

Fairview Community Primary School

Drewery Drive, Wigmore, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 0NU

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement across Key Stage 2 in recent years has not been good enough.
- Teaching is not consistently good in Key Stage 2. Teachers are not always clear what good learning looks like in their classes. They do not use assessment well in lessons to adapt activities to help pupils make the best possible progress.
- Pupils are not always encouraged to take an active part in lessons through discussing their ideas with each other. This means not all pupils are included or thinking as deeply as they could about what teachers explain to them.
- Teachers do not make the best use of other adults in the classroom to make sure pupils do their best thinking and learning.
- Sometimes, pupils are too dependent on adult support. As a result, when expected to work on their own, they do not produce their best, or enough, work.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress and attain above average standards.
- Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Pupils get off to a good start when they first join the school and make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- Leaders and managers have taken strong and effective action over the last year which has started to raise achievement in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils love coming to school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about how the school cares for their children. As a result, attendance is well above average.
- Pupils are safe and their individual needs are well known to staff. The school offers a very high level of care and support to those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They observed 27 lessons, three of them jointly with the deputy headteacher, and made brief visits to every class with the assistant headteacher to look at the learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They looked at the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents covering safeguarding and child protection, attendance, behaviour, pupils' progress and attainment and the work of the governing body, as well as the school improvement plan and the arrangements for checking the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors considered 42 questionnaires completed by staff. They consulted the Parent View website, where 51 parents and carers had posted responses to the on-line questionnaire. Inspectors also received and considered two letters and one email.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Julie Winyard, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

George Long

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than an average-sized primary school. Its Early Years Foundation Stage includes children of both Nursery and Reception age.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much lower than the national average, as is the proportion for whom English is an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is lower than average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational need is above average.
- In 2012 the school met the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part way through the year is slightly above average.
- Since the last inspection there have been considerable staff changes in Key Stage 2.
- The headteacher has been absent from the school for periods of weeks over the last two years due to serious illness.
- The school has achieved a Silver Award for Eco Schools and membership of the Get Set Network for Olympic and Paralympic Values.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils' progress accelerates, particularly at Key Stage 2, by making sure that:
 - all teachers understand what good learning looks like in their year groups
 - teachers use assessment well in lessons to adapt their teaching and activities so that pupils make the best possible progress
 - pupils take responsibility for doing their best work at all times, even when they are not supported by an adult
 - pupils are encouraged to take a more active part in lessons through discussing their ideas with each other
 - teachers make the best use of other adults in the classroom at all times.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils join the school with knowledge and skills that are similar to those expected for their age. They get off to a good start in the Nursery and make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- They continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 are achieving above national expectations. However, for the last few years, progress has slowed significantly in Key Stage 2. As a result, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has dropped to around average.
- The achievement of current pupils in Key Stage 2 shows improvement in both mathematics and English. This is because the school has recognised that pupils do not achieve as well as they should from their good results in Year 2 and has taken action to put this right.
- The current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve above national expectations, showing at least good, and sometimes rapid, progress from their starting points at the end of Key Stage 1.
- In past years girls have outperformed boys in English and boys have done better than girls in mathematics. The records for current pupils show there is no longer any significant variation between boys and girls.
- Overall, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve in line with other pupils. At times they make good progress because their needs are identified rapidly and accurately and good support is put in place to meet these needs.
- The small numbers of pupils eligible for the pupil premium achieve in line with other pupils in the school in English and mathematics and their attainment is similar. This is because they are given the help they need to make good progress. This is also true of pupils who join the school at different times during the school year.
- Pupils who have English as an additional language are given good support. Overall, they make similar progress to other pupils as they move through the school.
- Scores in the 2012 Year 1 national check on standards in phonics (the sounds letters make) were above the national average. The school's records show that pupils are likely to be above average this year as well. This is because pupils have daily phonics lessons and read regularly to an adult at home and at school.
- Less able pupils in Year 2 use their phonic skills to sound out words. They are able to blend sounds together and use their understanding of the story to work out new words. They enjoy reading, although are not yet fluent readers. Less able readers in Year 6 read with confidence but do not know the levels they are working at and are not always motivated to read. Nevertheless, the most able readers in Year 6 read widely, are confident and enjoy reading.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is good in the Nursery, Reception groups and Key Stage 1, but it requires improvement overall because it is inconsistent in Key Stage 2. This slows pupils' progress.
- Where teaching is not good, teachers do not show good understanding of how pupils learn well. They do not involve all pupils in thinking about the questions they ask and do not give them the opportunity to talk through their ideas with each other. As a result, most pupils sit passively whilst one or two give their answers. Teachers do not ask all pupils to think about answers offered and why this is good or not. They do not always ask pupils to explain what they mean and how they came up with their answer.
- In some lessons teachers do not use their assessment of pupils' understanding effectively and so do not change activities to meet pupils' learning needs.
- Pupils do not always understand that they are expected to do their best learning even when they are not being supported by an adult. In some lessons other adults are not used as well as they

could be throughout the lesson. For example, in one lesson, higher ability pupils stayed on the carpet listening to the teacher's very detailed instructions for every group rather than going off with a member of support staff to start their task straight away. This held back the progress they made in that lesson.

- Most marking is good. Pupils say teachers' comments are helpful, but they are not always given enough time in every class to make changes to improve their work as a result of these comments.
- Where teaching is good or outstanding, pupils make at least good progress because teachers have high expectations for what they can achieve in the lesson. Pupils talk to each other about their learning and work well together, producing good quality work by the end of the lesson.
- Teachers give good support to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and the small number of pupils who have English as an additional language. Teaching assistants are well trained and informed about pupils' needs and are given tasks that help these pupils to do well. Along with other adult volunteers, they provide help for individuals or small groups, either inside the classroom or nearby. Pupils who join the school part way through a school year receive good support to help them settle in.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes pupils enjoy learning because they are given good opportunities to work on topics they have chosen as well as those chosen by the teachers. Pupils have good opportunities to learn in the well organised outside area but this happens mainly in the afternoons and has not yet been extended to morning activities. Other adults work well with groups but do not always move around the classroom enough. As a result, some opportunities to extend pupils' thinking are lost.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Pupils' behaviour is typically good and pupils enjoy learning. Pupils are proud of their school and talk with great enthusiasm about being 'A Star of the Week' and how this motivates them to behave well and work hard.
- Pupils are thoughtful and polite. They show respect to others and make a significant contribution to the school's calm, orderly environment. Pupils have a high regard for all the adults in the school and these good relationships mean they feel confident to ask for help when they need this. They say their views are listened to and things have changed in school as a result of their suggestions.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are well looked after. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and talk confidently about how to use the internet safely.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They say that incidents of bullying are rare and, if they happen, staff deal with this effectively. The school takes immediate action to tackle any form of discrimination.
- Pupils enjoy learning and love coming to school. Parents spoken to during the inspection, responses to Parent View and the letters received by the inspection team make it clear that their children are happy and well looked after. As a result, attendance is high when compared to national figures. Pupils understand the importance of arriving on time.

The leadership and management

are good

- During the headteacher's sometimes long periods of absence due to serious illness, the deputy headteacher and recently appointed assistant headteacher have led the school well. They have all recognised that pupils do not make good enough progress or attain as well as they should in Key Stage 2. They have taken strong and effective action to reverse this trend but this did not take effect soon enough to make a difference to last year's test results.
- This year the new system for tracking pupils' progress and more frequent checks, including very

challenging meetings with teachers to check on pupils' progress, have resulted in good progress in Year 6 and improving progress in the rest of Key Stage 2.

- The headteacher gives good leadership and drives improvement. The local authority, senior leaders and governors have strong confidence in her ability to lead the school well.
 - Most other leaders in the school are good. They regularly check pupils' work and make sure progress is improving in their subjects and key stages by checking pupils' work in their books. For example, the mathematics leader has worked with staff to improve the school's approach to teaching number work from Nursery to Year 6. This has contributed strongly to improving pupils' achievement in mathematics.
 - The leader for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has reviewed the achievement of these pupils thoroughly and very effectively over the last year. This has resulted in good progress for these pupils from their starting points.
 - There have been a lot of changes in teachers in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. This is because teachers start as newly qualified teachers (NQT) at the school and, for a variety of reasons, move away after three or four years. Senior leaders and governors are reviewing their approach to employing teachers and how they keep good teachers in the school so that pupils' learning is not put at risk.
 - All staff take part in performance management and have targets that are closely linked to pupils' achievement. They say they find these targets help them to improve their work. However, not all teachers find the feedback they get following observations of their teaching helpful. This is because it is not always focused sharply enough on how pupils learn well.
 - Pupils enjoy all the subjects they are taught at school because the school makes sure that topics in all year groups are matched to pupils' interests as well as teaching them the skills pupils need for everyday life. There are lots of opportunities to visit interesting places and hear from expert visitors linked to these topics.
 - Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Both in assemblies and in class, pupils are given opportunities to think about what they are doing and why. They collaborate well when they are given clear directions about what they must achieve by the end of a lesson.
 - All safeguarding policies and procedures are fully in place and meet national requirements.
 - The school staff value the good support given by the local authority, especially during the headteacher's absence. They say there is not enough good quality general training for teachers and, as a result, have bought in training from other sources. However, training on the new approaches to spelling and grammar, and on how to teach phonics, has been given by the local authority and teachers have found this helpful. Senior leaders appreciate the challenge the local authority gives them. They say this has helped them to take a long hard look at underachievement in Key Stage 2 and take effective action to deal with this.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are enthusiastic and very active in their support of the school. For example, they have given good support to the school and to the headteacher during her absence. They say their understanding of information about pupils' achievement has improved recently thanks to good joint training from the local authority and the school and through looking at the school's Dashboard (a visual presentation of attainment and progress information for every school on the Ofsted website). As a result, they have challenged senior leaders about pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2. Governors have a secure awareness of the quality of teaching across the school. They take their duties around performance management seriously and make well informed decisions about teachers' pay. They use pupil premium funding effectively to help pupils eligible for this achieve well. They make sure that safeguarding requirements are met and that all pupils are safe in the school.
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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

Unique reference number	134904
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	412231

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	601
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sean Bodkin
Headteacher	Mrs Deborah Willis
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 May 2010
Telephone number	01634 338710
Fax number	01634 268550
Email address	office@fairviewprimary.medway.sch.uk

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