

Findern Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112551
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337962
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2010
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Geddes
Headteacher	John Lord
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed seven lessons and six teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents including pupils' work, progress records, governors' records and various policies. The replies to 46 parental questionnaires and those of pupils and staff were analysed and written comments examined.

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

- current progress across the school and how this compares to previous years
- whether improvements since the last inspection demonstrate a good capacity to improve.

Information about the school

This smaller than average primary school, serves a mainly White British community. Very few pupils come from other ethnic backgrounds and none have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than in most schools. The school has a below average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities but these cover a range of needs. The school roll has fallen due to small numbers joining the school several years ago but numbers joining the Early Years Foundation Stage have risen again. In recent years, the school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Health Promoting Schools Award. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is within a mixed-age class with some Year 1 pupils. The headteacher position is currently shared by the former full-time headteacher and the former deputy who continues in her deputy role part time.

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

Findern Primary provides a good education. By the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science although within English writing is a weaker aspect. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance rates are consistently high. They say that they find the practical type of lessons are best and enjoy writing in these more than in other subjects. Teaching is good and the much improved use of assessment systems within the classroom has ensured that all pupils now make good progress whereas previously they made satisfactory progress. Work is well matched to pupils' ability and the most able are given extension work to help them make more progress. Pupils have good relationships with adults who they say give them lots of help to improve their work.

The curriculum provides well for all aspects of pupils' learning except for their cultural development which is less well developed, as they have little planned contact with pupils from distant communities. There is good provision to support pupils' personal skills and this results in good behaviour. Pupils have improved their understanding of healthy lifestyles since the last inspection and they now have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. Pastoral care is good and the school works well with external agencies, such as the speech therapist, who comes into school to provide specialist support.

The leadership and management of the school are good. Progress on issues from the last inspection is good. The main improvement is in the effectiveness of teaching which has driven up progress. Strategic planning has improved with actions clearly linked to raising achievement. The use of assessment systems within the classroom and by leaders has also improved. The school's self-evaluation, based on effective monitoring of its work, is very accurate and this confirms the school's good capacity for further improvement. The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion is satisfactory as more work needs to be done to extend links beyond the local community. Although most aspects of safeguarding are good the overall effectiveness is satisfactory because some recommendations from a recent health and safety survey have not been completed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, especially in English, by promoting creative writing based on practical activities linked to pupils' interests.
 - Improve community cohesion and pupils' cultural understanding by developing links to other schools and communities and carrying out formal evaluations of the impact of actions taken.

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- Ensure that health and safety recommendations identified in the recent survey are carried out to support the otherwise good practice.

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

All pupils achieve well because they make good progress and attain at least average levels of attainment. Because of the small numbers in each year group the attainment on entry varies from year to year. For example, the current Year 6 had a lower level of attainment on entry than most years reflecting their good progress in reaching broadly average standards. Pupils say they enjoy school especially using the computers and carrying out experiments. Positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour ensure that all pupils can participate fully in lessons. Pupils' enjoyment, evident in all lessons, contributes to their good achievement. This was clearly seen in a Class 3 numeracy lesson, when the pupils were fully involved in the initial question and answer session; they joined in enthusiastically with purposeful numeracy games used by the teacher to make learning fun. In all lessons there are very good relationships between all the adults and the pupils, and pupils are very confident, readily ask questions and are proud of their work. In all lessons pupils are very aware of the learning objectives and what they should have achieved by the end of the lesson. They are becoming increasingly involved in assessing their own work as well as that of others. This was seen in a Class 5 literacy lesson, for example, where pupils had checklists to use identifying the main elements of persuasive writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the high quality support they receive.

All pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being as a result of having above expected skills in information and communication technology (ICT). Behaviour is good both in and out of lessons and, where teaching is most motivating, it is outstanding. Pupils eat healthy food especially at break time when they have fruit or yoghurt and they participate in the many sporting opportunities. They make a good contribution to the school community, for example through the school council, acting as peer mediators at lunchtime and by helping with assemblies. They are actively involved with the local community especially at Christmas and harvest times. Pupils actively support many charities and some are chosen by the pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They joined in with moments of reflection in assembly and were sensitive to the feelings of others during lessons. The limited range of cultural diversity in the school restricts opportunities for pupils to know about different faiths and cultures beyond what is provided through the curriculum.

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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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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and make lessons enjoyable. They work extremely well with support staff to help pupils who find it difficult to concentrate and learn. The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Teaching has improved as a result of staff training in the use of assessment strategies which is now embedded in the daily routines. Teachers know their pupils' abilities well and work is given to match these abilities. The improved teaching has been recognised by the school receiving the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

The curriculum caters well for the majority of pupils, especially in promoting their personal skills. There are good opportunities associated with sport and music. The school has received the Health Promoting Schools Award reflecting the priority given to pupils' care exemplified by the annual health and safety week which is an integral part of the staying safe and being healthy curriculum. Provision for ICT is good and includes a specialist facility enhanced by recently purchased laptops for use in the classroom. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and school visits including residential visits to Derbyshire activity centres.

Good procedures are in place to maintain high standards of behaviour. Procedures to maintain the high levels of attendance are very good. The support for pupils who are in vulnerable circumstances is very good and additional support is obtained from appropriate specialists as soon as possible. Transition arrangements within the school are excellent because the mixed-age classes at present also cross key stages and so provide a natural progression from one year to the next. Pupils get good information about the secondary school and there are progression tasks to prepare them for moving

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from Year 6 to Year 7. Systems to support the welfare of pupils are excellent with good provision for first aid and pastoral support. A recent health and safety survey was carried out at the request of the school but suggested actions have not yet been fully completed. Staff set good role models and demonstrate a very caring approach.

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 current interim leadership arrangement is providing continuity during a proposed period of change. The leadership team are well supported by staff at all levels in their vision for the future of the school and in driving improvement. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of teaching and learning is good and the standard of teaching has improved mainly because of the improved use of assessment systems. Financial management is secure and good value for money is provided.

The school knows and treats every pupil as an individual and ensures that they all have equal access to opportunities around the school, such as joining clubs and taking part in sport. There is no discrimination.

Governors provide good support and challenge as well as ensuring that statutory requirements are met. Some are very active within school while others show a determined approach to support the school by effective questioning at meetings. They understand what needs to be done in the school and have an effective partnership with the leadership team.

The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion is satisfactory. The school is physically isolated from its community but leaders know the local community well and have an action plan to develop wider links built into the school development plan. Good relationships have been established with parents and carers and with the local community. Pupils have very limited knowledge of what pupils in different communities experience. Safeguarding procedures are all in place including systems to ensure appropriate checks are carried out. Risk assessments are carried out but some suggestions from a recent survey have not yet been completed. Child protection procedures are good and these are supported through effective partnerships with support agencies.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Within this safe and caring environment children make good progress having entered Reception with skills and capabilities around those expected for their age. Most join from the local pre-school provision and know each other. Because they join a mixed-age class with Year 1 they are helped to settle quickly by the older children.

Children are happy and polite. They settle quickly into the routines as a result of good induction procedures. At the start of the day all children move swiftly to carry out an activity of their choice. All the children mix and play well together. The welfare of the children is very well supported. The key person system is well established and ensures that each child has close contact with an adult known to them. All safeguarding requirements are met including the provision of appropriately trained first aiders.

The co-ordinator provides good leadership and is supported by all adults such that the outstanding teamwork from well-trained staff, supports the children effectively in an extremely well-organised learning environment. There is a good outdoor area which is well used to enhance the classroom learning. Unfortunately it is not directly linked to the classroom and so free movement of pupils between the indoor and outdoor classrooms is not possible. There is a good balance between indoor and outdoor activities as well as between teacher-led sessions and those which the child chooses. Resources are good and imaginative use is made of basic materials, for example a packet of cereals, to extend children's knowledge of measurement. Systems to monitor children's progress are good and records of both formal and informal observations are dated and included in a well-presented 'My Learning Journey' file for each child.

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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

Over one third of the parents and carers expressed their views and most are pleased with the school. A small minority of parents and carers had concerns over the way unacceptable behaviour is dealt with and that the school does not always listen to their views. A few parents also had concerns about the progress their child makes, how well they are kept informed about this progress and about how well the school meets the needs of the pupils. These views were all considered during the inspection and contribute to the findings. There were few written comments but several described the school as 'a great school'. A very few had individual concerns which were considered as part of the inspection process but were not supported by the inspectors' findings or were already being resolved.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Findern 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 118 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	52	20	43	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	43	26	57	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	35	22	48	6	13	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	33	23	50	4	9	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	16	35	25	54	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	28	26	57	6	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	35	27	59	3	7	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)	16	35	19	41	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	35	24	52	6	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	28	20	43	5	11	5	11
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	28	19	41	10	22	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	17	37	19	41	5	11	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	30	26	57	5	11	1	2

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). 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">■ 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.



17 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Findern Primary School, Derby, DE65 6AR

Thank you for welcoming us and helping us when we came to your school. It was good to talk to many of you in your classroom and around the school. Your school is giving you a good education.

There are many things we admire about your school and these are a few of them:

- your levels of attendance are high showing how much you enjoy school
- most of your personal skills, including your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good
- you are making good progress and getting involved in assessing your own progress
- you enjoy and achieve well in ICT
- provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good as a result of outstanding teamwork and organisation
- you told us that you feel safe in school and that adults look after you and help you learn
- you get on well with your teachers and with each other
- staff look after you extremely well.

There are a few things we have asked the school to do to make it better. They are:

- to help you achieve better in English by improving your writing through giving you more creative tasks linked to practical activities and your interests
- to develop links with other schools so that you can learn about experiences that pupils have in various learning environments and communities
- ensure that suggestions from a recent health and safety survey are completed.

You can help by working as hard as you can in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead Inspector

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