

# Fairfield Community Primary School

Rochdale Old Road, Bury, Lancashire, BL9 7SD

**Inspection dates** 20–21 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not always make good enough progress, particularly disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, and those who are supported by the pupil premium.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Teachers do not have high enough expectations about what pupils can achieve. They do not always use information about how well pupils are learning to set work which is challenging enough for pupils of all abilities.
- Marking does not always make it clear enough to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- Leaders do not make checks on pupils' progress rigorously enough. As a result, they are not able to react quickly enough to deal with any underperformance.
- Leaders have been slow to take action when teachers have been underperforming, and have not dealt with the differences in the quality of teaching.
- Leaders are overly generous in their judgements of how well the school is performing.
- Governors do not have enough information about the school's performance to be able to provide sufficient challenge.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of good teaching and a stimulating learning environment.
- Pupils feel very safe in school, because adults provide good levels of care and look after them well.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have good manners, treat each other and adults with respect, and behave well in lessons and at break time. They enjoy school and are proud to be part of the school community.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed all teachers, and parts of 16 lessons. Two lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, and took into account the quality of the work and marking in their books.
- Opportunities were taken to talk to pupils in lessons, around school, and a formal discussion was held with members of the school council. Inspectors listened to the views of parents as they were bringing their children into school, and took into account 29 responses to the online parents' questionnaire (Parent View).
- Meetings were held with school leaders, governors and with a representative of the local authority; and inspectors also considered responses to a staff questionnaire.
- A range of documentation was examined. These included minutes of meetings, records of monitoring activities such as lesson observations, analysis of behaviour records, improvement plans and school data tracking pupils' progress. Inspectors also observed the work of the breakfast club.

## Inspection team

Christine Birchall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stefan Lord	Additional Inspector
Susan Barkway	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. It has an Early Years Foundation Stage unit which provides for both Nursery and Reception-age children.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is lower than average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, or who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is higher than average. Pupil premium funding is provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils who are looked after by the local authority and the children of military personnel. In this school, the majority of pupils entitled to the pupil premium are those known to be eligible for free school meals, but there are also a small number of looked after children and a child of military personnel.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has on-site, before- and after-school care, which is managed by the governing body.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good by:
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations about what pupils can achieve and use pupils' responses in lessons to refocus activities when necessary so all pupils make good progress
  - ensuring teachers make it clear in each lesson what they want pupils to learn and how pupils will know when they have been successful and provide clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve
  - ensuring that teachers use information about how well pupils are learning to provide activities which are appropriate for all pupils, particularly disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium
  - taking swift action to tackle teacher underperformance, including making sure that teachers are set challenging targets based on the achievement of pupils in their classes.
- Accelerate progress in Years 3 to 6, particularly for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium, by:
  - making sure that teachers' assessment of how well pupils are learning is accurate
  - developing robust systems for leaders to check how well pupils are doing, so that any underachievement can be quickly addressed
  - ensuring that all pupils have opportunities to develop their extended writing skills in English, to solve real-life problems in mathematics and to work by themselves.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that systems for checking how well the school is performing are rigorous and that improvement plans are well focused with clear timescales
  - using accurate information about how well the school is doing to address areas of weakness
  - ensure governors have a good understanding of what they need to do to support and challenge school leaders.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children typically enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are below those expected for their age. As a result of good teaching, an exciting learning environment, and teachers who have a good understanding of how well the children are learning, they make good progress in their early years at school. By the end of Year 2, their achievement is broadly in line with national expectations.
- However, achievement overall requires improvement. Good progress is not sustained throughout Years 3 to 6. Pupils do not achieve consistently well in all subjects and year groups, particularly disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Although there are variations across the school, the differences between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium and those who are not, in English and mathematics, are generally wider than the differences nationally. This is because leaders are not rigorous enough in their checks on how well different groups of pupils are achieving, and teachers do not always have high enough expectations or set work which is challenging enough.
- Teachers place great emphasis on reading and encourage pupils to read at home. As a result, pupils enjoy reading and read regularly. By the end of Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make), successfully to help them to work out new words. By the end of Year 6, pupils read fluently and with expression.
- Progress in writing, however, is typically slower than in reading. Work in pupils' books indicates that they are not always given enough opportunity to do extended pieces of writing, or to practise their writing skills across the curriculum. Progress in mathematics tends to be faster than in English. However, pupils are not always given enough opportunities to use their mathematics skills to solve real-life problems.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Although inspectors saw some examples of good teaching, too many lessons were not good and work and marking in pupils' books indicate that teaching over time requires improvement.
- Teachers do not provide sufficient clarity in lessons about what they want pupils to learn, or how pupils of differing abilities will know when they have been successful. They do not make good use of information about how well pupils have learned to set work which is closely matched to their abilities. In too many lessons, activities lack challenge and do not move pupils' learning forward quickly enough; this includes work for pupils with special educational needs, where additional activities in support groups are often too easy. Pupils do not always have enough opportunity to develop their skills in working on their own.
- Although teachers use strategies to check how well pupils are learning in lessons, they do not use the responses well enough to refocus the teaching when necessary and ensure that all pupils make good progress. Work in books is not always assessed accurately, and as a result, teachers are not as effective as they should be in helping pupils to know what to do to improve.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Teachers care for pupils well, and this creates a secure environment for learning in which pupils are confident to ask questions and contribute to discussion. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to do well.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Teachers know the pupils well, and provide a range of exciting activities which motivate and challenge children. Consequently, children's skills, particularly social and emotional, develop rapidly.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are very happy in school and say that they feel safe because they know that teachers look after them. Parents agree that their children are safe and well looked after. Pupils enjoy school, and, as a result, attendance is slightly above average and pupils are punctual. The breakfast club ensures that pupils get a positive start to the school day.
- The good levels of care provided by teachers and the consistent use of behaviour management strategies ensure that pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They take pride in their work and want to do well. They are confident to ask and answer questions and to contribute to discussions.
- Behaviour around school is as good as it is in lessons. Pupils treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and are absolutely clear about the school's rules and expectations of behaviour. As a result, the school is calm and orderly and the atmosphere is harmonious, which makes a very positive contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- Pupils have been provided with a range of strategies to keep themselves safe, and understand, for example, about road safety and e-safety. They are well aware of the different forms that bullying can take, but say that it is extremely rare and that teachers will always deal with it.
- Although pupils work well in lessons they are not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in working by themselves. Sometimes when lessons are not good, pupils become passive and are not actively involved in their learning.

**The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The systems for checking how well the school is doing are not rigorous enough. As a result, leaders have an overly generous view of the school's performance. This means that priorities for improvement are not always accurate or sufficiently well focused, and improvement plans lack clear timescales or criteria to measure success.
- Systems for tracking how well pupils and groups of pupils are doing are not robust enough. Meetings with teachers to hold them to account for the progress of pupils in their classes are not frequent enough. As a result, variations in progress for different groups of pupils, classes or subjects are not identified quickly enough, and leaders have not properly evaluated the impact of pupil premium funding.
- Leaders observe lessons, but feedback to teachers is not always clear enough to help them to improve their performance. Teachers are not set challenging enough targets linked to the progress of pupils in their classes. Although they are given opportunities to attend courses, not enough impact was observed in lessons. As a result, the quality of teaching is not improving rapidly.
- The school provides an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, including visits to places of educational interest, which motivate and excite pupils. However, the curriculum overall requires improvement because it does not meet the needs of all pupils so that all are able to make good progress.
- Leaders have developed very effective strategies for managing and supporting pupils' behaviour which are understood and consistently applied by all teachers. Adults are passionate in their support for pupils and provide high levels of care, liaising well with parents and outside agencies as necessary. As a result, the school is a harmonious community and many barriers which can prevent pupils from learning have been removed. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted well. However, the promotion of equal opportunities requires improvement overall because different groups of pupils do not all make good progress.
- The local authority has identified the school as one which is capable of managing its own improvement and has therefore adopted a 'light touch' approach to monitoring the school's performance.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance requires improvement. Governors are very committed to the school and are passionate about supporting the social and emotional needs of the pupils. They know that behaviour is a strength of the school. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met. They also understand how the pupil premium is spent, but they are not aware of whether it is having any impact. They are not provided with enough accurate information about how well pupils are doing to enable them to hold leaders fully to account for pupil progress. Nor are they fully aware of whether targets for teachers are being used as an effective tool to improve teachers' performance or whether pay increases for individual teachers are used well as a reward for good teaching.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105287
<b>Local authority</b>	Bury
<b>Inspection number</b>	402973

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	260
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	D Miller
<b>Headteacher</b>	C Ashley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2007
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