

South Farnborough Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116155
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338739
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Edward Wheatley

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	264
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Saunders
Headteacher	Lynne Smith
Date of previous school inspection	25 March 2010
School address	Cunnington Road Farnborough GU14 6PL
Telephone number	01252 545682
Fax number	01252 378525
Email address	headteacher@southfarnborough-jun.hants.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons or parts of lessons were seen and eleven teachers observed. Meetings were held with staff, pupils, governors and local authority staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, tracking information, looked at pupils' work, planning, self-evaluation and 102 parental questionnaires.

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

- the impact of efforts to improve achievement in English and mathematics, especially through challenging teaching
- how well the school is working to make sure all groups of pupils achieve equally well
- how accurately the school identifies areas where it can improve, especially in the quality of teaching.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. Pupils come from mainly White British backgrounds and there are very small numbers from Asian and Caribbean heritages. A very small number speak English as an additional language. The most commonly spoken language other than English is Nepalese. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although the number with statements of special educational needs is above average. The majority of these pupils are in a specially resourced unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. There are small numbers of other pupils with physical difficulties, speech, language and communication difficulties, and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.

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

This is a good school. Attainment is average and a significant minority of pupils reach above-average levels in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make good progress. Recent variations in performance between subjects and different groups of pupils, notably boys and girls, are narrowing, although attainment in English has not fully caught up with the attainment in other subjects. This is because pupils' independent and creative writing skills are not as well developed as other aspects of their English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to good, well-planned support. Pupils in the moderate learning difficulties unit achieve well because of the sensitive, effective support they receive. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress as other pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They feel safe and say there is no bullying. They are friendly, help and support each other and respect each other's opinions. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and physical exercise. Their contributions to the school and wider community are good and pupils are ready to take on responsibilities and support charities. Attendance is above average, pupils' social skills are good, and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils enjoy learning and relationships are very good. Typically, good lessons are challenging, fast-paced, include work pitched effectively to pupils' learning needs and catch pupils' attention because they are interesting. Marking is regular and provides a clear indication of how pupils can improve, but teachers do not always check to make sure pupils have followed the advice provided. Despite activities in lessons being well matched to pupils' needs and based on accurate assessment of pupils' performance, it is not always clear to pupils how well they have done or what level they have reached. The curriculum is enriched with a wide range of trips and visitors, and theme weeks which pupils thoroughly enjoy. Links between subjects are improving, and there are some, but not enough, opportunities in all subjects for pupils to develop their independent writing skills and to write imaginatively. The range of out-of-school activities is good and well supported by pupils. Provision in the unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties is good with perceptive and frequently individual support. Where possible, these pupils join the main school for learning activities and this contributes successfully to their personal and social development.

The quality of personal care, guidance and support is outstanding. The school has an excellent network of links with outside agencies and social services to support vulnerable pupils and families. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is excellent and the school provides exceptional support for pupils with behavioural difficulties who come from other schools. There is a very clear focus on encouraging

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pupils to treat each other well and bullying in any form is not tolerated.

The headteacher provides exceptionally clear direction for improvement and she is remarkably well supported by senior staff. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the school is working well to deal with comparative weaknesses. The pace of improvement is increasing as relatively new subject leaders gain experience and confidence to push forward developments in their areas of responsibility. Governors are outstanding in the level of knowledge they have of the school and in the way they hold the school to account. The capacity for further improvement is good and the issues from the last inspection have been dealt with well. Relationships with parents and the level of involvement they have with their children's education are excellent. Efforts to promote community cohesion are good and plans for improvement are based on effective work the school already does.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, especially in English, by July 2010 by:
 - providing opportunities for independent and creative writing in all subjects
 - making sure pupils know the levels they are working at so that they have a clear understanding of how well they are doing.
- Improve learning to the quality of the best by making sure:
 - all lessons are challenging
 - teachers check that pupils follow the advice given in marking.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Learning is good and pupils work hard. Attainment is broadly average and many pupils reach the higher National Curriculum levels. Attainment is improving but fluctuates because attainment on entry varies from year to year. Attainment in mathematics and English had fallen behind that in science, but currently the gap is very narrow. Improvement in mathematics is significant. For example, pupils now carry out mental calculations confidently and accurately. They also plot coordinates on graphs and apply this knowledge to locating places on maps. Performance in mathematics is slightly better than in English because pupils' creative and independent writing skills are not as good as other aspects of writing. For example, pupils write instructions of how to carry out an investigation extremely well, but do less well if asked to apply their understanding to a particular situation where they have to use their imagination. The school has identified this as an area for further work, but improvement is at an early stage. Pupils' achievement is good, and improving.

Pupils enjoy school. They are enthusiastic learners and express their opinions readily. For example, they were ready to discuss what they knew about animals in the presentations from visiting speakers. They trust adults and work with other pupils sensibly and with consideration. Inspectors saw mainly good behaviour and pupils feel it is good too. Pupils eat sensibly, readily join in physical activities and know how to stay

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safe. They take on a wide range of responsibilities, including school council and play leaders in school, and performing for the elderly and raising money for charities in the wider community. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils’ awareness of other cultures is sophisticated and based on ‘rights, respect and responsibility’. Those in the unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties develop good social skills through having some lessons with pupils in the main school and joining in other activities which they experience.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils like lessons and develop confidence to contribute to discussion and practical activities. Learning is fun and pupils find the work interesting because teachers ensure pupils are fully involved. Work is challenging and based on accurate assessment of pupils’ progress and learning needs. Feedback to pupils on how they can make further progress is good and pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve. However, teachers do not always tell pupils what level they are working at, or have reached, so, despite knowing how to improve, pupils are not always clear on the standards they

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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achieve. The best lessons enable pupils to be imaginative in planning their own work and in reporting or writing about it. Marking is accurate and gives clear guidance on how to improve, though pupils do not always respond to the suggestions made.

The school provides a wide range of theme weeks that enrich the curriculum focusing, for example, on science, mathematics, Borneo, arts and personal, social and health education. Pupils enjoy this approach, and the residential visits and other activities they take part in. Links between subjects are improving, and there are some opportunities for independent and creative writing to help raise attainment in English, but they are not embedded in all subjects. Partnerships with secondary schools are very good and contribute effectively to sports, technology and science activities.

Pastoral support for pupils is excellent and the school works exceptionally well with parents, carers and support agencies to maintain this. Strategies to reduce the absence of a very small number of regularly absent pupils are extremely thorough and are leading to improved attendance. Pupils are confident that they have adults to turn to for support when they need it. Links with infant and secondary schools to smooth the transition process are exceptionally good. The quality of support for those in the unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties is outstanding and the efforts made to seek out expert support where it is needed are first class. The support for all pupils with social or emotional difficulties is excellent.

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 is ambitious for the school's improvement and this is evident at all levels of leadership. Identified weaknesses are dealt with effectively and staff receive considerable support to help them in their professional development. The pace of improvement is accelerating and is driven by governors who set challenging targets, check that initiatives to raise standards are implemented and that they are effective. The school promotes equal opportunities effectively and the past differences in performance by boys and girls are decreasing quickly. The school has thoroughly evaluated its work in promoting community cohesion, identified where provision is thin and organised how to improve it. Links with parents are excellent. Parents are extremely well informed about school activities and what their children are doing each term. The school involves them as widely as it can in supporting learning. For example, it organises activities to help parents support their children in mathematics. Governors work hard to

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ensure the school is safe and secure and at the time of the inspection safeguarding requirements were fully met.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	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	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

Views of parents and carers

Parents' and carers' views are predominantly positive, and inspectors agree with them. A small number of parents and carers feel that pupils do not make enough progress and inspectors partially agree, in that some pupils do not develop independent and creative writing skills as fast as they should. Small numbers of parents and carers feel that the school does not help parents and carers support their children's learning, deal with unacceptable behaviour well enough or take account of parents' and carers' suggestions. Inspectors found that the school provides many opportunities to help parents and carers support pupils' learning, deals well with unacceptable behaviour and has good approaches to consult with parents and carers and, where appropriate, to act on their suggestions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at South Farnborough Junior 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 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 264 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	61	37	36	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	67	34	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	46	45	50	49	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	42	47	46	8	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	52	51	43	42	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	44	48	47	7	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	52	48	47	0	0	1	1
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)	47	46	45	44	5	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	43	46	45	6	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	49	48	42	41	6	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	41	48	47	5	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	57	56	40	39	3	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	55	42	41	3	3	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.



26 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Farnborough Junior School, Farnborough, GU14 6PL

Thank you for making us so welcome. You were very helpful and gave us a good idea about what you think of your school. You think your school is good, and we agree with you.

- You all make good progress, and you enjoy learning.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are usually fun and you have a very good range of activities that make learning really interesting. The 'science week' that was happening during the inspection is just one of these.
- You like school and treat everyone with consideration and respect. You behave well and your attendance is good. You are friendly and polite to adults and know you can ask any of them for help if you need it.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how to stay safe.
- You take on responsibilities readily and carry them out well.
- The school takes excellent care of you.

In order for the school to be even better, we have asked your teachers and governors to do two things.

- Improve how well you do, especially in English, by making sure you have opportunities to write independently and imaginatively in all subjects, and that you all have a clear understanding of how well you are doing.
- Make sure learning is good in all lessons by giving you challenging work and checking that you always follow the advice given when your work is marked.

You can help by telling teachers if you think the work is too easy, by asking about how well you are doing, and by making sure you follow the advice teachers give when they mark your work.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley

Lead inspector

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