

# Fernhurst Primary School

Haslemere Road, Fernhurst, Haslemere, GU27 3EA

## Inspection dates

10–11 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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' achievement across the school is uneven in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Too few pupils attain higher levels in Reception and, in Key Stage 1, in mathematics.
- Less-able pupils in Key Stage 1 do not make good progress in phonics (knowledge of letters and their sounds) and they read hesitantly.
- Weaknesses in handwriting, spelling and punctuation limit some pupils' writing in Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. Teachers do not always help pupils to apply phonics when spelling.
- Children in Reception are not consistently challenged when learning through play.
- The pace of improvement since the previous inspection has not been fast enough.
- Some leaders have not been in post long enough to have had a strong impact on making sure aspects of English and mathematics teaching help pupils to make good progress.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Progress for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is rapid as a result of strong teaching. Standards of attainment in Year 6 are rising and are now above average.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe, behave well and show respect to each other and adults.
- Staff work together with a clear sense of purpose and morale is high. New staff have settled well.
- Pupils make good progress in using and applying their technology skills across different subjects.
- The headteacher provides clear leadership and has taken firm and effective action to reorganise and build a new senior team.
- Governors hold the school to account well. They have steered the school through a difficult period of staffing.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, all of which were jointly observed with the headteacher, and listened to a sample of pupils read from Years 1 and 2.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, looked at a range of their work and examined the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teachers and a local authority representative.
- The inspector considered the 50 responses to the online Parent View survey, the school's own most recent parents' questionnaire and a few letters from parents and carers.
- The inspector considered responses to the 17 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders' observations of teaching.

## Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- Fernhurst Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school, although the number of pupils on roll has increased in recent years.
- There are six classes. Most pupils are taught in single-age classes although pupils in Years 4 , 5 and 6 are taught in two mixed-age classes.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British and few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for certain groups such as looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up his post in January 2011. There have been some recent staffing changes, including at senior level. There is a new acting deputy headteacher and a permanent Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 leader started this September.
- The school provides pupils with daily breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Two extra classrooms are currently being built.
- The pre-school nursery on the school's premises is not managed by the governing body and was not inspected at this time. The inspection report may be found on the Ofsted website.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - providing greater levels of challenge for children in Reception during learning through play, especially in developing their skills in reading, writing and mathematics
  - making sure phonics is taught to less-able pupils at the right level of difficulty
  - enabling pupils to apply their phonics skills consistently when reading and writing and giving parents and carers sufficient information to help their children read at home.
- Raise achievement and accelerate progress by:
  - consistently challenging more-able pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 to reach the higher levels of attainment, especially in mathematics
  - improving handwriting, spelling and punctuation for some pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Improve the effectiveness of some leaders by:
  - making sure they play a full part in improving aspects of English and mathematics teaching
  - managing teaching assistants more effectively and, where necessary, giving training to improve the support they give.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement is not good because it is still too inconsistent across year groups.
- Although attainment and progress in Year 6 declined in 2012, especially in mathematics, these issues have been addressed. Pupils are now making accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 5 and 6.
- Children join Reception with knowledge and skills which are generally typical of those for their age. They settle quickly but their progress slows during learning through play when activities are insufficiently challenging, especially for developing their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. They enter Year 1 with average standards but too few reach higher levels, especially in writing.
- National phonics checks show Year 1 pupils' attainment has exceeded national figures for the past two years. However, less-able pupils do not make enough progress in learning phonics because activities are sometimes too hard and not matched well enough to their previous attainment. Progress is also uneven for pupils of other abilities because teachers do not enable pupils to apply their phonics skills consistently when reading and writing.
- Attainment in Year 2 has been average over time, including in reading. In reading, writing and mathematics, too few pupils reach the nationally expected standard though some exceed it. In mathematics not enough pupils reach the higher levels of attainment and this stems back to a lack of challenge, especially in Reception.
- In Key Stage 1, less-able pupils are not consistently given enough opportunities to practise their sounds before reading to an adult. This causes them to lack confidence when blending sounds to read simple words and some read hesitantly. Pupils' home-school reading records do not include sufficient information about the key sounds and letters they should know, which limits parents' and carers' ability to help their children.
- Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 continues to be uneven. There has been some historic underachievement for pupils in Years 3 and 4 in writing. Better teaching throughout Key Stage 2 has begun to tackle this but untidy handwriting coupled with spelling and punctuation weaknesses are limiting some pupils.
- The attainment of Year 6 pupils in national tests has been average in reading, writing and mathematics over the past three years. The results for 2013 show improvement to above average standards in reading and mathematics although they are still average in writing. Pupils' work, lesson observations and the school's data show that pupils' progress is rapid in Years 5 and 6.
- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in applying their information and communication technology skills to help them learn in other subjects.
- Small-group teaching speeds up the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the few who speak English as an additional language. These pupils' progress is rapid in Years 5 and 6. However, the overall progress of these groups is similar to that of their peers. It is uneven due to inconsistencies in class teaching in other year groups.
- Those supported by the pupil premium are currently making progress similar to that of their peers. In last year's Year 6 tests, their attainment improved to above average and was similar to that of their peers. There were no gaps in their attainment compared with other pupils' in English and mathematics. In Key Stage 1, eligible pupils' attainment improved as well and was similar to that of their peers.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not promote consistently good progress in all year groups.
- The school's own evaluations of teaching show that some teaching in the past has had a negative impact on pupils' performance. Teaching has improved, particularly in Years 5 and 6, but is not yet helping younger pupils to make good progress.
- In Reception there is insufficient planning for stimulating, purposeful play, including for developing children's skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Children's use of activities is not always checked carefully enough. Outdoor space and learning resources are currently limited but the redevelopment of the outdoor area is planned as building work progresses.
- In Key Stage 1, class teaching of phonics to the whole ability range does not enable teachers to match work readily to less-able pupils' needs. Tasks for them are often too hard although they are usually well matched for pupils of other abilities, including the more able.
- In both Reception and Year 1, teachers do not consistently enable pupils to apply their phonics knowledge when reading and writing.
- Teachers provide interesting activities and manage their pupils well. Most have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' achievement.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work in English and mathematics is improving and pupils are usually clear about their targets and what they are doing well and how they need to improve.
- In the best lessons seen in Key Stage 2, teachers built up pupils' learning extremely well and all pupils made rapid progress. For example, in an outstanding Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils of all abilities very successfully learned to construct mathematical charts from data they had previously collected. Careful planning meant that more-able pupils learned to interpret charts which used more advanced mathematical scales.
- There are examples of teaching assistants working well with pupils, such as helping to keep them focused on their work and enabling disabled pupils to take some responsibility for their learning. However, their help varies and leaders have not always made sure that they have the necessary skills, for example, when supporting small groups of younger pupils in literacy.

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

- Relationships are extremely good and pupils from different backgrounds get on very well together. This is because the school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are thoughtful and considerate of each other and show respect, courtesy and kindness regardless of age, race or disability.
- There is a very positive ethos within the school and pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are keen to learn and, from the earliest days in Reception, children develop good social skills and share resources and take some responsibility for their own learning.
- Pupils behave well. The school has worked successfully to carry out robust procedures for promoting good behaviour. Parents and carers who expressed a view also say that behaviour is typically good and that their children are safe and happy.
- There have been no exclusions for the last two years, which is a marked improvement on previous years. Pupils who have previously displayed challenging behaviour are helped very well and disruptions to learning are extremely unusual.
- Pupils' behaviour is not outstanding because when learning activities fail to interest them or are not well matched to their needs, a few pupils do not fully engage in tasks. At times less-able pupils are too passive because adults do too much for them.
- Pupils feel very safe and have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, such as internet bullying and name calling and say that bullying is very rare. They trust adults to help them if they have a problem and feel secure knowing that they can talk to someone and be taken seriously.
- Pupils' attendance is average although improving. The school has stringent attendance procedures and works closely with the few families who do not send their children to school as

regularly as they should.

- The breakfast and after-school clubs provide a happy and safe start to the school day.

## The leadership and management

## require improvement

- Leaders are ambitious and determined to bring about improvements. The headteacher gives strong leadership and has taken decisive steps to build a new senior team. However, new appointments have not yet had time to have a full impact on raising pupils' progress and attainment across the whole school.
- Staffing inconsistencies, including at senior levels, have limited the pace of school improvement. While some pupils make good progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6, this is not consistent for all groups across the school.
- Recent appointments, including that of the acting deputy headteacher, have strengthened the senior team and are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2.
- Staff changes have led to a recent review of teachers with leadership responsibilities in order to make sure they have a recognisable impact on aspects of English and mathematics teaching across the whole school. New systems enable these leaders to take a fuller role in raising pupils' achievement.
- Staff are held to account for pupils' performance. Performance targets are set and regularly reviewed so that staff know and understand how well they are doing. Pay is linked to the level at which teachers perform.
- Systematic monitoring of teaching and staff training are helping to improve the quality of teaching in the school, especially in Key Stage 2.
- The local authority has provided proportionate support in assisting the headteacher and governors in taking effective actions to overcome staffing issues which have hampered the pace of school improvement. The school has found this support very helpful.
- Activities which involve pupils learning about others' beliefs promote tolerance and understanding of ethnicity and diversity. All pupils are treated equally, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, who make similar progress to their peers. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The curriculum has been overhauled, is relevant to pupils' interests and contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school and their mature attitudes. A wide range of sporting activities, including cricket, rugby and soccer as well as musical activities and educational visits help to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is using its primary school sport funding to employ more sports coaches and to increase professional training for staff in physical education. It has plans to measure the impact of this work.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has improved considerably in the last year under the leadership of a new Chair of the Governing Body and vice chair. They have reorganised committees so that governors' expertise is used more effectively to support and challenge the school. Governors are ambitious and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have helped to steer the school well through a difficult period of staffing. They examine pupils' progress and know how it compares nationally. Governors' training has increased their capacity to challenge and hold the school to account. They have a sharpened view of performance, including teaching. They understand the link between performance, teachers' salary progression and the targets being set by senior leaders to improve teaching. They know what the school is doing to tackle underperformance. They have managed financial resources wisely and effectively to make new leadership appointments and have set demanding targets for the headteacher. Governors have a detailed knowledge of how the pupil premium is spent and its impact. They have produced good plans for spending the new primary school sports funding to improve provision and promote pupils' good health. Safeguarding requirements are fully met.

## 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>	125877
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	426516

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	155
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gary Parkes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01428 653144
<b>Fax number</b>	01428 653770
<b>Email address</b>	office@fernhurst.w-sussex.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

