

Fairfield Infant School

Fairfield Raod, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 1AY

Inspection dates 7–8 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school benefits from the exceptionally strong leadership of the headteacher. She has very effectively led the school through a period of considerable staff changes and absences.
- New staff have helped to strengthen the senior leadership team. They have already put in place effective plans to address weaker aspects of the school's work. The school is well placed to improve further.
- The headteacher has very strong skills in supporting improvements in teaching. New senior leaders are excellent teachers whose coaching skills help ensure teaching quality is at least good.
- Strong systems for supporting staff and checking learning lead to consistently good, and improving, teaching across the school.
- Robust systems are in place to check pupils' progress and all aspects of the school's work. Leaders' plans to improve the school show that leaders are fully aware of the main priorities.
- Pupils achieve well. Over the past year, progress in mathematics has accelerated especially well.
- There are very good programmes to help pupils at risk of under achieving to catch up with their classmates. All pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, achieve well.
- Pupils benefit greatly from the outstanding range of subjects and activities which supports their academic progress and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Relationships between pupils and with staff are excellent. The school's outstanding work to keep pupils safe and free from harm helps pupils feel secure and enjoy school.
- Effective teaching helps ensure early years provision is good and Reception children achieve well in all areas of learning.
- Governors fulfil all their statutory duties well and are very well informed about teaching quality and pupils' progress. They provided very good support for the headteacher during the staff changes that limited the contribution of other leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching and learning in some aspects of reading and writing has not improved as well as in mathematics, because phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is not taught consistently well by all staff in Years 1 and 2.
- Some middle leaders are new to their roles and are still gaining expertise in checking quality and supporting the school's work. This limits their involvement in driving improvement.

Information about this inspection

- All teachers were observed teaching. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspection team made a number of other short visits to group or individual sessions provided by the school to help pupils who have fallen behind to catch up. They also heard a sample of pupils read, scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work and visited the before school club (Toast Club).
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and staff, including senior and middle managers. A conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 38 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own parental survey. A small number of parents bringing their children to school were also spoken to.
- Responses from the 19 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors 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 planning, use of additional funding, monitoring and safeguarding were also looked at.

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Beddows	Additional Inspector
Fiona Robinson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Fairfield Infant is an average-sized infant school, with three classes in each year group.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is well above the national average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is low. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is broadly average. This additional funding is to provide extra support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Fairfield Infant is a School Direct school which provides teacher training in partnership with a local university.
- Since the previous inspection there has been a high level of staff change and lengthy absences. Apart from the headteacher, the large majority of other leaders and class teachers are relatively new to their roles.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on recent improvements to the teaching of phonics in Years 1 and 2, especially through ensuring all teaching assistants are well trained in this aspect, so that pupils' progress accelerates rapidly in reading and writing.
- Increase middle leaders' skills in checking and supporting the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility so that they can make a full contribution to driving improvement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's determination, together with her excellent motivational and support skills, ensures the school continues to provide good quality education. She has been well supported by a strong governing body over the past few years. The headteacher has the full confidence of staff, who appreciate the level of support they receive and willingly work to increase their expertise.
- The headteacher and governors have clear expectations that teachers and leaders will ensure the quality of provision consistently supports at least good pupil progress and the ambition to improve this further. Very astute appointments have been made to help achieve this. The quality of teaching has improved over the past year and there are now effective leadership teams in place to tackle weaknesses and improve the school further.
- Inspection evidence shows that they are now doing so successfully, especially in mathematics, where the rate of progress increased significantly last year. Training for teaching assistants, led by the English leader, is starting to improve their skills in supporting phonics in reading and writing activities.
- Some middle leaders new to their roles are still developing their skills in supporting monitoring and improvement work. As a result, although they are very well supported by senior staff, they are not yet taking a full role in helping to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The clear and helpful analyses of pupils' progress shared with all staff ensure that staff intervene swiftly when this slows or raise the level of challenge for the more able.
- The school works very successfully to help train new teachers. Newly qualified teachers at Fairfield often develop into outstanding practitioners. Leaders work effectively to develop the many new staff who have arrived in recent years.
- More recently, the appointment of very experienced and effective leaders helps provide strong coaching and support skills, enabling all staff to improve their practice well.
- The curriculum is adapted exceptionally well to meet new government requirements. It ensures pupils are enthused about learning and provides activities very well matched to pupils' needs and strengths. The new programmes for mathematics have already had a very positive impact on pupils' progress.
- High quality programmes to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensure that British values are promoted. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life in a diverse national and global society.
- Staff, governors and pupils themselves exhibit a very strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relationships and tackling discrimination. When asked to describe the school in a few words, staff wrote of a school where 'children feel safe, nurtured and valued'.
- The rigour and attention given to safeguarding pupils ensure policies and procedures are very effective. Staff and governors are exceptionally well trained in supporting this aspect. For example, the level of care offered at the Toast Club and the monitoring of attendance are excellent.
- The school works hard to encourage parents to support their children's learning, providing a range of opportunities to help them do so. Where pupils have a specific academic, emotional or behavioural need, liaison with parents is excellent. The annual reports to parents are very informative and ensure pupils and their parents contribute to these also.
- Over the last three years the local authority has supported the school well, helping to train new staff and recruit quality leaders and teachers. Now, local authority officers are confident that the school only needs light support, but governors are keen that officers maintain an important role in areas such as helping to train new middle leaders.
- The sport funding grant is used first and foremost to improve the quality of physical education in the school in a wide range of skills and sports. Staff and pupils have many opportunities to learn from highly skilled coaches, for example in cricket and football. Pupils' enthusiasm for the opportunities on offer and their commitment to physical activity are very good.
- Procedures for managing staff performance fully meet requirements. There is a strong emphasis on rewarding performance, but only where it ensures at least good teaching and learning and continuing improvement in these areas. Very effective opportunities are offered to help staff improve their practice.
- **Governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very well informed about all aspects of school life. They rigorously update their training, for example in safeguarding, and ensure they challenge and support the school to the best of their ability. This way, governors develop a very good range of monitoring skills to gain an accurate picture of teaching quality and its impact on pupils' progress. Their knowledge of national and school

information on achievement and what needs to improve is good.

- Governors are very astute at using funding to give pupils the best education they can. Additional funding is especially well allocated. Recently appointed staff have responsibility for planning, monitoring and reporting on the use of the pupil premium and sports fund grants.
- The pupil premium grant is very carefully allocated to meet the specific needs of pupils who receive it. This ranges from social or emotional support in the nurture group to access to exciting and motivating activities and specialist learning. The appointment of a dedicated pupil premium teacher and teaching assistants has already accelerated these pupils' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen to come to school, enjoy lessons and work hard.
- The few pupils who find consistently good behaviour difficult are managed very well by staff. Their behaviour improves well over time. Learning is rarely hindered by low level disruption. In a few activities, pupils' excitement in learning leads to a rise in noise level and this can make it difficult for some to hear staff directions.
- Behaviour around the school, in assemblies and at playtimes is excellent. Pupils and their parents say that behaviour is mainly good. Bullying in any form is rare and pupils are confident that it is always dealt with swiftly and successfully.
- Through programmes to help pupils recognise their rights and responsibilities to others, British values of tolerance, care and respect are promoted exceptionally well. Relationships throughout the school are very harmonious. This provides a caring and supportive environment that helps pupils to thrive and show an excellent respect for their surroundings and one another.
- Very effective support has improved attendance levels and punctuality and there are few poor attenders.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- This helps ensure that pupils feel very safe in school. They quickly learn safe ways to move around the school, including when going up or down the stairs. Pupils also look out for one another; being kind to their classmates is a strong feature of school life.
- The small number of decisions made to exclude individual pupils for a short time are always taken for good reason.
- Pupils are well informed about ways to keep safe outside school, for example when walking to the local supermarket for a visit. The development of computing skills places a strong emphasis on using the internet safely. Good advice is also provided for parents on this aspect.

The quality of teaching is good

- A current strength of teaching is the consistency of quality across all year groups and subjects, and the teachers' ability to adapt this to meet the needs of pupils in each class. This is the result of the strong procedures in place to support staff new to the school or to teaching. Improvement in teaching quality is accelerating.
- Due to a high level of staff changes and absence last year, the quality of teaching dipped in some classes, although none was inadequate.
- A rigorous development programme for teachers and the appointment of skilled staff have ensured phonics is now consistently well taught. To strengthen the expertise of staff, leaders are now training all teaching assistants to support this aspect of learning.
- Over the past year, the support provided by teachers and teaching assistants for pupils at danger of falling behind has improved exceptionally well. This is helping pupils to make more rapid progress.
- Staff have a very good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and that for pupils in Years 1 and 2. This helps them to explain new learning clearly in all the subjects taught. Lesson planning is very well based on an effective analysis of pupils' previous learning and staff provide challenging activities to help all pupils in the class do well.
- As the result of new curriculum requirements, teachers very skilfully adapt mathematics lessons to

emphasise the importance of pupils using and applying their skills in a wide range of different situations. The rate of learning accelerated especially well last year as a result.

- Staff make sure that pupils are aware of what they could move on to if they have completed their work, in order to progress even further. In an outstanding writing lesson observed, even the lowest attaining pupils had a go at the challenge set for the most able, which led to excellent improvement in their writing.
- Both teachers and teaching assistants monitor pupils' progress throughout lessons exceptionally well. They encourage deep understanding by very effective questioning of pupils about their learning. Pupils are very clear about what they have learnt and what they need to improve.
- The marking of older pupils' written work is very good. Pupils say teachers help them to improve their confidence in attempting new things.
- Through the home/school link books, parents are provided with very good advice to help their children learn at home. This supports pupils' progress well.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of Reception children enter the school with skills below those typically seen at this age. The attainment of boys tends to be lower than girls. Most pupils with special educational needs have weak communication and language skills.
- Reception children make good progress and achieve well. The majority attain a good level of development, although few children exceed this level. There is a small minority, mainly boys, whose skills are still weak by the end of the Reception Year. Achievement in children's reading and writing tends to be lower than other development areas.
- Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 is good. There is no difference in the achievement of boys or girls as the school works successfully to help boys catch up. Attainment in these subjects is broadly average by the time pupils leave Year 2. The proportions of pupils reaching or exceeding the levels expected for their age are rising. This is most notable in mathematics.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics check improved well in 2013, but declined in 2014. This was partly due to considerable staff changes in this year group and left the school for a while without an English leader. This weakness is now being tackled swiftly. Outstanding learning in this year group (now in Year 2) was observed during phonics activities.
- Excellent use is made of the good range of reading material and use of the library to increase pupils' comprehension skills. As a result, the large majority are well on course to achieve at least the expected levels in reading by the end of Year 2.
- By Year 2, pupils write correctly in sentences, organise their work well and use interesting vocabulary. Most write neatly and accurately, punctuating correctly. Pupils' spelling is less good because, until recently, their ability to break words up into letter sounds has not been secure. This limited pupils' achievement last year, but pupils are making better progress now.
- In mathematics, most pupils develop good calculation skills and use these effectively to work with measures or data. The emphasis on really understanding the concept behind calculations, for example dividing as equal sharing, has paid dividends. Pupils are now much more skilled at solving word problems and using their mathematics skills in other subjects. The proportion reaching the nationally expected level by the end of Year 2 has risen significantly.
- Despite few pupils being above expected levels when they start in Reception, good progress helps more pupils to exceed the levels expected for their age as they move to higher year groups. The most able pupils achieve well. The proportion reaching the higher level (Level 3) in the Year 2 national tests is rising, especially in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. As a result, more are reaching the expected levels by Year 2. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds also achieve well, as do those who speak English as an additional language.
- The progress of pupils in receipt of additional funding has accelerated especially well due to the excellent allocation of the funding. Their attainment in English and mathematics is less than a term behind that of their classmates and the nationally expected level by Year 2.

The early years provision**is good**

- Good induction processes help children to settle into school quickly and enjoy learning.
- In all areas of learning, activities are well planned to cater for each child's needs, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. There is an effective focus on children's personal development and communication skills to help children become good learners.
- Safeguarding arrangements are excellent. The environment is safe and secure so children feel very safe and quickly learn to make safe choices, for example in handling resources. They develop a strong awareness of how to keep healthy.
- Children are consistently well taught, so all make good progress. Support for new staff and the curriculum documentation are very good; so, despite staff in Reception being new this year, teamwork is very effective. This helps ensure the assessment of children's learning is accurate. Children's equality of opportunity is fostered well.
- Activities are interesting and great fun; for example, children were thrilled to be 'Going on a Bear Hunt', and thoroughly enjoyed singing 'Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes'. Children have many opportunities to develop a good knowledge of the world, for example in food tasting when thoughtfully discussing their preferences.
- As in other year groups, support for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. There are many opportunities to reflect on the wonder of the world around them. Excellent moral and social development helps children to work exceptionally well together. They consistently behave well due to the high expectations of staff.
- Important early literacy and numeracy skills, such as phonics and counting, are effectively taught and prepare children well for the harder work they will have to do in Year 1. The many opportunities for children to write ensure when they move to Year 1 they are very well prepared, for example when writing about a visit to a local supermarket.
- The early years leader manages the provision well and has a clear idea of what is already good or better and where improvement is needed. There is a strong commitment amongst all staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning continually.

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	115904
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	443792

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Cheshire
Headteacher	Brenda France
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 May 2011
Telephone number	023 92483029
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