Inspection of a good school: Farnham Church of England Primary School

Farnham, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 1HR

Inspection dates: 27 June 2024

Outcome

Farnham Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Farnham Church of England Primary School. They develop a real sense of their place in the world and learn how to positively contribute to it.

There are frequent, carefully planned, learning opportunities and trips. Pupils learn about and make effective use of the local environment in many subjects, including geography. These experiences enrich pupils' knowledge and spark their curiosity. Pupils learn about global and local social issues such as homelessness. Pupils are 'courageous advocates' for those less fortunate than themselves. They raise money for a range of charities. Pupils learn about different cultures, countries, and faiths. This helps prepare them very well for life in modern Britain.

Pupils behave well. They are keen to do their best. If pupils need extra help to feel happy in school or to focus on their work, they know they will receive it.

Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They achieve well. The school provides very effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils with SEND access a full or appropriately adapted curriculum and achieve well.

Pupils understand how to keep safe, whether online or out in the community.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school's curriculum is well-designed. It meets the needs of all pupils and stimulates their interest in the wider world. Staff carefully consider how pupils, including those in Reception learn. Staff identify the key knowledge that pupils need. This is broken down into small chunks and arranged into a logical order. Pupils gain new knowledge securely before moving onto new content. This supports pupils to achieve well.

Teachers know the varied needs of pupils, including those with SEND, very well. They effectively check pupils' knowledge. They use these checks to adapt tasks. This supports all pupils to access new learning and move on when they are ready. As a result, pupils increasingly produce high quality work across the curriculum.

Learning to read is a school priority. From Reception, pupils learn how to blend sounds into words. Books are carefully matched to pupils' reading ability, including books in the well-stocked library. Pupils enjoy the engaging and diverse stories and texts that teachers read to them every day. Pupils discuss what they have read and use this knowledge in their written work. Teachers link books and stories to different subjects to deepen pupils' learning. Many pupils read widely and enthusiastically. However, the school does not carry out rigorous checks on how much and how often pupils are reading. Consequently, some pupils do not build their reading knowledge as well as their peers because they do not read as often as they could.

Children in Reception enjoy learning with pupils in Year 1 and 2. This helps children develop independence, confidence, and teamwork. Teachers model increasingly complex language. Pupils in Year 6 read with them. This helps children develop their vocabulary. Consequently, children build a solid foundation for future learning in year 1 and beyond.

The school has established high expectations of how pupils should behave. Pupils understand, and mostly follow, the 'whole school super 7' rules. Pupils treat each other, and adults, with kindness and respect. Many pupils attend well. The school is working closely with a small number of pupils and their parents to help them attend school more regularly.

The school's high quality personal development programme is in line with its motto: 'through faith and nurture, we thrive'. Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities to discuss and debate social and moral issues, including in assemblies. Pupils have a voice, as leaders ask them for their views on how the school could be made even better. Pupils enjoy a range of clubs, trips, and visitors. The school widens its extra-curricular offer to pupils, such as sporting competitions, through its federation and collaboration with other local schools. Pupils learn, in an age-appropriate way, about healthy relationships and consent. They are well-prepared for adulthood.

The school checks on staff well-being and workload and provides support when staff need it. High quality training helps staff develop their knowledge and skills. They are happy working at the school and staff turnover is very low. Parents like how staff get to know pupils and families well. The positive relationships formed help pupils achieve well and enjoy school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's oversight of reading does not always provide a sufficient assurance of how well reading practice is delivered and how often pupils take up opportunities to read. As a result, some pupils do not read as often as they should. They do not always develop the reading knowledge that they could. The school needs to strengthen its oversight of reading to clearly check the quantity and quality of reading by pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be a good school, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	115189
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10345154
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Christensen
Headteacher	Tracey Bratley
Website	www.federationfarnhamrickling.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Farnham Church of England Primary School is a small, rural primary school. It currently has three mixed-age classes: Reception and Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.
- The school's executive head teacher also leads two other local primary schools. The school is part of a federation. It works closely with other local primary schools.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school offers before and after school provision for pupils.
- Farnham Church of England Primary School is a voluntary aided school and is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford. The school received its most recent Section 48 inspection in January 2017, and it will receive its next inspection within eight years of that date.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke to the local authority's school effectiveness advisor.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school. They met with groups of pupils to discuss behaviour in the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector considered the 11 responses and eight free-text responses received during the inspection to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also considered the three responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey. The lead inspector also spoke to parents at the gate.

Inspection team

Steve Woodley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
David Piercy	Ofsted Inspector

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