

# Fairfield Infant and Nursery School

Bench Road, Fairfield, Buxton, SK17 7PQ

**Inspection dates** 10–11 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school. They reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is good. Teachers often use questioning well to extend pupils' learning and develop their thinking skills.
- Teachers give pupils high-quality guidance through their marking. This helps pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils develop secure skills in reading. They are keen to talk about their enjoyment of a variety of books.
- Support staff make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. They know the pupils well and are skilled in providing good support in a range of subjects.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. They behave well, both in lessons and around the school building.
- The school provides high-quality care for its pupils.
- The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders and governors work well together and are strongly committed to driving further improvement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. The most able pupils are sometimes given work that is too easy, particularly in writing, and their progress slows as a result.
- The outdoor areas in the Nursery and Reception classes are not always used to provide exciting learning opportunities for children.
- Leaders, other than the headteacher, are not fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors do not have a detailed enough understanding of some aspects of the school's work, particularly the quality of teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons. Three of these were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also carried out a series of shorter visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were too few responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, to enable inspectors to use this source to gain evidence on parents' opinions. However, 69 responses to the school's own parental questionnaire, carried out recently, were considered. Sixteen responses to the staff questionnaire were also analysed and considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including national published assessment data and the school's own data, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, safeguarding policies, behaviour policies and records and documents relating to teachers' performance management.

## Inspection team

Julie Price-Grimshaw, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional government funding for pupils entitled to free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed services. There are no pupils from service families currently in the school.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also broadly average.
- There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
  - staff in the Reception and Nursery classes provide more stimulating learning opportunities for children in the outdoor environment
  - when children in the Nursery and Reception choose their own activities, staff provide the right level of support to move learning on more rapidly
  - the most able pupils are always given work that is difficult enough for them, especially in writing.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - increasing the involvement of leaders other than the headteacher in checking the quality of teaching and learning so that they can play a greater role in driving forward improvement
  - making sure that governors have a detailed knowledge of all aspects of the school's work, including the quality of teaching, so that they are better placed to provide rigorous challenge to school leaders.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress in all classes and year groups across the school.
- When children join the Nursery, their skills are generally below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially when staff provide good-quality guidance to help develop their skills. By the end of the Reception Year, their attainment is close to national expectations, with a few children exceeding this. Progress in personal development is particularly good.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, they reach standards that are broadly average. In 2013, attainment in reading was higher than that in writing and the school has responded swiftly, introducing new approaches to help pupils to make more rapid progress in writing. This is having a positive impact, as seen in the quality of pupils' current work.
- Results in the Year 1 national screening check in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) improved significantly in 2013. This is as a result of the good-quality teaching of early reading skills. Pupils are confident readers who are keen to talk about their enjoyment of a range of different books.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their individual starting points. Staff have a detailed understanding of the needs of these pupils and provide tailored support that helps them to achieve well.
- The school is successfully narrowing the gap in achievement between those eligible for the pupil premium and their classmates. Funding has been used to provide additional adult support for these pupils and this has helped them to make good progress in all subjects. In 2013, those supported through the pupil premium were approximately one term behind their peers in English and mathematics. This represents an improvement on previous years.
- The most able pupils achieve well overall, but some do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable. In 2013, an above-average proportion reached the higher level (Level 3) in reading, but this was not the case in writing.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers pay much attention to preparing resources and planning enjoyable lessons. Pupils say that their teachers 'make learning fun'. Most lessons are lively, with pupils busily working by themselves or in groups. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive throughout the school.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adult-led sessions are often very successful in supporting children's learning. For example, in an outstanding Nursery session, a teaching assistant dressed in the costume of a storyteller. Her animated and engaging style was used to draw the children into the story, developing their skills in thinking and speaking, and promoting their interest in books.

- In Years 1 and 2, teachers often use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding and to help develop their thinking. This is most effective when teachers target questions, tailored to the right level of difficulty, at pupils.
- Most tasks and activities are matched well to pupils' different abilities. The pupils themselves respond well to challenges and are keen to complete the tasks set. However, at times, the most able pupils complete their work early and are not then given more difficult work to move their learning on, particularly in writing. As a result, their progress slows.
- Teachers plan lessons that include a good variety of tasks, taking pupils' interests into consideration. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class were especially keen to write a piece based on their trip to see a Nativity play at Chatsworth House the previous day. This was largely because the teacher had taken great care to produce pictures and booklets to support their learning.
- Teaching assistants provide high-quality support in lessons. They use their own initiative very well in working with groups of pupils. Their good use of questioning helps pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as a range of other subjects.
- The school has recently introduced a new approach to marking pupils' books. This is working particularly well and is already helping pupils to make improvements to their work. Teachers give very helpful feedback and guidance in their written comments and pupils are given time to respond to this feedback in lessons.
- When children choose their own activities, staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not always provide enough guidance to maximise learning and progress. Children enjoy making choices and working by themselves or with their classmates, but, at times, staff do not ask questions or make suggestions to guide the learning further. The outdoor learning environment, particularly in Reception, does not provide enough stimulating activities for children.
- On the few occasions that pupils are kept sitting on the carpet for long periods of time, some lose concentration and focus. Consequently, the pace of learning slows and not all pupils are fully prepared to carry out follow-up work on their own.

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

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. They feel happy and safe in school and respond well to the praise and encouragement given by staff. All pupils are familiar with the school's 'golden rules', which support their good behaviour and personal development.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They are kind and supportive towards one another and feel that they can speak to the staff about anything that is worrying them. Pupils understand what bullying is but none felt that it was an issue in the school. They are confident that staff would deal quickly and effectively with any such incidents.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe. They know all about road safety as a result of the school's successful work in this area.
- Over recent years, attendance has typically been below average. The school has used a number of strategies to reduce pupils' absence, including working closely with families. As a result, attendance figures have risen this year and are now average.

- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because pupils occasionally become distracted, particularly when they are required to sit on the carpet for too long.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher's strong leadership has helped to ensure that good-quality teaching and learning has been maintained in spite of significant changes to staffing since the last inspection. Leaders have a clear plan for the school's future, which is shared with all staff.
- Senior leaders have a secure awareness of the quality of the school's work. Development planning is detailed and helps to support ongoing improvements.
- The school has well-established systems for managing staff performance. Targets set for teachers are linked clearly to pupils' progress and staff benefit from a range of training opportunities. Only good performance is rewarded by progression through the pay scales.
- The quality of teaching and learning is checked carefully but, at the moment, almost all of this work is carried out by the headteacher. The roles of other key leaders, such as those in charge of literacy and numeracy, are developing, but their limited involvement in checking teaching and learning means that they are not yet able to take a full role in driving school improvement.
- Pupil premium funding has been used mainly to pay for additional adult support. This has helped to accelerate progress for eligible pupils.
- Pupils benefit from the range of subjects and activities provided by the school. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects. This, together with good teaching and learning in information and communication technology, means that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Good use is made of out-of-school visits, which broaden pupils' experiences and provide a stimulus for literacy and numeracy work in the school. Some of the pupil premium has been used to fund the work of a visiting teacher who has carried out some very high quality creative work with the pupils, motivating them to produce imaginative work themselves.
- Spiritual, moral social and cultural development is promoted well across the school. The quality of pastoral care is very high and staff make sure that each pupil has equal access to every opportunity the school has to offer.
- The additional government sports funding is being used well; for example, to fund cheerleading sessions and sports activities during a 'healthy living' week in October. The school has engaged a dance teacher to work with Year 2 pupils in the spring term, which is due to culminate in pupils performing in a dance festival at Buxton Opera House.
- The school works well in partnership with parents. The school's own survey shows that the vast majority are very happy with the quality of education provided for their children. Many remark on the rapid progress their children have made and express their appreciation to the staff.
- Because the local authority judges the school to be good, it has provided only limited support. Teachers have benefited particularly from the input of a literacy consultant.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a sound overview of the quality of the school's work. Governors have a good understanding of data on pupils' performance and this is discussed in detail at meetings. Governors are linked to subject departments within the school and take an active interest in the school's curriculum. However, their awareness of some other aspects of the school's work, in particular the quality of teaching, is less well developed.
- Governors know how the pupil premium funding is being spent and they check that this is having a positive effect on the achievement of eligible pupils. All aspects of the school budget are managed well. Governors make sure that safeguarding procedures meet all national 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>	112699
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	425100

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>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	191
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joanne Hibbert
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Coackley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 February 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01298 22441
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