

Fair Furlong Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109130
Local Authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	337223
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2010
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs L Maggs
Headteacher	Ms E Drew
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at policies, attendance records, assessment information and other documents, including 137 parental questionnaires.

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

- how well pupils progress, especially in Key Stage 1
- the school's success in raising pupils' attainment in English
- whether recent changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage have led to improvements.

Information about the school

Fair Furlong Primary School is larger than average. It has a higher-than-usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The largest group of these pupils has speech, language and communication difficulties. Most pupils are White British and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is about double the national average.

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

1

Main findings

Fair Furlong Primary is a good school. It has several outstanding features. The headteacher's great enthusiasm, determination and close attention to detail are felt in all corners of school life and pupils, parents and staff acknowledge her very positive influence. Parents recognise the importance of the school in their children's lives and appreciate its numerous qualities. One representative view was, 'I don't know how the school does it but not only do they 'reach' all adults, but have a good rapport and make learning fun for the children.'

Pupils make excellent progress in their personal development. They show great pride in and commitment to their school, have splendid opportunities to make their views heard and take on numerous responsibilities. They are exceptionally well behaved and deeply considerate. One pupil, typical of many, wrote, 'My school is a lovely place. We have good teachers and a good headmistress and they have helped me learn new things and get to a high level in everything I do.' Pupils achieve well. From exceptionally low starting points, children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They work hard to overcome barriers to learning posed by poor language skills. Although there is a strong emphasis on literacy, pupils' progress in English is occasionally slowed when the targets set for improvement are not precise enough. Despite low starting points, pupils leave Key Stage 2 very well prepared for the future and with levels of attainment similar to the national average.

Pupils are outstandingly well cared for. They greatly appreciate the school's determination to nurture each one of them. Excellent attention is paid to safeguarding systems, which are comprehensive and subject to ongoing review. The curriculum is good and well adapted to pupils' requirements. Close attention is paid to the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures their progress is at least as good as that of others.

Teaching is good and many staff are excellent practitioners. The work of the school's leaders to maintain high quality teaching in the face of staff changes is outstanding. Lessons are very well planned to cater for all aptitudes and teachers make sure that lessons are great fun. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and focus hard on their tasks. Marking provides useful advice but pupils' targets for improvement are not precise enough. Teachers are less confident teaching information and communication technology (ICT) than other subjects. Combined with limitations in resources, this means that ICT attainment, while close to average, is below that in other subjects.

The school has an excellent capacity for improvement. Since the previous inspection the school has made exceptional improvements in many aspects of pupils' personal

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development and in leadership and management. Self-evaluation is comprehensive and used unflinchingly to compare the school's performance with that of others and to plan very well for the future. Excellent leadership and management of the school embed ambition and powerfully drive forward improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment, particularly in English, by maintaining and improving the school's focus on literacy and developing precise, individual targets to promote faster progress.
- By September 2010, improve teachers' confidence and the quality and quantity of resources in ICT and so promote higher attainment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' difficulties with English are energetically tackled in many lessons across all subjects and, combined with good teaching, this ensures good progress in Key Stage 1. Pupils make rapid progress in their personal development and this lays the foundations for strong academic progress in the next stage.

Continuing very effective teaching ensures that pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science accelerates in Years 3 to 6. Given their low starting points, the achievement of all groups of pupils is good. Since the last inspection pupils' attainment in English has improved, although there is scope for pupils to make more rapid progress in this area. Those with speech, language and communication difficulties achieve well because they receive very strong support. Pupils' computing skills are average but some elements of their understanding of ICT are less well developed.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of the risks of everyday life and know how to stay safe. They recognise the school as a very safe environment and appreciate the strong sense of mutual respect. Bullying is negligible and pupils relate very positively towards one another. Pupils fully understand what is required to grow up healthily. Almost all try to maintain a healthy diet and participate keenly in the wide range of sports available.

Attendance is average. The school's relentless promotion of good attendance ensures an improving trend. Punctuality was good during the snowy days of the inspection. Pupils develop excellent personal qualities in preparation for the future. For example, most know how to work independently. Their progress in gaining important skills like literacy and numeracy is good. Pupils regularly reflect on their own and others' experiences, relating them to a clear set of values promoted by the school. They are most interested to explore and understand cultural diversity, demonstrating very positive attitudes towards people from different backgrounds. Overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The care, guidance and support of pupils are central to the school's ethos. Excellent attention is paid to all aspects of care and this encourages pupils' enthusiastic engagement in school life. The school has high expectations, for example of pupils' attendance. Simultaneously, it reaches out to help vulnerable families and, through effective collaboration with other agencies, does a lot to sustain the well-being of numerous pupils facing challenging circumstances and barriers to their education. Pupils are very motivated to learn and teaching creates a very positive learning environment, promoting progress powerfully. Resources are used imaginatively to promote good learning. Interactive whiteboards stimulate pupils' attention and help maintain a good pace to most lessons. Teachers challenge pupils to do better and question them closely to check their understanding. Pupils respond well to this, showing fierce concentration and close engagement with their learning. They work particularly effectively in pairs or small groups, enjoying opportunities to help one another. Warm relationships make learning fun, as many pupils testified. Rigorous assessment and marking gives teachers a clear picture of pupils' progress. This influences their lesson planning. Activities are well matched to pupils' varying abilities and interests, so that lessons are stimulating and challenging. Pupils have broad targets and 'ladders' that show them what requires improvement but lack precise, personal targets to boost their English attainment. Some teachers are less comfortable teaching ICT, and resources in

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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this subject are limited, resulting in ICT attainment being slightly lower than in other subjects.

The curriculum provides a broad variety of activities that contribute effectively to pupils' development and well-being. Good planning incorporates opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. The curriculum is thoroughly adapted to take account of the school's context and to meet the needs of the many vulnerable pupils. It is extended through links with other schools, including those in France and Uganda, and enriched by links with arts and sports organisations. Opportunities for out-of-school activities are varied and are taken up by pupils in large numbers.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher inspires pupils, staff and parents to work together to provide a high quality learning experience. Outstanding leadership and management are shared by many staff and governors. Rigorous monitoring and close analysis of assessment information afford the school a very accurate view of teaching and progress and help it plan exceptionally well for the future. The school's promotion of good teaching is relentless, firmly tackling areas of concern and actively supporting new staff. Teaching is currently good rather than outstanding because a number of new staff are settling into the school, although school leaders are working very effectively to bring the whole staff together as a cohesive team.

Governors monitor the school thoroughly. The school has helped them develop their evaluation skills and they regularly discuss what the school provides with pupils and parents. They are very well informed; this enables them to offer the correct mix of strong support and effective challenge to the school. Procedures for safeguarding are extremely effective.

The school is pro-active in encouraging all parents and carers to strongly engage with their children's learning. For example, the Early Bird reading group encourages parents to sit and read with their children at school breakfast, before the day starts. The school fosters warm partnerships with other schools locally, nationally and internationally. These links are very beneficial to the curriculum. Work with a nearby university broadens older pupils' horizons and many Bristol sporting organisations contribute to after-school sporting opportunities.

Equality of opportunity is central to the school's philosophy. Powerful interventions and

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very competent teaching assistants ensure that no pupils, however disadvantaged, are left behind. Sophisticated monitoring of each pupil maintains the school's effectiveness and the school is quick to challenge any stereotypical views.

Promotion of community cohesion is good. The school is internally very cohesive. It has an excellent understanding of the local community and its planning reflects this knowledge. Its influence on the locality is growing but the school recognises that there is more to do.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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

Changes to the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage in summer 2009 have melded staff into an effective working team. Amongst a range of improvements, better assessment provides good information and accurate benchmarks to help staff judge attainment and progress. Thorough self-evaluation and the resulting action plan provide a good basis for further improvement.

Children enjoy coming to school. Consistently good teaching promotes good progress from starting points that are well below typical age-related expectations. Poor language skills inhibit children's development. The school works with parents and adjusts the curriculum to provide children with the skills needed to progress, and in this they are successful. Personal development is particularly good and children quickly develop social and other skills that help them become receptive learners. Parents and carers spoke about how much their children's behaviour improved when they started at the school. Behaviour is excellent. Children demonstrate growing independence, working and

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playing quietly and calmly. They leave the Reception class with skills and aptitudes below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Their achievement is good and they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Sessions are carefully planned, reflecting all areas of learning. Resources are well prepared to provide rich experiences and good opportunities for children to initiate their own activities. Teachers encourage children, modelling good practice to promote confidence. Regular reviews of learning feed into lesson plans, so all pupils work at the optimum level.

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 express strong support for the school. They confirm that they are well informed and that relationships with all staff are most positive. They have very few concerns and many questionnaires warmly praised the headteacher and staff. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns over pupils' behaviour. In contrast, the inspection judges behaviour to be excellent.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fair Furlong 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 137 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 314 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	96	70	41	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	99	72	37	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	76	55	56	42	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	85	62	51	37	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	100	73	37	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	80	56	56	41	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	66	48	71	52	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)	69	50	65	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	82	60	53	39	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	79	56	50	36	5	4	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	63	46	71	53	0	0	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	82	60	53	39	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	99	72	36	26	2	1	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 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.



13 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fair Furlong Primary School, Bristol BS13 9HS

Thank you very much for welcoming the inspectors when we visited your school for two snowy days in January. Many of you told us that Fair Furlong is a good school and we agree. Some things are even better than good. One of these is your behaviour. This is excellent and I congratulate you; it is one of the things that make your school such a good place to work and learn. The way the school is led and managed is also excellent. The headteacher and staff make a very strong team who work hard to give you the best education they can.

Lots of you said how much you enjoy lessons. The topics you study are interesting and many lessons looked great fun. Teaching is good and you always seem keen to learn. This helps you achieve well in the school and your standards by the end of Year 6 are similar to those of other schools across the country. This means that from your starting points when you join the school, you make good progress.

The way the school cares for you is excellent. Because the school is so caring and safe, your personal development is excellent.

There are two areas to improve that we have asked the school to concentrate on:

- raising standards, particularly in English, especially by giving each of you clear, personal targets to help you improve. If you do not know how your English work could be improved, you should ask your teacher
- improving ICT equipment and teachers' ICT skills to help you to do better in this subject.

Once again, many thanks for being so helpful. It was lovely meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead inspector

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