

Fairway Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106046
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	377344
Inspection dates	5–6 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Jennifer Platt

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Julia Tait
Headteacher	Reverend Lynn Boyle
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Teaching and learning were observed in 12 lessons taught by eight staff. Shorter visits were made to classrooms and observations of other activities took place. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other leaders, two members of the governing body including the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions were held with parents and carers as they accompanied their children to school. Two groups of pupils met with inspectors. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documents including policies, action plans, information about pupils' attainment, learning and progress, arrangements for the care and protection of pupils (safeguarding) and attendance data. Responses to questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and the 72 returned by parents and carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether the learning and progress of all groups of pupils is at least satisfactory across the school, especially for the more-able pupils and boys in mathematics.
- Whether teaching and the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and gives enough attention to teaching basic skills including an understanding of letters and sounds.
- The effectiveness of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and whether assessment is used successfully to ensure good progress.
- Whether judgements that leaders make about the school are accurate and the effectiveness of subsequent actions on outcomes.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. A broadly average proportion of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a very small number from minority ethnic heritages. The school holds Healthy School status, Active mark and the Full International School Award.

Since the previous inspection there have been some staffing difficulties caused by unavoidable absence and several members of the governing body are new. The school has on-site, before- and after-school provision which were not 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Fairway is a happy school that provides a satisfactory quality of education. The school is improving after a dip following the last inspection and has several strengths. This is a caring school where pupils feel safe because they know staff will listen to them and sort out their worries. Pupils have a good understanding of keeping healthy and enjoy many energetic activities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils relate well to each other. Behaviour is good even as the tempo for Christmas increases. Attendance is above average.

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' attainment is broadly average and the school is steadily climbing back to previous higher levels. From starting school with a level of skills broadly in line with expectations, pupils make satisfactory progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle happily because of the welcome they receive. The majority make satisfactory progress but activities do not always allow them to investigate and the learning for the older children is not promoted consistently. Current attainment in reading and writing shows a steady rise in Year 6 and is moving to above average as more pupils exceed the level expected for their age. This improvement is less evident in other classes and more-able pupils do not always make enough progress.

The quality and impact of teaching is satisfactory. Examples of good teaching observed were when lessons were conducted at a brisk pace and the teacher's expectations were high. This enabled pupils to show their keen attitudes to learning and they enjoyed rising to the challenge. However, this effective teaching is inconsistent and the pace slows when work is not sufficiently challenging or questions fail to extend learning. The effective curriculum is much improved with more emphasis on the teaching of basic skills, especially letters and sounds; a previous weakness. The amazing array of trophies on show reflects the richness of extra-curricular activities. Care for pupils is effective, especially for the pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. The school has close links with parents, carers and other agencies which contribute to pupils' well-being. Community cohesion is good, especially the links with other countries.

The headteacher has developed a collaborative approach to management involving all staff in leadership teams. As a result, there is a sense of community and a clearer vision for the future. This is improving the school's own evaluation of its performance and provision which have been too positive. Nevertheless, the school has adopted

several approaches that, although not embedded, are having an impact on outcomes. Thorough tracking is in place and the headteacher has 'raised the bar' with higher expectations of individual progress. Middle leaders are more involved in monitoring but priorities do not focus sharply on outcomes for pupils. The governing body is extending its role through a detailed action plan and training to increase members' skills in challenging the school. Overall, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching and raise attainment by:
 - ensuring that activities in lessons are closely matched to pupils' needs and especially provide challenge for the more-able pupils
 - increasing the pace in lessons and ensuring that pupils are fully engaged in their learning
 - using questions more effectively to include all pupils and assess their needs.

- Improve the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring that children have enough opportunities for independent learning
 - making sure there is a better match of work to ability and a faster pace, especially for children in the Reception class
 - ensuring that priorities for improvement receive sufficient focus in the school's overall development planning.

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders' evaluation and monitoring by:
 - increasing the monitoring role of middle leaders and ensuring that priorities focus more on outcomes with measurable success criteria
 - extending the role of the governing body in making decisions and holding the school to account for pupils' achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The great majority of pupils are keen to learn and are inquisitive when given the opportunity to come up with their own ideas. They enjoy learning and appreciate humour as seen in role play in Year 2. Teachers often encourage discussion but pupils lack confidence in transferring their ideas, especially to their writing. Pupils learn at a good pace when work is challenging and exciting. Pupils in Year 1 grew in confidence to apply their skills in early writing following a carefully planned lesson. However, pupils become bored and on occasions behaviour deteriorates when teaching is less effective. Nevertheless, overall progress is satisfactory and pupils are leaving school at the expected level. The pace of progress is accelerating in Year 6 where teaching is strongest. English is improving at a slightly faster rate than mathematics as changes to writing start to reap benefits. Results in writing at the

end of Year 2 in the 2011 assessments were above average reflecting good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. There are examples of good progress for these pupils when the school has helped them overcome difficulties in their lives and become more receptive to learning. Although the school's data show a difference between the achievement of boys and girls there is no pattern of inequality. More-able pupils now make better progress in Year 6 but these pupils do not always make enough progress in other classes, especially in Key Stage 1.

Pupils are proud of their school and appreciate the care they receive. The majority make a positive contribution to the happy atmosphere by their politeness and they are extremely courteous to visitors. Many carry out responsibilities in school most efficiently. Considerable funds are raised for a variety of charities reflecting pupils' awareness of their role in helping others. They engage well with the local community and musical activities are widespread. Pupils display empathy for others although a few experience difficulty in recognising how their actions can upset others. They recognise they are part of a multicultural society and value the beliefs and cultures of others.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	3
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	
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	3
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Positive features were seen in all lessons observed. Relationships are supportive and pupils feel able to confide in staff when they are struggling. Lessons are organised efficiently and for the most part adult support is effective because pupils are clearly versed in what is expected of them. In good lessons, teachers generate enthusiasm including a high level of challenge. Year 6 pupils learn well through effective discussion with their peers and probing questions that encouraged in depth thinking. However, in other less effective lessons learning was slower especially when tasks did not match levels of ability and worksheets were used which, although often at different levels, did not fully extend learning. In some lessons there is too much teacher input and questions are not directed to individual pupils or sufficiently probing. As a result, pupils become compliant rather than enthusiastic. Marking is

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

regular and often tells pupils how to improve. Pupils have targets although reference to them is not always enough to sharpen pupils’ awareness of how to improve.

The curriculum is planned very thoroughly and shows a rich set of learning experiences. Teachers collaborate to audit the effectiveness of themes and to ensure that the teaching of skills receives enough attention. This is starting to improve pupils’ progress especially in English with more opportunities to write extended pieces of work. Improved tracking is ensuring that interventions are more closely targeted to pupils who are seen to be falling behind. The school grasps every opportunity to get involved in exciting events. For example, the whole school took part in running in an Olympic Runathon. This not only contributed to their growing enthusiasm for the Olympic Games but also their understanding of keeping healthy. Visits and visitors are closely linked to topics in lessons and so make learning more purposeful. The school has earned national recognition for outstanding development in the cultural dimension of the curriculum.

A culture of care is established and as the headteacher says the school ‘encourages pupils to be anything they want to be’. With this in mind, visitors share the achievements in their life. For example, an ex pupil inspired pupils about her journey to become a radio presenter. The focus on personal development is good and there is targeted support for groups of pupils who may be vulnerable because of their circumstances. Rigorous attention to attendance leads to it being above average although not all pupils are consistently punctual.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, supported by other leaders, has successfully implemented changes that are now leading to a steady rise in attainment. Middle leaders are improving their monitoring skills. Although it is not always easy to measure success in the targets set and ensure that priorities focus more on outcomes, new approaches are reaping benefits. Evidence is clear in improved attainment in writing in Year 6. Tracking procedures are very thorough and are shared as an example of good practice with other schools. The school now has an informed picture of pupils’ progress. In some cases the judgments about the best progress has been given more weight than overall progress leading to some evaluations the school makes about itself being more positive than inspection evidence shows. The drive to improve is rising with more challenging targets being set and staff being held more to account for pupils’ progress. Teaching is monitored regularly although areas of weakness have not been thoroughly resolved. Nevertheless, management is more secure now and steadily bringing about improvement.

The governing body provides satisfactory support and carries out its role in an organised and efficient manner. New members of the governing body have been welcomed and an audit of strengths has been carried out to exploit all skills. A plan is in place to develop further the role of governors. Training is in place to improve their skills in the analysis of data in decision making and holding the school to account for pupils’ achievement. Safeguarding procedures are fully met and staff are checked carefully to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

This is a harmonious community because discrimination is not tolerated. The promotion of equal opportunities through procedures to close the gap between different groups of pupils is satisfactory. Relationships with parents and carers are good and they are very well informed about school life. Effective links with other agencies not only support the care of pupils but also enable pupils to experience a wide range of activities that would otherwise not be available. For example, pupils enjoy fencing and music. The school promotes community cohesion effectively based on an initial audit of the school’s context. As a result, the school recognises its own mainly monocultural setting and does much to promote links wider than the school and local community. The Full International School Award has established partnerships with schools in France, Israel and Africa.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are happy in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the caring relationships established. They settle well and make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. However, few children reach beyond the expected level by the time they start in Year 1. Plans identify a good choice of independent learning and free choice activities. However, in practice because of the number of adult-led activities available children veer more to working with an adult. Tasks often capture children’s enthusiasm, such as making decorations for their Christmas tree and writing a letter to Father Christmas. Children enjoy games but occasionally these are time consuming or the equipment makes it difficult for them to follow the instructions on their own.

In Reception, when children are taught as a whole class, such as for numeracy, there is a lack of good planning to match work to their needs. Role play in the Post Office is a popular feature and children extend their ability to take on other roles and interact with each other. Letters and sounds are taught regularly in small groups but again the match of work to ability is not always accurate, especially for the older children who have been in the school since Nursery and are able to move at a faster pace. The school’s leadership teams are responsible for managing the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although the setting is included in the school’s focus on teaching letters and sounds, other areas of learning and priorities do not receive enough attention in the whole school development plan. Nevertheless, staff meet regularly to plan and improve provision. The detailed learning profiles include a rich range of experiences and are appreciated by parents and carers.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	3
Taking into account:	3
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

About a third of parents and carers returned the questionnaires seeking their views of the school. They are happy that their children enjoy school and are confident that they are safe in school. These positive views were endorsed by inspectors. A few parents and carers had individual concerns which were shared anonymously with the headteacher and action is being put in place to address these issues in a general way. Inspection evidence also agrees with parents and carers that their children are encouraged to have a healthy lifestyle and behaviour is good. However, evidence indicated that some areas judged by the school to be good, including aspects of provision and overall outcomes, are satisfactory rather than good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fairway 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 209 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	78	16	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	74	19	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	57	28	39	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	57	29	40	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	71	19	26	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	69	19	26	2	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	56	29	40	3	4	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)	34	47	35	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	57	29	40	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	44	32	44	4	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	40	33	46	6	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	42	58	24	33	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	69	21	29	0	0	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 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



7 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fairway Primary School, Stockport SK2 5DR

Thank you for the friendly way you welcomed the inspectors to your school. We appreciated you giving up your playtime to talk to us. It was good to see how well you behave and show respect to visitors and each other. You are very energetic at play and have achieved many successes in local sporting competitions. Congratulations on being the national leaders in cheer leading!

We judge your school to be satisfactory. It has several good features, especially in the care provided that enables you to feel safe. The school offers you a good range of interesting activities and you learn a lot about other cultures through many links with other schools. It is not surprising your attendance is higher than in many schools. A few of you could be more punctual, so please remember to allow time to walk down that long path. You are making satisfactory progress and overall attainment as you leave school is in line with the national average.

To help your school become even better, I have asked your headteacher and members of the governing body to:

- help you make more progress by checking teaching is always good and especially challenges all of you to achieve as much as possible
- make sure that the children in the Nursery and Reception classes make enough progress and it is clear how staff intend to improve provision for these children
- make sure that leaders and members of the governing body monitor what is happening in school and set priorities that will help you to make even more progress.

You can help by continuing with your hard work and enthusiasm for learning. I am sure you will all have some wonderful memories of school, especially the exciting events at Christmas.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Platt
Lead inspector

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