

Fairfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117923
Local Authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358225
Inspection dates	14–15 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Dawn Jones
Headteacher	Mr Mark Gillyon
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2008
School address	Mendip Avenue Scartho, Grimsby NE Lincs DN33 3AE
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed eight lessons, each taught by a different teacher. They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the School Improvement Partner. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including safeguarding policies and records, samples of pupils' work and assessment information. The 100 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed in addition to those from pupils and staff.

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

- How well teaching and the curriculum meet the needs of all groups including girls and higher attaining pupils.
- Whether learning and progress are consistent as pupils move up through the school.
- How effectively pupils' behaviour is managed.
- The impact of leadership and management on improving the school's performance.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. Most pupils are White British and there are very few pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. One-third of these pupils have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school has gained the Investors in People award, the Artsmark and Activemark, BECTA ICT mark, FMSIS and has Healthy School status. A deputy headteacher has been appointed for January 2011. At the time of the inspection a senior teacher was acting deputy headteacher. The privately managed childcare provision and children's centre which share the school's site did not form part of this inspection.

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

Fairfield is now a good school because the headteacher has so successfully led the drive to improve pupils' achievement. The strong and effective support of senior staff and the governing body have contributed well to developments in teaching that have in turn accelerated pupils' progress. Rigorous systems to monitor and evaluate the school's work mean that leaders have an accurate view of its strengths and where further development is needed. This is a school moving forward as a result of a systematic approach to tackling well judged priorities, and it has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

Pupils make good progress from their individual starting points, in line with the overall good quality of teaching. However, there are a few inconsistencies in teaching which mean that learning is not as good in every lesson. Occasionally, for example, pupils spend time listening to the teacher when they could be learning more independently. Pupils' understanding of their targets has improved greatly since the previous inspection. Marking is usually good but from time to time does not point out to pupils exactly how they can improve their work. The curriculum meets pupils' needs satisfactorily and has a number of good features. For instance, pupils are stimulated regularly by activities that encourage them to be enterprising, involve good partnerships with the local community and help to prepare them well for their future lives. However, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills to subjects other than English. Work has begun to ensure that the transition from the Reception Year curriculum to that in Year 1 is smooth enough for all pupils but there has not been time for this to be embedded sufficiently.

The school takes good care of pupils and makes sure that they feel safe. Pupils point to many examples of the school's concern for them, such as the provision of high-visibility vests when they are learning in the wider community. Less obvious is the careful attention paid to supporting pupils who may be more vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This work means, for example, that pupils who initially find it very hard to manage their own behaviour become increasingly self-controlled as they respond to the arrangements made for them. Pupils mirror the school's care for them in their own attitudes to others. They readily take on a host of responsibilities and carry them out conscientiously. For instance, junior sports leaders successfully encourage other pupils to be physically active during playtimes, because they appreciate the importance of healthy lifestyles.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate the small proportion of teaching that is satisfactory rather than good or better, focusing particularly on ensuring that:

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- lessons consistently include varied activities that enthuse pupils and require them to be active learners
- marking always informs pupils about what they need to do in order to improve their work.
- Develop the curriculum by:
 - extending opportunities for pupils to write in real-life contexts and in subjects other than English
 - maintaining and developing further the links between learning opportunities in the Reception Year and Year 1.

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

Pupils are confident that they learn a lot during lessons and in the majority of instances this is an accurate assessment. They are keen to answer questions and they listen attentively to each other and to adults. In most lessons, pupils concentrate well on their work and support each other when working in small groups. When, as is usual, teachers establish a fast pace and show their enthusiasm, pupils relish being busy and enjoy a challenge. 'Shall we try a higher number?' asked a Year 1 pupil during an exciting mathematics game involving number bonds. Occasionally, learning slows when the lesson moves on only steadily and pupils spend too long watching and listening rather than solving problems and being independent.

When they join the Nursery class, children's skills vary widely but tend to be below the expectations for their age. From this point on they make good progress so that attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average at the end of Year 6 and achievement is good. Inspection evidence indicates no current significant difference between the progress and attainment of boys and girls, although Year 6 girls performed less well in 2010. The school's assessment information shows that progress tends to slow in Years 3 and 4 and then accelerates quickly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are supported well in class and through additional programmes that meet their needs well.

Behaviour in lessons and around school is good and pupils confirm that bullying is uncommon. They are clear that they would report any concerns to an adult and certain that these would be dealt with effectively. New pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, are welcomed warmly and those from different backgrounds work and play happily together. Pupils are very aware of their health and clubs such as dance and yoga are particularly popular. They are quick to grasp opportunities to contribute to the school community, for example by being school councillors, librarians or playground buddies. Pupils play an active part in the local community, designing staff tee-shirts for the re-launch of a business. Attendance is usually above average but it dipped to average last year owing to an increase in holidays during term time. Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are well developed and they apply them effectively for a range of purposes. They develop a good level of economic awareness which helps to set them up well for the future.

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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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers mostly make good use of assessment information in order to meet the needs of groups such as the most-able pupils. Questions are often used well by teachers to help establish the extent of pupils' understanding and ensure that both boys and girls participate fully. Activities are frequently chosen well to motivate pupils and challenge them to learn fast. However, during a minority of lessons, teachers miss opportunities to inspire pupils and pupils may not be required to do much more than receive information. Teaching assistants make good contributions to lessons, particularly when supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. They work in partnership with teachers to manage pupils' behaviour effectively. In some classes, marking is very helpful and involves pupils' evaluating their own work and that of others. This good practice is not yet consistent throughout the school.

The curriculum provides well for pupils' personal development, for example, through work on healthy lifestyles or anti-bullying. There are particular strengths in the provision for ICT, music and art. Visits, including residential experiences and visitors to school add enrichment, for example by offering sporting and enterprise activities that would otherwise be hard to provide. Links between history and English have been successfully developed. However, there is not yet enough use of first-hand experiences and opportunities arising from other subjects in order to stimulate pupils' writing. In the past, the progress of some

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pupils has faltered as they moved from the Early Years Foundation Stage to National Curriculum work. Recent developments mean that the curriculum in Year 1 is meeting pupils' needs more effectively, for example, by ensuring that the most-able pupils are given more challenging activities from the outset. There has not been time to see the impact of this work on pupils' attainment.

Staff know each pupil very well and work closely together to identify those who may be more vulnerable. A number of senior leaders, together with the learning mentor, contribute to ensuring that support packages are quickly put in place. Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour are logged and the pupils concerned are monitored closely, applying the school's behaviour policy to link the nature of incidents with the actions agreed. These may involve individual plans for improving behaviour in partnership with parents and carers. Attendance is promoted rigorously and holidays during term-time are discouraged strongly. Effective links with a wide range of agencies and professionals enhance the school's work. Care for pupils continues after they have left school, with visits to Year 7 pupils in order to check that their transition has been successful. Transition between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 is satisfactory and improving. The school's breakfast club offers pupils a healthy and welcoming start to the day.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has ensured that staff share his high expectations for pupils and the school by, for example, holding teachers more accountable for pupils' progress and by providing opportunities for professional development in relevant areas. He has not shirked from making difficult decisions about staffing and in this has been supported very well by the effective governing body. Senior leaders and the coordinators of key subjects make a good contribution to monitoring, evaluating and improving the school's performance. Other middle leaders are playing an increasing role in this work.

The governing body provides challenge in addition to support. For example, its members pose pertinent questions about pupils' progress and targets. They have begun to obtain more information from first-hand observations and have already taken part in a tour of all classrooms, to gauge the quality of the learning environment. The school is concerned to provide equal opportunities for all pupils. Differences in performance are observed quickly and investigated. As a result, for example, library books have been purchased to be more reflective of girls' interests. Currently, work is in hand to ensure that progress is consistently good in all year groups.

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The school is a cohesive community and has varied and constructive partnerships with local community groups, for instance through the headteacher's membership of the children's centre management committee. Links with communities not represented in its locality are less well developed. Safeguarding requirements are met well and practice is good. Leaders including the governing body frequently review the school's arrangements and take decisive action whenever there are opportunities to strengthen them.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

From starting points that are often below expectations, children make good progress. By the end of the Reception Year, more are at the expected levels and some exceed them particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Reading is a relatively weaker area although there is a good focus on helping children to develop their ability to link letters and sounds. Children soon become confident and independent learners. They enjoy learning because adults arrange activities that are great fun in addition to promoting good learning. A group of children in the Nursery Year made imaginative use of resources as they made and wrapped Christmas presents and dressed up as Father Christmas. 'Ho, ho, ho! Merry Christmas!' cried one small Santa. Activities include a judicious blend of those chosen by children and others led by adults. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long during whole-class activities and this slows down learning. Children's welfare needs are met well and great attention is paid to supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Assessment arrangements are well organised and parents and carers are involved from the start, through visits to their homes and close liaison with the on-site children's centre. Adults work as a close team and all share the drive to make the provision as good as possible.

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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

The proportion of parents and carers returning questionnaires was below average. Most are happy with what the school provides. They nearly all consider that their children enjoy school and that teaching is good and are particularly happy with the way children are helped to have a healthy lifestyle. The inspection endorses all these views and the overall positive response of parents and carers. A number of parents and carers do not think that they are helped to support their children's learning. The inspectors looked at examples of information provided to parents and carers, such as details of children's targets and booklets with suggestions for helping with reading. The school regularly offers courses for parents, for example, in ICT. The inspectors judge that parents and carers are given plenty of help in this area. The way in which behaviour is dealt with was also criticised by some parents and carers. The inspectors checked this important issue and found that there are clear and effective systems to manage behaviour which lead to improvements in the behaviour of individuals. During the inspection, behaviour was judged to be good. The inspectors evaluated leadership and management carefully and this aspect of the school was also judged to be good, although a number of parents and carers do not share this view. A very small number of parents and carers raised issues relating to health and safety. These were investigated and the inspectors were satisfied that no unnecessary risks are posed to pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fairfield 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 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 241 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	59	39	39	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	64	31	31	3	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	49	49	47	47	2	2	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	49	44	44	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	52	52	42	42	5	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	43	47	47	9	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	41	58	58	0	0	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)	43	43	49	49	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	43	49	49	6	6	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	37	48	48	10	10	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	35	54	54	5	5	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	41	41	48	48	8	8	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	49	44	44	6	6	1	1

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



16 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fairfield Primary School, Grimsby, DN33 3AE

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when the inspectors visited your school. We enjoyed our time with you and have lots of happy memories of your Christmas activities, such as hearing the Key Stage 2 carols round the tree and the Key Stage 1 children having fun during their party. We would especially like to thank those of you who spent time talking with us.

We judge that yours is a good school. These are some of its best features:

- you make good progress in your learning because you have good teaching
- you learn a great deal about how to keep healthy
- you feel safe in school and you told us how well the school cares for you
- in turn, you do a lot to help others, making a good contribution by taking on responsibilities such as being playground buddies or school councillors
- behaviour is good and most of you attend school regularly
- you have plenty of interesting visits, visitors to school and clubs
- the school has improved well since its previous inspection
- the school's leaders make sure the school keeps getting better.

To help, we have asked the school to make sure that:

- lessons always include plenty of interesting activities and marking is always helpful to you
- you have plenty of opportunities for writing in as many subjects as possible.

You can help by continuing to try hard and by getting involved in all the things your school offers. We send each of you our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Eaton

Lead inspector

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