

Farnborough Road Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104863
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	354346
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Onyon

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Dale
Headteacher	Mrs Wendy Cheetham
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 lessons. A number of shorter visits were also made to classrooms to look at, for example, samples of pupils' work. Seventeen members of staff were observed teaching. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff, parents, carers and pupils and looked at a wide variety of documentation, including teachers' planning, the school's improvement plan, monitoring and evaluation, assessment records, safeguarding and health and safety information, and the reports from the School Improvement Partner. The responses given on questionnaires from staff were analysed, as were the responses from 151 parents and carers.

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

- the progress made by all pupils, in particular, any differences in the progress of boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able
- the impact of the use of assessment in guiding the next steps in pupils' learning
- how effectively leaders at all levels are involved in bringing about identified improvements.

Information about the school

Farnborough Road is much larger than most infant schools. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. A small number are known to be entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is around the average. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Extensive building refurbishments have been undertaken and are nearing completion. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of children in four Reception classes and the Nursery. In recognition of its work, the school has received Healthy Schools Status, the Activemark award and the Artsmark Gold award.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school where children achieve well at both key stages. It has many excellent features that result in outstanding outcomes for pupils overall. Since the last inspection, the school has sustained high standards and improved the quality of teaching, leadership and management from good to outstanding. The innovative curriculum remains outstanding, taught by very able, enthusiastic teachers totally committed to making sure that individuals achieve every success possible. The pupils enjoy school greatly and their behaviour and attitudes are exemplary. They feel extremely safe and adopt especially healthy lifestyles. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that the safety of pupils is given very high priority. The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and their contribution to the school and wider community are outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. For example, one reflected the views of most and highlighted the school's impressive focus on individuals' needs by saying, 'All children, regardless of ability really do get the chance to shine at this school. They have the knack of finding the things children are good at.'

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding, particularly in relation to providing for children's welfare. The school has an excellent reputation for individualised support for each pupil, particularly those with identified learning and emotional needs, resulting in these pupils making significant strides in their learning. Most pupils make good and sometimes better progress throughout their time at Farnborough Road and, by the end of Year 2, attainment is above average in all key subjects with many attaining high levels for their age.

The outstanding teaching and curriculum are key factors in the progress pupils make. The teachers plan exceptionally well for the varying abilities of the pupils in the classes. The teachers make effective use of assessments on how well pupils are doing to set work which challenges all, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are more-able. However, many pupils have little say in assessing how well they are doing or in contributing to their next steps in learning. The school has done much to promote community cohesion, both in school and locally. Pupils' insight into the cultural diversity found within the United Kingdom and internationally is being developed extremely well. The headteacher and other members of staff are a dedicated team, committed to improving the provision they make for pupils. Self-evaluation is successful in pinpointing where improvement is needed. The governors support the school's work extremely well, they have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses and play a full part in the strategic leadership of the school. Improvements since the last inspection and the quality of the current provision show

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that the school has an outstanding capacity to improve even further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sharpen the impact of assessment to accelerate progress further by involving pupils in assessing how well they are doing and engaging them in determining their next steps for learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The pupils really enjoy their learning and, in all the lessons observed, they were fully engaged and took great delight from their success. They have very sensible attitudes to their work. They are polite and courteous and keen to share all that happens at school. Pupils make good, and sometimes better, progress throughout Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science, and is very high in information and communication technology (ICT). In two English lessons seen in Year 1, the clear and helpful explanations provided by the teachers on the use of alliteration and selecting words from the interactive whiteboard, greatly helped pupils to improve their written work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve exceptionally well. Teachers are most careful to include all pupils fully in discussions, so that they know exactly what was expected of them. Boys and girls perform equally well and any slight unevenness in achievement between groups is reducing rapidly. Pupils' good achievement, together with their confidence in working well together and taking responsibility for a number of projects, such as growing plants and vegetables in the school garden, means that the school is preparing them exceptionally well for their future economic well-being.

The pupils clearly like school very much and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour and good attendance. Pupils eat fruit and healthy meals and readily take part in physical exercise. They say that they are pleased to have contributed towards the Healthy School status. Their very strong spiritual, moral and social development underpins their very good understanding of the multicultural society in which we live. They are enthusiastic about raising funds annually to support children's learning in other countries. They take on the very many responsibilities that the school offers them readily and conscientiously. They are proud to be members of the school council. The pupils are also very involved in the local community; hosting an exhibition of their art during the inspection and working very effectively with the neighbouring junior school.

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

How effective is the provision?

The staff are an enthusiastic, committed and effective team. In classes, relationships are strong, the teaching assistants are deployed well and the teachers make excellent use of a variety of resources and strategies to make the lessons interesting. As a result of exciting lessons, pupils are exceptionally well behaved, keen to learn and ready to work hard. The teachers make very good use of the interactive whiteboards and computers to motivate pupils and to develop their understanding. Teachers use information on how well pupils are doing to plan carefully for the varying needs of pupils in their class. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make excellent progress. One parent/carer commented that her child had 'made tremendous progress due to the sensitive support provided. Children know that people care about how well they do'. Pupils have detailed targets for improving their work in English and mathematics, although discussions with the pupils suggest that some know these better than others. Dialogue is successful in clarifying for pupils how to develop their work further; pupils are just beginning to involve themselves in assessing their work and contributing to their next steps for learning.

The curriculum contributes exceptionally well to the pupils' progress and their enjoyment of school. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the visits and after-school clubs that enrich the curriculum. The school has very successfully concentrated on linking subjects to produce a more innovative and exciting curriculum. Its work is enhanced greatly through partnerships with other schools. A particular strength is the provision for the arts, including music, where pupils learn to play musical instruments and perform together. Pupils' singing is excellent, in assembly, for example. Dance is of high quality and

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celebrated when older pupils perform for younger ones as seen in the assembly.

The exceptional care, guidance and support provided for pupils contribute very well to the pupils' enjoyment and their learning. Effective arrangements ensure the smooth entry of pupils into the school, as well as into the junior school when they leave. Several parents and carers commented on how quickly pupils settle in the school. Pupils are regularly reminded about the need to take care, for instance, when using computers, and can talk confidently about how systems protect them when using the internet.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, with the vigorous support of the leadership team and other staff, is highly successful in creating a very caring and happy learning environment for pupils. Exceptional care is also taken to ensure that no form of discrimination is evident in the school and that equal opportunities are promoted highly effectively. Monitoring and evaluation play a full part in minimising differences in progress between groups of pupils. Safeguarding procedures are consistent and very effectively applied, to ensure that all pupils are protected exceedingly well. The procedures have been particularly effective during recent large-scale building works in the school. The schools' self-review is accurate in identifying strengths and areas for development, and tackling them enthusiastically. There is clearly a strong ambition to improve and no stone is left unturned for the benefit of all. Community cohesion is promoted exceptionally well in the school. There are excellent community links, in school, locally, nationally and internationally and the school places a great emphasis upon the importance of developing pupils' full understanding of life in a diverse society.

The teachers demonstrate an excellent understanding of their role in leading and managing the areas of learning for which they have responsibility; they work as a team and actively support strategies for improvements. Governance is highly effective. Governors are very supportive of the school and play a full and active part in thinking about the future and how things might be better. There are exceptionally good working relationships with parents and carers, as well as with the local pre-schools. The excellent partnerships the school fosters with the local schools means that the best value is exacted from sharing resources, such as professional development activities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start in the Nursery, their knowledge and skills are similar to those expected for their ages, but sometimes lower in language and communication and personal and social skills. Through the Early Years Foundation Stage, children achieve well. They receive an excellent confidence-boosting welcome and there is a careful analysis of their needs. As a result, they are very happy in school; they enjoy themselves and they particularly value the company of other children in the classes. The children's behaviour is excellent and they are very keen to get on and do their best. Staff create a friendly and caring learning environment and children also benefit from the excellent induction period, when they visit the school prior to their start and where strong links are established with parents and carers. Adults provide the children with a good balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities for the children to choose for themselves and, as a result, children become independent learners from an early age. Adults take every opportunity to help children develop their various skills. The children tackle their work with tremendous enthusiasm; for example, building models and using digital cameras to consider how they might be improved. Staff know the children very well and the frequent observations and assessment of their progress result in fresh tasks, well matched to the children's needs. A good range of resources is provided, with the outdoor area being used in all aspects of the curriculum, whenever possible. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader uses her specialist knowledge and enthusiasm extremely well in making excellent provision for children. Other adults provide good support to leaders and managers to help meet children's various needs. Provision made for the welfare of children is exceptional.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Just over a third of parents and carers completed and returned the questionnaire. Of these the vast majority gave very positive responses to all the questions, showing a high level of satisfaction with the school. They were particularly happy with: how safe pupils are; how much children enjoy school; excellent teaching; the good progress of pupils and being kept well informed about progress. Inspectors agree that these aspects are high. There were very few negative comments and the inspection found no evidence to support these.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Farnborough Road Infant 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 151 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 427 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	121	80	28	19	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	121	80	26	17	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	83	55	63	42	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	93	62	55	36	2	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	113	75	34	23	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	101	67	49	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	96	64	52	34	3	2	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)	116	77	32	21	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	99	66	46	30	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	73	48	66	44	5	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	74	49	71	47	2	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	102	68	46	30	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	114	75	32	21	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

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.



2 July, 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Farnborough Road Infant School, Southport, PR8 3DF

Thank you all for making the team so welcome when we inspected your school. We had such a good time, especially when talking to you about so many things that you enjoy at school. Yours is an outstanding school and I agree with the very positive things that you say.

Here are some of the things that the inspectors judge to be excellent:

- the school looks after you very well and you all make good progress in your learning, including the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- your behaviour is exemplary and you get along with each other really well and feel completely safe in school
- the school council has very good ideas on how to make things better and the teachers always listen to what the councillors have to say
- you understand extremely well how to live healthily and to take the right decisions about exercise
- you find lessons interesting and enjoy school
- there are lots of exciting things for you to do in school, including going on visits and taking part in clubs
- the school is exceptionally well led and managed.

Your school has many plans on what it needs to do to improve even further. To help it move onwards, we have asked the school to build even more on your independence; so that you learn to check for yourselves, on how well you are doing and to work with the teachers to help decide on the next steps for your learning.

You can help by continuing to work hard and to help the school to be even better than it already is.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Onyon

Lead Inspector

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