

Farway Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113432
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	378706
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	Peter Clifton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Bucknall
Headteacher	Angela Potter
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Peter Clifton

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector used a number of strategies to observe learning. These included lesson observations ranging from 25 to 35 minutes, which were then followed by discussions with the teacher and separately with pupils. Seven lessons were visited, observing three teachers. The inspector listened to children read. Meetings were also held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school improvement plan, the school's information on pupils' progress, samples of pupils' work and information sent home to parents and carers. The responses to 19 questionnaires from parents and carers, 11 responses from staff and 15 pupil responses were examined and analysed.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school with pupils attending from the local area and nearby town of Honiton. There are three mixed-age classes. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average although in some year groups proportions are much higher or lower than those found nationally because of the small cohort sizes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a combined Reception and Year 1 class and have their own separate outside learning area. There is pre-school provision on-site that is managed by a private body. This is situated next to the Reception class.

The school meets the current government floor standard. It has achieved Healthy Schools Plus status, Eco schools, Travelwise and Active Lifestyle awards as well as the International School 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school where every pupil is known well by staff and treated as an individual. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and additional support quickly provided should any pupil be in danger of falling behind with their learning. Issues from the previous inspection have been tackled well because of strong leadership and management. Pupils' writing skills and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage have both improved.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and their attendance is above average. Safeguarding requirements are met. Pupils comment that they are treated with kindness and respect. Parents and carers confirm that pupils feel safe.
- Pupils, including children in Reception, make good progress and achieve well because teaching is mostly well matched to the needs of individual pupils. Some year groups are very small and, consequently, there is some year-on-year variation in attainment. In Year 2, and most years in Key Stage 2, pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. There are no consistent or significant differences between the achievements of any groups of pupils. However, on a few occasions, the learning of more-able pupils slows when they finish work sooner than expected.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons is consistently good. They are exceptionally friendly and talk about their school and the activities they do with considerable confidence. Parents and carers agree that pupils behave well.
- Teaching is mainly good with discussion being a strong feature across the school. Teachers typically ensure that learning moves along at a brisk pace. On a few occasions, the pace of learning slows, for example when too much time is spent recapping on previously learned skills. The marking of pupils' writing is consistently good and helps the pupils to improve. However, strategies used to help the pupils to assess their own work and to set personal goals are underdeveloped.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching matches that of the best by:
 - maintaining at all times a good pace of learning, particularly for more-able pupils, throughout each lesson
 - fine-tuning planning so that individual tasks are consistently challenging and extending.
- Develop self-assessment strategies for pupils so that they can be fully involved in setting their own goals for improvement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are typically in line with those expected for their ages. In the current Reception, children have a secure grasp of letters and their sounds and use these to spell and write simple words. They choose activities and play together confidently in a well-resourced area. They have made good progress from their different starting points.

The lessons observed and pupils' work seen show that pupils make good progress and achieve well. Reading skills are above average in Year 2 and by the time pupils leave school in Year 6. Weaker readers in Key Stage 1 read at expected levels by Year 6 because intervention programmes have been successful in boosting skills. Older pupils have good reading habits. Year 4 pupils, for example, have developed preferences about different authors and their styles of writing. The school's focus on improving pupils' writing has been successful in boosting attainment and progress. In Year 2, pupils' writing is at least at expected levels. In Key Stage 2, pupils' sentence writing shows good use of adjectives and adverbial phrases to create effect. Much of the writing is well presented and well punctuated. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 write fluently and logically making clear links between sections. However, in lessons there are a few occasions when pupils finish quickly and have to wait for further instructions and this occasionally slows their progress. Pupils have a secure grasp of number and place value. In Key Stage 2, pupils tackle investigations confidently when, for example, they look for patterns with prime numbers, or try to prove or disprove a theory.

Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress through the National Curriculum levels from their different starting points. Those with more complex needs are gaining basic writing skills securely because support is closely tailored to their needs. Questionnaires from parents and carers indicate a strong level of agreement that their children make good progress.

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Quality of teaching

Teachers are particularly successful in motivating pupils to engage in activities especially when using discussion to generate ideas. Activities stimulate the interest of boys and girls, for example, to write descriptive phrases or to think about different words they could use when 'dragons' visited the school. Through effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, adults successfully encourage cooperation, fairness and respect. Pupils are proud of the work that they do in school and comment that they usually work hard and like their teachers. Their parents and carers rightly agree with these views.

Across the school teaching is mainly good and parents and carers agree. Teaching in Reception provides children with good strategies to decode and write simple words. In choosing time they use information and communication technology applications which enable them to practise these decoding skills independently.

Lessons have clear objectives which are shared with pupils and are mostly well targeted at the wide range of needs of pupils. Planning was particularly successful in a mathematics lesson when the task enabled the pupils to explore a range of different solutions to a problem. However, learning is occasionally limited when tasks are narrow in their scope, such as when pupils do straightforward addition and subtraction sums. Pupils take note of the comments made in their books suggesting how they could improve their work. Nevertheless, they are not yet helped enough to decide for themselves what could be improved, for example in their writing, to help move it on to the next level.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Around the school pupils are very courteous and polite. They talk proudly about many aspects of the school that they particularly enjoy. Responsibilities are taken very seriously, such as looking after the school's chickens. Pupils are genuinely appreciative of going to a small school where they know everyone and feel valued by staff. Discussions with many pupils indicated that they had no concern about bullying, including cyber bullying. These views are supported by the parents and carers through the questionnaires. Pupils and parents and carers commented on how well pupils get on with each other and that any issue is quickly dealt with by staff. Behaviour in lessons is good and the pupils say this is always the case.

Pupils are punctual to school and attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school. In addition, the school effectively promotes regular attendance. Members of the governing body play their full part in discouraging absences such as pupils taking holidays in term time, and in ensuring the school's safety.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management arrangements have been stable since the previous inspection. The determined efforts to improve the school's effectiveness by the

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headteacher with the strong support of the governing body and other staff have been effective. This has consolidated good aspects of the school since the previous inspection as well as firmly tackling areas for development. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, opportunities to develop the children's independence through play, tracking the progress of children, and the approach to the use of letters and their sounds have all improved. Writing improvements in the rest of the school include a stronger emphasis on talk as a starting point and the use of accurate grammar.

Leaders track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils closely and take swift action to prevent anyone from falling behind. This has led to any gaps in achievement being closed rapidly. Provision to secure equal opportunities and tackle discrimination for pupils is effective. The governing body supports and challenges leaders effectively, for example by asking questions about pupils' rates of progress. Regular visits to the school provide them with first-hand knowledge about what happens in lessons. They have a clear understanding about their responsibility for safeguarding, and arrangements to promote this are comprehensive. The headteacher regularly monitors teaching. Teachers are given opportunities to visit other schools to help them reflect on their own practice. These arrangements are helping to ensure that teaching is generally good or better. Given the strength of improvement in achievement and behaviour as well as teaching since the previous inspection, the school demonstrates good capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is good and planning covers a range of stimulating activities in different subjects. Links between subjects are exploited well to extend pupils' basic skills and support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. History is used effectively as a stimulus for a range of writing activities. Pupils say they employ information and communication technology regularly in their work. The international link with the school in Uganda enables the pupils to exchange work and write to each other. The impact of the curriculum on the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in their confidence and the good relationships in school. The curriculum provides pupils with a strong appreciation of the environment and the importance of leading active lives. They show they value each other through the 'learner of the week' and 'thank you' books. Links with the local church and the vicar's visits to the school help the assemblies programme greatly.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Farway Church of England School, Colyton, EX24 6EQ

Thank you for being so welcoming and friendly to me when I visited your school. Farway provides you with a good education. A strength of the school is how well you work together. Staff know you all very well and give each of you good individual attention. You are rightly very proud of your school and show this by attending very regularly and on time. In discussion with many of you, you made it clear that you feel safe and valued, and your parents and carers agree.

You make good progress because the work you are given is well matched to your individual needs. However, on a few occasions, you finish your work sooner than your teachers expected. I have asked the school to make sure that this does not happen in the future. You can help by telling your teachers at any time if you find work too easy or difficult. Teaching in the school is good and your teachers use discussion well to help you to learn. However, there are a very few occasions when too much time is spent going over work you already understand. Several of you told me that you find the marking in your books helpful. I have asked your headteacher to make sure you are given more opportunities to check and level your own work so that you can identify for yourselves what you need to do better.

Your behaviour in lessons is good. I was pleased that you confirmed that any misbehaving or bullying is very rare and quickly dealt with. I really enjoyed walking around the school with a group of you and was amazed at how much information you told me in the time available.

Your headteacher and other adults have done a good job in improving your school since you were last visited by an inspector. I hope you will continue to cooperate fully with your teachers so that you learn as well as you can.

Yours sincerely

Peter Clifton
Lead inspector

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