

Fairfield Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115904
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	357842
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Frazer
Headteacher	Brenda France
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2007
School address	Fairfield Road Havant PO9 1AY
Telephone number	023 92483029
Fax number	023 92492324
Email address	adminoffice@fairfield.hants.sch.uk

Age group	4–7
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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty lessons were observed and nine teachers were seen. The inspectors met with pupils, staff, parents and carers, and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation including teachers' planning, assessment information and safeguarding policies, and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.

The inspectors analysed 60 questionnaires from parents and carers. The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is enough done to boost children's language skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- Is the school making sufficient impact upon improving pupils' writing skills?
- Do all teachers make the best use of assessment information to ensure that activities in lessons match with the needs of different groups of pupils?
- How widely do pupils use their information and communication technology skills?

Information about the school

The school is average in size. It serves the local area, with some pupils coming from outside the immediate area. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average when compared to other schools, and many of the individuals concerned have speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to that found in other schools nationally. Nearly all of the pupils are White British, with a very small number coming from other ethnic heritages. The school has nine classes, three of which are for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school is accredited with several awards including the Healthy Schools award and the UNICEF Level I Rights Respecting Schools 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they are taught well and make good progress. The same picture is reflected throughout the school, with good and occasionally outstanding teaching ensuring pupils achieve above average levels of attainment by the end of Year 2. Staff have excellent relationships with all pupils and use these well to encourage all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to become confident and enthusiastic learners who enjoy school a great deal. Mostly, teachers plan interesting lessons with a strong emphasis on practical activities so that pupils progress well in learning to explore and investigate. Very occasionally in satisfactory lessons, work is not matched precisely enough to pupils' needs and in these instances the pace of learning is not as rapid as it should be. Pupils' behaviour is good and sometimes excellent. They concentrate well in lessons and develop positive attitudes to learning. The school has a good range of initiatives, such as the emphasis on learning through outdoor activities, which ensure the provision of a lively and interesting curriculum to boost learning opportunities. Pupils show satisfactory skills in information and communication technology (ICT). However, there are not enough opportunities planned for them to boost these skills or to use ICT to enhance their work across the curriculum.

The excellent provision for care, guidance and support ensures that all pupils feel completely safe. They have no hesitation about seeking help should they need it. The principles of 'rights respecting' are deeply ingrained in the way in which staff work across the school. As a result, from an early age, pupils learn to have sensitivity and respect for the feelings of others and a good level of moral and social understanding. Through wide-ranging responsibilities, including playtime buddies and school council membership, pupils make a very substantial contribution to aid the smooth running and improvement of their school. They appreciate their level of involvement and say things like, 'It's great .we get to suggest ideas about how things can be changed.' Hosting coffee mornings for senior citizens and charity fundraising for international appeals are examples of the many ways in which pupils are also very effectively involved in contributing to the community both locally and further afield. The school's very strong emphasis on health education and its drive towards gaining the Healthy Schools award ensure that pupils gain an excellent understanding about how to keep themselves fit and healthy.

The headteacher does an excellent job of leading the staff. Very ably assisted by her deputy, she ensures that staff and the governing body are fully involved in supporting improvement in the school's provision and the standards achieved by the pupils. The governing body ensures all statutory requirements are met. Safeguarding procedures are top quality, with all staff and members of the governing body trained to a high level, well beyond the basic requirement. The governing body is good at holding the headteacher and staff to account while also providing good support. The school's self-evaluation is both

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rigorous and accurate giving staff and the governing body a clear view on strengths and weaknesses. A good quality and clear development plan is in place. The strong commitment of the staff and the good rate of improvement since the last inspection mean that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, where it is satisfactory, to a good or better level by July 2012 through ensuring that:
 - all lessons contain activities that match precisely the needs and abilities of pupils
 - the pace of work always moves rapidly to sustain the interest of all individuals.
- Improve pupils' skills in ICT by July 2012 through ensuring that sufficient opportunities are planned to enable pupils to use ICT equipment on a frequent basis across the curriculum.

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

Children attain below the expected levels when they start school and show particular weaknesses in their language skills. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and attain average levels by the time they start Year 1. The good progress and achievement continues across the school, with all groups of pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Pupils articulate their ideas well. They show confidence in writing activities, and by the end of Year 2, they use a good range of vocabulary both in their speaking and writing. Most pupils produce neatly joined up writing in their books. Pupils work well to develop good basic skills to help them progress in the future. These skills are well reinforced through the wide range of practical activity undertaken. For example, in an excellent outdoor science lesson for Year 2, pupils worked conscientiously to survey the range of living and non-living things they could find. Pupils gain a good knowledge of letter sounds to help with reading. They also show good ability to use and apply their mathematical skills in practical and problem-solving activities. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils worked well using a variety of methods to measure the lengths of items and group them according to size. While pupils show satisfactory skills in ICT, they do not make sufficient use of ICT to extend their skills and enhance other work they do.

Pupils are fit and healthy and show an excellent knowledge of what constitutes a healthy diet. In personal, social and health education lessons (PSHE), they gain a very good knowledge about aspects of mental health and emotional well-being. Pupils are very involved in helping to make their school a safe place. For example, school and class council members took action to improve playground safety. Parents and carers are confident that their children are very safe and enjoy school. Through their detailed studies, pupils gain a good knowledge of people from cultures different to their own. Attendance is above average. A very small number of pupils struggle to arrive at school punctually and the school is working hard to improve this.

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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	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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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 usually plan lessons well to ensure that there are opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to learn in ways that suit them best. For example, in an outstanding Year 2 English lesson, the teacher skilfully used visual prompts, excellent clear questioning, and active involvement of pupils through partner discussion or writing on whiteboards. This helped pupils work rapidly and make excellent gains in their ability to use letter sounds. Staff are successful in boosting pupils' writing skills through initiatives such as the 'Talk For Writing' work. This has been especially beneficial for the younger pupils, many of whom started school with particularly weak language skills. Much good work is also done to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly to help them overcome speech and language difficulties. Teachers regularly assess pupils and have a clear insight into the performance of all individuals. In the main, they use this information well to ensure activities in lessons match the needs of different groups of pupils. While most lessons across the school are well taught, in the few satisfactory lessons seen, teaching was less effective because the activities provided did not match the needs of the pupils as well as they should. Also, in these sessions, the pace of work was occasionally too slow so that pupils began to lose interest and become restless.

The school's curriculum provision is well enriched through the good range of trips, visitors, links with other partner organisations and extra-curricular activities. The 'Trailblazing'

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initiative to promote outdoor learning opportunities is very successful. For example, in a good Year 2 PSHE lesson to explore the 'right of children to have clean drinking water', pupils working outdoors enacted the role of a Ghanaian lady seeking clean water and rapidly learned about the difficulties for poor people in Africa.

ICT provision is not as well developed as other subjects. There are insufficient planned opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to use computers or other equipment to boost their ICT skills and enhance areas of work studied.

Staff have an excellent understanding of pupils' pastoral needs and cater for these fully and sensitively. Evidence seen show that staff give pupils with difficult social and emotional problems excellent support to help these individuals become confident and happy learners. Staff are vigilant in all areas concerning the safeguarding of pupils and some have specialist skills as 'first aiders'. All activities are rigorously assessed for risk. The very caring, welcoming and happy atmosphere set in the school is strongly appreciated by parents and carers.

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 and senior leaders and managers work closely with all staff to ensure that high expectations are maintained for pupils' achievement and that provision is constantly improved. For example, the classroom accommodation for the Early Years Foundation Stage children has been significantly upgraded to boost learning facilities. Also, there has been a year-on-year improvement in the levels achieved by all groups of pupils. Robust systems to check pupils' progress and set challenging targets ensure that all individuals are helped to be successful and that no discrimination occurs. Staff are alert to spotting any individual who may be falling behind and putting appropriate support in place. Targets for further improvement are ambitious with staff working energetically to achieve these.

The quality of teaching is rigorously monitored across the school. Good use is made of the information gained to help teachers improve their work. However, not all of those with leadership roles are involved in this kind of monitoring and their overview of teaching and learning is therefore limited.

The school works well to maintain good relationships with parents and carers. Their views are regularly surveyed and acted on where appropriate. They are kept regularly informed about their children's progress. Strong liaison is established to advise parents and carers, and to constantly promote their involvement in supporting their children's learning.

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The governing body has full involvement in all self-evaluation and strategic planning. Good systems are in place to involve governors in observing the work of the school and they have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Outstanding provision for safeguarding is underpinned by the excellent level of risk assessment and emphasis on maintaining top quality training for all staff and governors. As a result, all aspects of safety and safeguarding are deeply ingrained in the work of the school, including in the curriculum provision.

The school has good links with other schools and partner organisations and uses these well to boost pupils' learning. The school's provision for promoting community cohesion is good with effective plans constructed that help the school to engage with a range of community groups beyond the school and the immediate community. The pupils' heightened awareness of the plight of other people around the world through their charity fundraising work is one of many examples of the impact of the school's approach in this area.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction processes ensure that children settle into school quickly. Classroom areas are spacious and provide a good range of facilities to support children's work and play. They are constructed and maintained in a way that ensures maximum safety for the children. Children feel completely safe at all times. They also have a strong awareness of keeping healthy, with routines such as washing hands with antiseptic hand gel evident after certain activities. Good teaching ensures that activities are well planned to cater for the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning. Much good work is done by staff to work on children's language skills, noted as being weak

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when they start school, so that children become reasonably confident in talking, and basic reading and writing, by the time they start Year 1. Similarly, they acquire sound basic skills with number work.

Teachers and teaching assistants work hard together to make sure learning is always interesting and fun for children. As a result, lots of smiles and enjoyment are evident around the Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms. A good example of this was noted as children worked well with small video cameras, filming each other's activities and thoroughly enjoying what they produced. The curriculum is well designed to make the most of all opportunities for learning outdoors. A good balance is maintained, with children having opportunities to explore and investigate independently through practical and play opportunities as well as having good opportunities to work in guided activities with adults. Children's behaviour is good and sometimes excellent. They learn to listen well, get on well with each other and develop a mature approach to class activities. The excellent relationships between staff and children ensure that all individuals feel valued and keen to do their best. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. The self-evaluation is accurate and good plans are in place to keep provision improving at a good pace. Assessment is rigorous and the information gained is used well to inform lesson planning. The headteacher carefully monitors the quality of lessons. However, the coordinator for the Early Years Foundation Stage has not yet had the chance to monitor teaching and this restricts her overview of the quality of teaching and learning. Staff are extremely caring and provide strong pastoral support for all children. They are vigilant in ensuring that all safeguarding procedures are followed through rigorously.

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

There was a low return of questionnaires. Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they are very pleased with the school's work. Nearly all of them support the view that their children are happy and safe at school.

A very small minority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire did not agree that their children make enough progress or that they receive enough information about this from the school. During this inspection, lesson observations and the scrutiny of the school's assessment information confirmed that pupils make good progress. In addition, the inspection team judged that there are good systems in place for keeping parents and carers informed, including half-termly updates of pupils' targets, regular meetings for teachers with parents and carers, and clear annual reports about pupils' progress.

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A very small minority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire did not agree that the school meets the particular needs of their children. The inspection team judged the school to be doing a good job in boosting the learning of all groups of pupils, including the more-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

A very small minority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire did not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection team judged that the school's pastoral care is of high quality. During the inspection, staff were noted as being skilled in encouraging pupils to show their best behaviour and to always be friendly and helpful to others.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 250 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	73	16	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	68	17	28	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	37	33	55	2	3	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	32	34	57	4	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	47	30	50	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	38	32	53	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	55	26	43	1	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)	22	37	27	45	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	40	32	53	3	5	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	30	30	50	4	7	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	28	34	57	2	3	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	47	26	43	3	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	58	21	35	2	3	1	2

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



9 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fairfield Infant School, Havant PO9 1AY

Thank you for making us feel welcome at your school. We have judged that yours is a good school. Through talking to you, we know that there are many things that you like about your school.

Here are some of the good things that we found in your school.

- You make a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- We can see that you enjoy school and the well-planned curriculum makes sure you get lots of interesting activities to take part in.
- You are very fit and healthy and know a lot about how to stay this way.
- Good teaching helps you to do well and your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and fun.
- Your behaviour is good and sometimes excellent. You have good attitudes towards learning.
- You all have an excellent understanding about how to stay safe. The adults in the school do a very good job of taking care of you.
- The headteacher, staff and governing body have done well to improve your school and they work hard to make sure it keeps improving.

This is what we have asked the school to do now:

- improve teaching where it is satisfactory, to a good or better level, by making sure that you are kept busy, always have to think hard and give of your best in every lesson
- improve your work in information and communication technology (ICT) by giving you more opportunities to use ICT in different subjects.

All of you can play an important part in helping the school to improve by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin

Lead inspector

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