

Farne Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108455
Local Authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	337079
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Nigel Cromey-Hawke

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ralph Crozier
Headteacher	Ms Liz Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 12 lessons, observing 11 teachers and all classes. They also held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They looked at a wide range of school documentation including development planning, self-evaluation records, policies and performance data. Questionnaires from 104 parents, 104 pupils and 21 members of staff were scrutinized.

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

- how rigorously the school is tackling low attendance
- how effective target-setting for pupils is in raising standards and how well pupils are supported in lessons through the use of assessment guidelines to reach their potential
- how well embedded community cohesion is and the impact this has upon pupils' awareness of cultural differences.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there are few whose first language is not English. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion eligible for free school meals is well above average.

There is after-school care provided on site by a private provider, which is subject to different inspection arrangements. The school has a wide range of awards, including Healthy Schools, Basic Skills, Eco schools, and intermediate International Schools status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Farne Primary is a good school. It makes a considerable difference to the lives of many of the young people in its care. It has improved standards since the last inspection, especially at Key Stage 1 and in English. Parents and carers, pupils and staff are highly supportive of most aspects of the school's work. One parent typically commented that the school is 'very productive and forward thinking. Every child's development seems to be a priority.'

Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress, which continues as they move through the school. The majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge, understanding and skills which are well below those typical for their age. As a result of the good provision, children make good progress, especially in their language work. Knowledge and understanding of the world remains weak, however. Pupils within the main school also make good progress because of the good teaching and curriculum, although progress is slower at Key Stage 2 than elsewhere. Standards on leaving the school in Year 6 are broadly average and sometimes high in English, which is a strength. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The school has set challenging targets for pupils and most achieve well.

Pupils are clear that they feel safe within the school and feel highly valued as individuals; this is as a result of the good care, guidance and support they receive. They show their enjoyment of school through their good behaviour. Attendance is low, mainly due to a small proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. There have been improvements as a result of the school's efforts to address this issue. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, helped by the school's good community cohesion programme and the strong local and international links that promote pupils' awareness of the richness of the wider world. All safeguarding requirements are met and practice regularly reviewed. Good teaching generally engages pupils, assessment is a strength and variety and pace in lessons keep them interested. In satisfactory lessons progress slows because learning objectives are not clear, activities are not well matched to pupils' needs and assessment is less helpful. The curriculum is good, with many thematic units of work being developed to make learning exciting and relevant.

Leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, know through good self-evaluation what the school needs to do to improve and there is good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Ensure that pupils' progress is consistently good or better across Key Stage 2 by:
 - making the learning objectives within lessons clear
 - providing a better match of activities to meet the needs of all pupils
 - improving the quality of marking and feedback so that pupils have a clearer idea of what they have to do to improve their work.
- Continue to develop strategies to further improve the attendance of pupils so that their learning is not disrupted.
- Raise children's attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage in knowledge and understanding of the world by
 - providing them with more opportunities to explore and investigate by themselves
 - using assessment better to identify gaps in their learning.

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

The school is accurate in its own evaluation that achievement and enjoyment is good and attainment is broadly average. Learning is good in the majority of lessons, with pupils fully engaged as a result of the good and sometimes outstanding teaching. Most pupils acquire new knowledge, develop their understanding and learn new skills well. Pupils clearly enjoy the vast majority of their learning. Partner work is regularly used to engage pupils actively in their learning. Progress in learning is especially good throughout Key Stage 1 in which standards are above average and rose to high levels in writing in 2009. Progress slows throughout Key Stage 2, however, and by the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average overall. Given their starting points this represents good progress for all pupils and some that is very good, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities who are helped by the good levels of support and guidance they receive.

There are good relationships in lessons and behaviour is good. Pupils say they feel safe and know what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle, reflecting the Healthy Schools award. The progress pupils make in developing key skills is good, often from low starting points, and their knowledge and use of information and communication technology (ICT) is good. Workplace skills to help support their future economic well-being are satisfactory, however, being held back by low, but improving, attendance figures. The school council is effective, although largely adult led. Pupils take an active part in many aspects of school life, as buddies to younger children and as Eco guardians, helping support the increasingly well-used wildlife area within the school's grounds. Partnerships with the local community are good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ 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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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and use of assessment to support learning are good overall. There is some outstanding practice but also some that is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use this and different teaching methods successfully to make learning interesting and relevant. Assessments of pupils' work are used effectively by teachers in the good lessons to give guidelines to help pupils move on to the next stage in their learning. Individual pupil targets are set and are valued by the majority of them as helping shape their learning. However, in the small number of satisfactory lessons this practice is not as well developed, learning objectives are insufficiently challenging and sometimes unclear, and the match of activities to pupils' needs is not as successful. As a result pupils learn at a slower rate. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in their learning by the talented teaching assistants, who often take additional support groups alongside the main-class teaching.

The good curriculum is planned carefully and is responsive to most pupils' needs. There is a strong focus upon key skills in literacy and numeracy. Extensive additional provision in English means that pupils often make very progress in this area of their learning. The school's involvement with the Creative Partnership programme has brought benefits in the use of art and music within pupils' learning that they say they particularly enjoy and which is having a good impact on their personal development. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. Spanish is taught by a specialist and carefully constructed themed projects, including international studies, extend pupils' understanding of the diversity of the world. The school recognises that some of its work in these areas is still

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in development and its impact not yet demonstrated.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. The parent-support advisor plays a central part in communicating with families and, together with the local authority, is vigorously challenging persistent absenteeism, with increasing success. The school provides an extensive range of adult and family learning opportunities and works well with a wide range of agencies and partners, such as the on-site after-school club, to support pupils in their learning. Pastoral support is very good, as is the number and range of additional learning programmes operating for pupils within the school at any time. Individual education plans for vulnerable pupils reflect clear and appropriate strategies for supporting their needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is driving forward improvement with energy. She is supported by an enthusiastic and hard-working staff who are committed to bringing it about. There have been sustained improvements in standards at Key Stage 1 and in English since the last inspection. Leaders and managers at all levels have become increasingly effective in monitoring and improving the overall quality of teaching and learning although, through the extensive self-evaluation, they recognise there are some areas of Key Stage 2 where teaching and learning needs strengthening. Safeguarding requirements are fully met and the school provides a very secure environment for learning.

Governors are very knowledgeable and support the school well, especially through frequent visits to classes and support for reading activities. Engagement with parents and carers is good. The school has carried out an audit of its social, ethnic and religious context and has in place a good range of planned actions to support community cohesion. This is good overall and increasingly well supported through the curriculum and many national and international links that help promote pupils' understanding of and contact with the diversity of the world. The promotion of equal opportunities is good, with good partnership links with other schools and organisations meaning that pupils' needs are very largely met, especially through the extensive programme to support able and talented learners.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Comprehensive induction arrangements, including home visits, ensure that children and their parents and carers receive a warm welcome to the school. Children settle happily in the safe environment. The majority enter the Nursery with knowledge, understanding, communication and language skills that are well below those typical for their age. Throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage children make good progress, helped by the good care and support they receive. Progress in language and creative development is especially good, with most children reaching standards just below those nationally expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. Progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is weakest, however, especially in Reception, with attainment here remaining firmly below expectations by the time children leave. The curriculum has been adjusted as a result; however, it is too early to see the impact of these changes. Consequently, assessment has yet to clearly identify progress made and inform future planning. Teachers' assessment of all other areas of learning is good and informs children's next steps in learning. Teaching is good, with a good range of activities children choose themselves and those directed by adults. Behaviour is good, with clear expectations and routines established. Children play and work together well as a result. Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, with extensive self-evaluation resulting in good plans in place to move learning forward.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 vast majority of parents and carers, staff and pupils are very happy with most aspects of the school and consider it to be well led and managed. Some parents and carers expressed concern over the effective management of behaviour in some classes. Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour in classes and around the school is good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Farne Primary 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 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 238 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	67	32	31	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	65	63	38	37	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	40	56	54	4	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	65	63	38	37	0	0	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	59	57	43	41	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	42	52	50	6	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	42	55	53	5	5	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)	37	36	61	59	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	55	53	47	45	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	33	43	41	20	19	5	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	34	52	50	11	11	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	48	46	43	41	8	8	4	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	61	38	37	1	1	1	1

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



21 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Farne Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE5 4AP

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me and the team when we inspected your school recently. You were very friendly, polite and enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly very proud of it. Farne Primary is a good school. You get a good start to your learning in the Nursery and Reception and make good progress as a result of the good teaching and care you receive. This continues into the main school where the teaching, the subjects and topics you learn, and the help you get from the adults in the school all mean that you leave at the end of Year 6 having made good progress in most areas of your learning. You know what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle and both you and your parents and carers say that you feel safe and well cared for. Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, but the attendance of some of you is low and this means that your preparation for the next stage of your education and the world of work is only satisfactory. The headteacher, governors and staff work well together to make your school successful. I have asked them to consider three things that I think will help it to improve even more:

- improve the small amount of satisfactory teaching and learning within Key Stage 2 by making learning objectives clearer, matching activities more closely to your needs and improving marking and guidance so you know what you have to do to improve your work
- continue to develop ways to improve attendance
- extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

You can help by telling your teachers how best you learn, if you have any problems and by attending regularly. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Cromey-Hawke

Lead inspector

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