

Fairisle Junior School

Fairisle Road, Lordshill, Southampton SO16 8BY

Inspection dates

11–12 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leadership requires improvement because senior leaders do not check and use information, particularly on groups of pupils, rigorously enough to identify school priorities.
- Action-planning lacks sufficient detail and so is not useful in ensuring the school improves quickly.
- Governors do not hold the leaders to account effectively. They do not make sure that leaders use additional funding well, and do not communicate well enough to parents how this funding is used.
- Some senior staff do not have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. They do not always correctly judge strengths and weaknesses.
- Some school policies are outdated. School practice does not always follow the agreed procedures.
- Planning and teaching in mathematics mean that sometimes work is too demanding of some pupils. This is particularly so where pupils are of lower ability and need to gain a secure understanding of mathematical concepts before applying new ideas to their learning.
- A few teachers do not always have good enough subject knowledge in mathematics to ensure pupils gain a deep understanding of some of the more complex ideas.
- Too few leaders and staff have been trained to prevent extremism in the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have raised expectations. They have reviewed and developed plans for the subjects taught (curriculum).
- Teachers make good use of marking and feedback to ensure pupils improve. This is particularly strong in pupils' writing.
- Pupils are well behaved and polite. They are attentive in lessons and this has a positive effect on their learning.
- Attendance is improving, and the senior staff are quick to identify pupils who need support to help them to attend school more regularly.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and they get on well with each other. They show respect and tolerance appropriately.
- Pupils progress well through the school. The standard pupils achieve has improved steadily and is now in line with national averages. The most-able pupils achieve above expectations.
- The quality of teaching and learning of music is a strength of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning in mathematics by:
 - providing training and support for teachers to develop their subject knowledge
 - ensuring planning and teaching are designed to enable all pupils to secure their understanding effectively.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - checking, investigating and considering all the information the school gathers to identify priorities
 - ensuring the school has a detailed action plan to address areas identified
 - training all leaders in making accurate checks of strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching
 - making sure that performance management is carried out according to the school's policy
 - reviewing the safeguarding policy so that it includes all of the relevant information required
 - providing training for all staff in the prevention of extremism
 - ensuring information about the use of the pupil premium is detailed, and that pupils' progress is checked regularly to ensure the additional funding is used effectively
 - ensuring governors challenge the leaders about all aspects of the school, particularly the use of pupil premium and sport funding.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Although the school's leaders have made improvements to teaching and progress across the school, they are not analysing information deeply enough to identify which groups of pupils are not doing as well as they could and the reasons for this.
- Leaders have not used the information they have to decide what needs to improve or to plan in detail how to achieve this. Issues are identified only in broad terms and do not focus on the effect these will have on pupils' progress.
- Not all leaders identify strengths and areas for development in teaching accurately, and therefore some teachers' development needs are not addressed well enough. Where leaders correctly identify weaknesses, coaching leads to improvement.
- Leaders have changed the way they use the pupil premium funding. There has been no ongoing analysis of how well this is working, so the effect of this is not measured. The school's recent analysis reports contain only information about Year 6, and only make comparisons with pupils nationally, and so only present part of the picture. Nevertheless, pupils for whom this funding is intended progress well through the school but they are not closing up the small gap between them and other pupils in the school.
- Recent improvement to the way in which the school checks on the progress of pupils has led to all groups of pupils achieving well. Each teacher attends pupil progress meetings for their class and these identify specific pupils who need additional support, which is quickly put in place. The effect of this is checked at the next meeting.
- The school uses the sport and physical education (PE) funding well to coach new staff about teaching PE and to provide a wide range of clubs, which are all free. Many pupils take part in 20 competitions across a group of schools. This has led to a significant increase in the uptake of sport. However, there is no detailed analysis of this aspect of the school's work. No specific amounts are allocated and therefore it is difficult for governors to ensure the best use of funding.
- Despite a high turnover, staff in the school are proud to be members of Fairisle Junior School. They report that the senior staff support them effectively using professional development well. The leaders have created a culture where good behaviour is the norm.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well, along with their understanding of life in modern Britain. Inspectors joined a poignant remembrance assembly which was well led by the whole of Year 6. Pupils presented freeze-frame dramas showing emotive situations during the Second World War and shared powerful poetry they had written.
- Checks on the performance of staff are carried out using a combination of lesson observations, assessment information and pupils' work in books. This is a supportive process but leaders do not always follow the timescales set out in the policy. Consequently, there are some staff who have not yet had objectives set for them this year. Governors have not been given anonymised objectives and so are unable to ensure the process is fair and supportive.
- All pupils are treated equally and the school curriculum includes British values as common themes running through each year group. Pupils in Year 6 have been to an adventure centre which gives them opportunities to build relationships and work together outside the classroom early in the school year.
- A recent review of the curriculum has led to many changes being made to encompass the new National Curriculum. A consultant is working with the school to develop deep and meaningful activities, often around high-quality books. The curriculum is engaging. Pupils enjoy learning in this more creative way and make better progress than was previously the case, particularly in writing. The school employs sports coaches who develop pupils' PE skills effectively. All pupils in Year 4 learn one of six instruments, and the uptake of this beyond Year 4 has increased this year, making learning in music a strength of the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - asks questions of the leaders, but governors do not follow these up to gather the detail behind the responses
 - does not hold leaders responsible, and this has led to governors not evaluating information thoroughly. For example, the pupil premium report does not give sufficient or specific detail to inform governors or parents of how this large amount of money is spent
 - is given the published and in-school performance information for pupils

- is not able to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the school because the information the governing body is given contains no analysis of the trends across each year group
- is responsible for the headteacher’s performance management and is involved in awarding pay rises to teachers whose performance has been good
- has been involved in looking at pupils’ work books. Governors have recently had subject leaders to their meetings to share specific aspects of the school. They are supporting the leaders in their drive to increase the amount of reading pupils do at home
- shows a significant increase in number since the last inspection, although many of the governors are new this term. The Chair has been in post for just over a year
- has improved since the last inspection but still requires further improvement.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils report that they feel safe in school, and the leadership has recently distributed posters showing who the child protection leaders are. Staff follow agreed procedures and recording is detailed. The safeguarding policy needs updating to ensure information is accurate, new guidance is included and there is clear information to help parents if they have a safeguarding concern relating to the school. Currently, only the headteacher has completed anti-extremism training. Staff and governors have yet to undertake this training.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Overall, teaching in the school is good. Teachers plan lessons that help pupils to gain and deepen their knowledge and understanding and therefore make good progress. It is not yet outstanding because some of the teaching in mathematics does not have the right amount of support and challenge to enable all pupils to make the best progress.
- Staff have worked effectively to improve teaching and raise standards in writing with considerable success. Pupils write with confidence and their work shows increasing quality. They make strong progress. The new creative topics are helping to give a focus to their learning.
- Marking and feedback are making a significant difference to the progress pupils make because pupils respond well. A consistent process for marking and feedback is used throughout the school, and teachers’ comments and questions lead to pupils improving their work. A Year 3 class was seen improving the introduction to their writing about a chosen wild animal. The teacher used powerful video clips to illustrate introductions, which pupils used to engage the reader with great effect.
- Each year group has a set of ‘non-negotiables’ which have colour-coded statements linking to when the specific aspect was taught. Pupils have their own copy of these to refer to and teachers expect pupils to include these elements in their writing. This has helped to raise the standard of written work.
- During the inspection, one year group was celebrating two Diwali days in which their learning linked to this festival. On the second day, they came to school in costume. A range of such activities gave pupils memorable learning experiences.
- Sports coaches teach most of the PE in school, providing pupils with high-quality, structured learning across the PE curriculum. In an engaging dance lesson, pupils were practising the new skills ready to perform to the rest of the class. The coach and an assistant were effective in supporting a number of pupils who were struggling with the movements.
- Music is a strength of the school, with many clubs supporting this subject. An increasing number of pupils have small-group music lessons as they progress through the school.
- Reading is a focus in the school at present. Leaders and teachers are working to engage pupils more in reading for pleasure, and reading at home. Pupils have a home/school diary. The school is using intervention and support for pupils who came into the juniors without reaching the expected standard in phonics (the sounds that letters make), but there is insufficient evaluation of how successful this is.
- Teachers’ knowledge of the curriculum is generally good. However, some teachers lack a deep understanding of the mathematics they are teaching. At times, this holds pupils back.
- The most able-pupils and average-ability pupils achieve well in mathematics through very prescriptive work. There are however few open-ended activities and real-life examples to enable pupils to deepen their understanding. The lowest ability pupils are often given inappropriate challenge because of the lack of practical work. This limits their ability to complete abstract calculations.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Attendance at the school is improving steadily and persistent absence is reducing. However, because there is no analysis of this by groups, leaders do not know which groups are represented. Whilst the school has addressed these individually, more needs to be done to identify groups.
- Pupils, staff and parents report that pupils are safe in the school. The four child protection leaders work well together to share responsibility for safeguarding.
- Posters have recently been displayed to inform everyone in the school community whom they should speak to if they have concerns about safety. Pupils say that bullying is rare and is dealt with well by staff when they report it.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school and they know that the computers have guidance when they log in. Inspectors scrutinised computing planning to see that there is an e-safety element to each unit of study the pupils complete. However, pupils did not recall this.
- Pupils keenly adopt healthy lifestyles and the majority take part in after-school sports clubs. They show self-confidence (for example during the remembrance assembly) and take on responsibility enthusiastically. The uniform for Year 6 is different from that for Years 3 to 5 and so younger pupils look up to Year 6 as role models. Year 6 pupils rise to this opportunity well.
- Pupils have good levels of self-confidence and self-esteem and contribute positively in lessons, focusing on the activity. They are positive about their learning and are keen to do well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils move around the school calmly and play well together.
- Behaviour in lessons is almost always very attentive and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils show a lot of pride in their work and focus well with good attitudes.
- The school is an orderly community. Pupils know and respect the rules and the values they represent. They take pride in their learning environment, inside and out, ensuring it is tidy and litter free.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the promotion of British values are threaded throughout all school activities and are supported well. Pupils show kind and caring responses to each other.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- From their different starting points, the progress of pupils at Fairisle Junior School is in line with pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Proportions of pupils who make particularly good progress are broadly in line with pupils in other schools.
- Standards are also rising steadily, with a gentle improvement year on year over the last few years. Pupils enter the school in Year 3 with skills and abilities that are above those seen nationally and overall leave having made secure progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress that is broadly in line with that of other pupils. However, as their starting points were lower, they still need to catch up the relatively small gap. Although their progress has improved since the last inspection, they do not all make sufficiently rapid progress in order to close the gap with their peers.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make progress that is close to that of other pupils. Progress for this group has improved since the last inspection.
- The most-able pupils make good progress, and in 2015 a higher proportion than that seen nationally achieved the highest level (Level 6).
- Pupils are now achieving well in writing, with marking and feedback making a significant contribution to their strong progress.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in physical education and music. Specialists provide high-quality teaching which leads to excellent learning in these subjects.

- Pupil progress meetings are held with each class teacher to focus on individual pupils' improvement. Strategies are discussed and support put in place as necessary, and this is having a positive impact. Progress is reviewed regularly. While staff track information carefully, they are not always sufficiently focused on ensuring that all pupils make good progress and do not evaluate the impact of interventions used.
- Generally, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education, with positive attitudes to learning and an expectation of good progress. The majority of pupils move on at a good standard of skill, knowledge and understanding.
- Learning of new concepts in mathematics is weaker for lower ability pupils and so they make slower progress. These pupils do not always receive enough practical experiences in mathematics to help them to grasp new learning.

School details

Unique reference number	116253
Local authority	Southampton City Council
Inspection number	10002321

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nikki Webb
Headteacher	Peter Howard
Telephone number	023 807 33415
Website	www.fjsslive.net
Email address	Info@fjsslive.net
Date of previous inspection	10–11 October 2013

Information about this school

- Fairisle Junior is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who come from ethnic minority backgrounds is lower than average. Approximately one in 10 pupils speak English as an additional language. This is below the proportion found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is above average.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority) is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is a member of Portswood Teaching School Alliance. It provides training and coaching for second -year teachers and deputy and assistant headteachers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 13 lessons and carried out a learning walk across three classes during mathematics. Six of these were observed jointly by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher or one of the two assistant headteachers.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks to assess their progress in the current school year. They listened to pupils reading. All the inspectors joined in the school's remembrance assembly which was attended by all the pupils and adults in the school.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, two governors, a local authority representative and school staff. Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils and staff during the school day.
- A wide range of documentation was looked at, including the school's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, the school improvement plan and assessment information. Documents detailing arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed and discussed.
- The 35 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were analysed, along with comments considered. Inspectors spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff through the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Janet Sharp, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Kearsy	Ofsted Inspector
Robert Howell	Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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