indoors and outside. This has ensured a good balance of opportunities for children to learn both independently and under the direct guidance of adults. Staff plan together effectively for children's needs and they focus well on developing learning. Although there has been some turbulence in staffing in recent times, good provision has been maintained because the coordinator has used the skills and strengths of all staff to ensure the curriculum continues to be delivered well. Plans are in place to further develop home visiting and assessment in order to give children an even better start to their education.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The parents who returned the questionnaires were extremely positive about the school and the level of disagreement with any of the questions on the questionnaires was exceptionally low. About a quarter of parents made additional comments. Some spoke highly of the particularly good start their children receive in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some spoke very positively about the work of the headteacher and his staff. A very small minority of parents felt that their children did not enjoy school but did not say why. Very few parents disagreed with anything else; the inspectors' findings reflect

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these highly positive responses.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Friars Primary Foundation School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	71	15	24	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	74	16	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	50	28	45	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	53	28	45	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	61	24	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	42	34	55	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	56	26	42	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	40	30	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	44	32	52	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	47	27	44	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	42	32	52	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	60	22	35	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	73	16	26	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



16 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Friars Primary Foundation School, Blackfriars, London SE1 0RF

What a pleasure it was to visit your school recently. We enjoyed ourselves very much! We found you to be very polite and well mannered and it was good to speak to some of you during the inspection. We were glad to hear that you know what it means to lead a healthy life and that you know how to keep yourselves safe and sound. We like the way you take on extra jobs in school and the way you involve yourselves in the area around your school in particular. We were impressed to hear of your involvement with national and international projects. Some of you have had your models put in an exhibition in Sweden. This is highly commendable; well done!

The school cares for you very well and makes sure that you are kept safe. We think your school is outstanding; this means it does lots of things extremely well. Your teachers do a good job and some of them are quite brilliant! We enjoyed watching lots of good and some excellent lessons. You produced some excellent writing prompted by improvements requested by 'Inspector Dave'. Your teachers ensure you have lots of opportunities to work together to solve problems.

Even in a school like yours there is work to be done. Sometimes some of you find parts of your lessons a little bit too easy and we would like more of you to get a Level 5 in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. We think the school could do this if even more lessons were outstanding. We have asked the school to:

- help you get even higher results in English and mathematics by ensuring that more teaching is outstanding and that all of you have work which makes you think hard all the way through your lessons.

We wish you every success at Friars Foundation Primary in the future.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Lead inspector

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