

# Fairway Infant School

The Fairway, Copthorne, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 3QD

**Inspection dates** 24–25 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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		Require improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching has not been consistently good enough in Years 1 and 2 over time so that pupils make rapid enough progress. As a result, attainment is below average overall and the good start made in Reception is being wasted.
- The information teachers collect about how well pupils are doing is not used well enough to set work at the right levels to challenge all pupils of different abilities, particularly the most able.
- At times, teachers' introductions to lessons and their explanations are too long and this limits the time pupils have to work on their own or find things out for themselves. Some lessons focus on the activity pupils are going to do rather than on what they are going to learn.
- Planning does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in solving problems nor literacy competencies to be sufficiently developed to improve pupils' writing.
- Teachers do not have enough regular opportunities to learn from good or better teachers.
- Subject leaders do not have the fully developed skills or planned opportunities they need to monitor and drive improvement.
- Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching; this work has not yet been effective enough to ensure teaching helps all pupils make consistently good progress.
- The governing body has an over-generous view of the school's effectiveness and their role of challenge is not fully developed to ensure consistent strength in the school's performance over time.

### The school has the following strengths

- Reception-age children make good progress. Teaching here is consistently good and the provision is very well managed.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals and those with additional needs make faster progress than their classmates, particularly in mathematics.
- Relationships across the school are warm and harmonious. Pupils are well behaved both in lessons and around the school.
- Attendance has improved.
- Parents and carers are supportive of all that the school does and appreciate the effort it makes to involve them in their child's education.
- The headteacher, members of the governing body and other leaders are ambitious for the school. Their drive to move the school forward is already helping to improve pupils' achievement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons taught by six teachers and two teaching assistants and part of one assembly. Eight lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made five shorter visits to lessons and provision for pupils learning outside the classroom as well as some supported within to focus on specific aspects.
- Inspectors heard individual pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, two members of the governing body and staff, including senior and middle managers. In addition the lead inspector talked with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 77 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school were also spoken to.
- They observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to the school's performance, self-evaluation, planning, monitoring and safeguarding were also looked at.

## Inspection team

Wendy Forbes, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Steven Smith

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Fairway is smaller than an average-sized infant school.
- Most pupils are White British and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This provides additional government funding based on the number of children looked after by the local authority, those from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals. In this school there are only pupils from the last category.
- The percentages of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above average.
- No pupils are educated in alternative provision away from the school site.
- There have been a number of staff changes, a significant number of staff absences covered by temporary teaching staff and a range of new appointments since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher, Early Years and literacy leaders and most recently a new deputy headteacher.
- There have also been a number of changes in the governing body since the last inspection, including most recently the appointment of a new chair and vice-chair.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 so that the majority is consistently good or better through:
  - planning activities that strongly focus on the learning expected for different groups of pupils and increasing pupils' awareness of the skills they need to become good learners
  - ensuring that all teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress accurately and use this information to set work that is at the right level to challenge all pupils, especially the most able
  - use time more effectively in lessons to increase opportunities for pupils to work on their own and find out things for themselves
  - providing training for staff regarding what is good or better teaching, including more opportunities to learn from good or better teachers.
- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise levels of attainment in Years 1 and 2 by:
  - building effectively on the strong start children make in Reception
  - ensuring that pupils write neatly, and spell and punctuate accurately in all their work
  - planning mathematical activities where pupils have to decide how to tackle a problem and choose the calculation method to solve it with little help from their teachers
  - providing opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing and mathematical skills in a range of subjects.
- Improve leadership and management and ensure that senior leaders and members of the governing body effectively support the school in monitoring and improvement work through:
  - increasing the rigour in their checks on the effectiveness of their actions so they are better placed to make well-informed decisions about the school's performance
  - extending the management skills of all leaders so that they can monitor and support teaching

quality effectively

- develop the leadership roles of staff, especially those new to leadership, so they can effectively check and improve the school’s work and pupils’ progress
  - ensure governors have a very clear view of the school’s performance and are able to hold the school to account by increasing first-hand monitoring of improvement priorities.
- An external review of the governing body 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

- Achievement is not good because Year 1 and 2 pupils, particularly the most able, have not made good progress over time because teaching is not consistently good. In addition, some disruption to learning as a result of staff absence over time left a few pupils with gaps in their learning.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills generally at expected levels. Consistently good teaching in a stimulating, well-organised environment helps children make good progress in their learning. As a result, most reach expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. However, in other year groups staff did not always build well enough on this good start to help pupils reach previously above-average attainment. Consequently, attainment in the national assessments for Year 2 pupils in reading writing and mathematics declined and was significantly below average in 2013.
- Results in the phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils in 2012 were low. However, the focus on improving reading, especially phonics, has ensured 2013 results improved to above average.
- There are now higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Year 1 and 2 pupils read and write more confidently, enlivening their work with a range of vocabulary, connectives and similes. However, their work is sometimes spoilt by careless handwriting and inaccurate spelling or punctuation.
- Strengthened mathematics teaching has improved Years 1 and 2 pupils' understanding of place value and calculation skills well, helping to improve attainment. Pupils use these skills effectively to work with data or different measures. However, their mathematical problem-solving skills are weaker. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make better progress than their peers because of carefully tailored support. This help focuses on specific gaps in knowledge and skills. For example, some pupils take part in extra activities, successfully promoting their social and emotional skills and their physical development.
- Of the pupils who left school in Year 2 in 2013, those who eligible for free school meals were broadly in line with similar pupils nationally in English and on average six months ahead in mathematics. They reached similar levels to classmates in English and were about a term ahead of other pupils in their year group in mathematics. The school makes effective use of pupil premium funding, providing one-to-one tuition, small group work, extra resources and access to educational visits. Consequently, these pupils make progress at a faster rate in mathematics and at the same rate in English than their classmates.
- The school's strong determination to provide equality of opportunity ensures that pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve similarly and sometimes better than their classmates.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching in Key Stage 1 is not consistently good. Some lessons are good but some teaching still requires improvement.
- In some lessons the pace of learning is too slow because expectations are not always high enough. There is sometimes too much focus on completing tasks rather than on the learning involved and too much time spent introducing lessons. As a result, some pupils lose interest and learning suffers.
- Teachers know their pupils well. However, they do not always assess progress routinely during lessons. Tasks are not always adjusted to extend learning. In some lessons, teachers give too little attention to pupils' different abilities and so, for the most able pupils in particular, work is not always demanding enough for them. This means they do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Staffing difficulties and some weaker teaching over time has had a negative impact on the

achievement of some pupils. However, most of these issues are now resolved, strengthening the quality of teaching overall.

- In more effective lessons, teachers model well what pupils need to do to succeed. They have high expectations and plan interesting, often practical activities. This, together with effective behaviour management, keeps pupils engaged and ensures good pace is maintained. Such good practice was observed in Year 2. Enthusiastic pupils were seen writing eyewitness accounts of the Fire of London using an extensive range of descriptive language.
- The teaching of mathematics has been more effective than writing because of the emphasis given to developing numeracy skills.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good. The well-organised environment encourages independence. A good range of learning activities based around meaningful themes captures children's imaginations. There is an appropriate balance between teacher-led and child-selected activities. The strong emphasis on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills meets their needs well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs progress well because their needs are appropriately targeted for extra help, usually from teaching assistants.

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

- The school is a calm, friendly and orderly place. The positive atmosphere for learning in the school is evident. Pupils themselves and parents agree that behaviour is typically good. Behaviour records show incidents of unkindness are uncommon. Pupils confirm lessons are hardly ever disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because occasionally a few pupils become distracted when activities in lessons are not pitched at the right level to challenge them.
- They have an age-appropriate understanding of different forms of bullying and say that there is little bullying in school. Scrutiny of school records pertaining to bullying incidents confirms this. Pupils feel very confident that adults know them well and care for them.
- Typically pupils get on well with each other, feel safe and show respect and kindness to others regardless of age, race and disability, and learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as on roads and when using the internet.
- As one pupil told an inspector, 'We really like our school; everybody is nice to you here; we look after our friends.' Pupils are enthusiastic about opportunities to celebrate their efforts in special assemblies, 'especially when (the head) says 'well done to you if your work is good or you win the 'punctuality puppy''.
- Discussions with staff who support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs show the school has effective links with external agencies and is active in supporting children and families who need additional help.
- The school works hard to promote regular attendance by stressing the impact of being absent from school. This has paid dividends. Attendance levels have improved significantly and are now above average.

### **The leadership and management require improvement**

- Leaders' checks on teaching have not always been sharply focused enough on the quality of learning or progress made in lessons. This information, as well as pupils' work seen and progress data collected, was not always accurately aligned to give a clear enough picture of how well pupils are doing. However, a recently introduced system for checking and tracking progress has strengthened staff understanding of how well pupils progress and has raised expectations of what can be achieved.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action to strengthen the teaching of and progress in reading, particularly phonics, and writing, already showing signs of improvement. The school's focus on

driving up standards in mathematics and providing training and support for staff has already paid dividends.

- Led by a determined headteacher, the school is clear about what it needs to improve. A strong staff team are behind her drive to raise standards and accelerate progress. All this demonstrates the school's capacity for improvement within the school.
- However, some more recently appointed leaders have not had the opportunity, or developed the skills needed, to bring about improvements.
- Leaders use their knowledge of teaching quality to inform the management of teachers' performance. Pupil progress targets set for teachers are beginning to improve progress.
- The local authority has provided 'light-touch' support for the school. However, this has not ensured attainment overall improves at a fast enough rate.
- The curriculum encourages pupils' enjoyment of learning. The planning for reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 is adapted effectively in some lessons, promoting good learning and progress, but this is not consistent in all lessons. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum ensure children make good progress.
- There is a strong focus on ensuring equal opportunities throughout the school. There is no discrimination. However, variations in teaching mean pupils do not all have the same opportunity to make good progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is supportive, closely involved with the school and committed to its success. They carry out their duties diligently and give close attention to reports received from the school and local authority, including arrangements for managing staff performance. They understand links between teachers' pay and progress. The governing body has gone through a number of changes since the last inspection, including new chair and vice-chair positions, and are currently re-evaluating the way in which governors work. They are aware that they are not yet fully involved in the school's evaluative, improvement planning processes or detailed analysis of performance data. As a result, they have an over-generous view of the school's effectiveness and have not been instrumental in halting a decline in pupils' attainment over time. The use of pupil premium is reported to the governing body and checks made to ensure it is effectively spent on narrowing any gaps in attainment between these and other pupils. They access relevant training provided by the local authority. Governors ensure safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

## 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>	125943
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	426655

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	178
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Wayne Stepney
<b>Head teacher</b>	Bridget Davison
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01342 713691
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