

Fairway Infant School

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

Inspection dates	4–5 February 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has developed a culture of trust and higher expectations that has led to improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Other school leaders have been empowered to lead their areas of responsibility effectively. They systematically check and make improvements to the quality of teaching.
- Teaching throughout the school has improved and is now consistently good.
- Standards are rising in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers use assessment information well to plan appropriate learning activities for their pupils.
- Early years provision is good. Strong partnerships with parents enable children to make a good start to school life.
- Governors have introduced rigorous systems to check the quality of the school's performance.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have excellent manners and care for each other well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and are making good progress over time.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It interests and motivates the pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and keep pupils safe from harm.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Despite recent improvements, not enough pupils are achieving the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in the early years and Key Stage 1 do not have enough opportunities to practise and improve their writing skills.
- Some teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is less engaging and as a result, pupils make slower progress in these sessions.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to explain how they solved problems in mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is typically outstanding and all groups of pupils, especially the most able, make accelerated progress by:
 - providing more interesting activities for pupils to apply and improve their writing and phonics skills
 - developing pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has developed a strong culture of trust and teamwork in the school. This has resulted in improved teaching and outcomes for all groups of pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and how well it is led and managed.
- All school leaders have benefited from opportunities to attend training and visit other schools to improve their skills. As a result, they are now making a positive impact on raising standards. For example, the subject leader for English has implemented a rigorous system to check on the quality of teaching that includes: visiting lessons; looking at pupils' work books; analysing information about pupils' progress; and scrutinising teachers' planning. This gives teachers clear points for development which are followed up a few weeks later. The relatively new subject leader for mathematics is now successfully implementing a similar system. These checks are leading to pupils making faster progress throughout the school.
- The deputy headteacher provides effective leadership to the team of dedicated teaching assistants. She ensures that the regular training she leads allows them to develop their expertise in supporting pupils. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support to develop their knowledge, skills and independence.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. The themes chosen by teachers, such as 'fire and ice', spark pupils' interest and motivate them to learn. This topic has given pupils the opportunity to apply their literacy skills and artistic flair in a thematic way. This encourages pupils to make good progress and leave Fairway well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- As well as developing pupils' academic skills, the curriculum enhances their physical and social development. Primary sports funding has been used effectively to train teachers to improve their expertise in teaching a range of physical activities and to provide a wide range of high-quality sporting and physical activities for pupils. There is an interesting range of extra-curricular clubs. However, a few parents would like to see more choice.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well. For example, pupils learn about celebrations from different religions, make important decisions as school councillors and work together in teams to solve puzzles. Pupils learn about making right and wrong decisions in assemblies and enjoy celebrating together as a class if they win the award for the best attendance or punctuality.
- The school's work with colleagues from other schools in the locality, as part of the East Grinstead Group of Schools, has been instrumental in helping school leaders and teachers work together to share good practice and raise standards. Teachers at Fairway speak very positively about the opportunities such collaboration has given them to improve their work.
- School leaders ensure that all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are well supported so that nobody falls behind academically. This demonstrates a clear equality of opportunity.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure that the very few disadvantaged pupils are able to participate fully in all aspects of school life.
- The local authority has provided very good support to the school's leaders and governors since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The membership of the governing body has changed significantly since the previous inspection. The Chair of the Governing Body took up her role in September 2014, and with the help of her colleagues has made substantial improvements to the effectiveness of the governing body's work in holding the school to account.
 - Governors now have an accurate and unbiased view of how effective the school is. They challenge the headteacher and other school leaders to make further improvements to the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
 - Governors manage the financial resources of the school well. They ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the outcomes of those pupils who are entitled to the additional funding. They know how the primary sports grant is improving the physical well-being of pupils and the expertise of staff. They also make sure that performance management systems are robust and that pay decisions for teaching staff are closely linked to performance.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders ensure that all relevant policies are up to date and are implemented consistently. Staff and governors receive regular training to ensure that they are able to recognise potential dangers for pupils both in and out of school. There are rigorous checks in place to ensure the suitability of all adults working in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now consistently good in all year groups. Inspectors agree with the vast majority of parents who completed the Parent View survey and felt their children were taught well.
- A culture of high expectations and positive relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils ensures that everyone wants to learn and make progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan interesting activities that match the needs of pupils and ensure that they are able to make good progress from their starting points.
- Where teaching is most successful, teachers interact and intervene with individual pupils during lessons, carrying out assessments on the spot to move learning on quickly. For example, in an English lesson where pupils were writing poems about an ice dragon, the teacher gave individual pupils specific advice on improving their use of interesting vocabulary and using a wider range of punctuation.
- The teaching of phonics is accurate and is leading to pupils making better progress, especially where pupils are organised into groups based on their ability. These are generally taught well by the teacher or teaching assistant. However, on some occasions, the activities chosen are less engaging and do not always inspire pupils to make good progress in phonics lessons.
- During the inspection, pupils were observed, both inside and outside the classroom, using and applying their calculation and problem-solving skills to measure objects that were more than one metre long. Many of the pupils showed great perseverance in this task. Some pupils were also asked to apply their skills to solve some measurement problems on a computer. However, pupils were not asked to justify or give reasons for their answers. A scrutiny of pupils' mathematics work books also showed that there were not enough opportunities for pupils to use their reasoning skills to explain how they had solved a mathematical problem or puzzle.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop their independence as learners. For example, they choose to use a dictionary or thesaurus to select better words in their writing. One child was observed asking a teacher whether he could use her 'big special dictionary', as he could not find his chosen word in his children's edition.
- The system the school has implemented for marking pupils' work and giving them feedback is applied consistently by teachers. This helps pupils to know what they have done well and what they could improve. For example, teachers will typically highlight a few words that pupils have misspelt, which they are then asked to practise.
- The school has successfully introduced a new system for assessing the progress of all pupils. It is used and understood well by all staff and governors. The headteacher has plans in place to involve parents more by sharing this assessment information regularly. A number of parents who completed the Parent View survey thought that they did not receive enough information about their child's progress. These parents are likely to appreciate this development.
- The vast majority of parents who completed the Parent View survey or spoke to inspectors were positive about the homework that is set. There are good links between home and school when it comes to reading, and this leads to pupils making good progress in this key area.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Systems to keep pupils safe both in school and when on school trips are effective, because of robust risk assessments.

- Pupils feel safe in school. They are aware of what bullying is and say that adults deal with any rare concerns about unkindness quickly.
- Pupils have varied opportunities to learn about staying safe. For example, they know where and whom to go to for first aid.
- A planned programme of themed assemblies has focused on skills and attributes such as perseverance. As a result of this, pupils can regularly be heard in lessons talking about persevering and not giving up when work appears to be tricky.
- The vast majority of pupils take pride in their work. They try their hardest to use their best handwriting to present their work neatly.
- Pupils make healthy food choices at lunchtimes. With very little adult help, they take responsibility for managing any allergies by being responsible for their own allergy card.
- The sports crew, made up of selected Year 2 pupils, organises well-planned physical activities on the playground twice a week. Having received training using the primary sports grant, they set their peers targets to complete physical challenges and present stickers as rewards to those who are successful. This project promotes healthy lifestyles and physical well-being particularly well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, are attentive in lessons and work well together in groups and with supporting adults. They respond well to the consistently applied positive reward systems, especially the use of stickers to reward good behaviour.
- When moving around the school, pupils walk sensibly and politely stand to the side to let adults pass by. They have excellent manners.
- At lunchtimes, the dining hall is a calm place where pupils eat sensibly whilst talking quietly with their friends.
- On the playground, pupils play together energetically. They know the rules about using different equipment and follow instructions quietly and sensibly when playtime ends.
- All staff who completed the staff survey and the overwhelming majority of parents who completed the Parent View survey feel that pupils behave well at Fairway.
- Attendance is improving. The school analyses patterns of attendance well and works closely with families where pupils have a high incidence of absence.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding as pupils do not have enough opportunities to promote and improve positive behaviour themselves.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils now do better than previously in the key areas of reading, writing and mathematics and are therefore well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Over the last two years, pupils have made consistently good progress through Key Stage 1. Nearly every parent who completed the Parent View survey during the inspection felt that their child was making good progress at school.
- The school's own assessment information continues to show an improving picture. Inspectors listened to pupils read and checked their work books to confirm that all groups of pupils currently in the school are making good progress in reading and mathematics. They also concluded that pupils are making good progress in writing overall due to good teaching, but that the progress is not as fast as that in reading and mathematics. Many pupils need more interesting opportunities to practise the writing skills they have been taught.
- Boys and girls make similar progress in different areas of the curriculum because they usually find the work and tasks interesting and challenging.
- The few pupils who are entitled to support through pupil premium funding are making faster progress than their peers. Their achievements are closely tracked, and any extra support is quickly organised so that they never fall behind.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress over time due to the dedicated support they receive from teaching assistants, who ensure that they are able to succeed at different tasks.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils has improved since the last inspection. The proportions of pupils achieving the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 improved in 2014 and again in 2015. However, it these proportions are still below the national average. School leaders have rightly set this as an area for further development.
- Most pupils currently on roll are making good progress in the development of their phonics knowledge and skills. At this time, more pupils are on track to meet the required standard in the national screening check in Year 1 than in previous years.

Early years provision

is good

- Parents are extremely positive about the early years provision. They explain that there are good links between home and school and that their children are well cared for and make good progress. Inspectors agree that this is the case.
- Through good links with local nurseries and careful assessment, teachers are able to identify and build on the different starting points that children have when they enter the setting. Most, but not all, children start the Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. Some are at an earlier stage of development.
- All adults in the early years are clearly focused on improving learning. They make accurate assessments about children's skills, knowledge and understanding, and use questioning and discussion well to deepen or apply learning even further.
- As a result of good teaching, children are making good progress in all areas of learning. This is especially the case in personal, social and emotional development, where boys are now making better progress compared with that in previous years.
- Through precise teaching, children are developing a secure understanding of phonics and this is giving them the skills needed to make progress as readers. Focused, adult-led group or individual reading sessions are effective in developing these essential skills well. However, there are too few opportunities for children to apply their phonics skills in interesting writing tasks.
- Practical activities, including those in the well-designed outside area, allow children to practise their skills in mathematics. For example, a group of boys were observed finding shapes in the water tray, naming them and counting the number of sides. A small group of girls, using the outside area, were enjoying finding, in order, the different pictures with '-teen' numbers on.
- The provision for disabled children or those who have special educational needs is well thought out. Children who have difficulties with speech and language receive good support to develop their skills.
- Behaviour in the early years provision is good. Children are able to sustain a range of activities for increasing amounts of time. They take it in turns to use equipment and apparatus and talk politely to each other, saying 'please' and 'thank you'.
- The early years leader sets high expectations and oversees a good range of training opportunities for adults in the provision. He works with colleagues in the local group of schools and with local nursery providers to ensure that there is consistency in assessment between settings.
- The curriculum is interesting and engaging. At the time of the inspection, the theme was 'outer space'. The sandpit had been transformed into the surface of the moon and the children were enjoying their voyage of discovery to investigate the properties of the 'moon dust' (sand). Children had the opportunity to explore the differences between the properties of dry and wet sand, and could begin to predict why it was easier to make castles out of wet sand.
- Colourful displays and imaginative role-play areas inside, and the range of spaces, opportunities and equipment for play and learning outside, contribute to a sense of awe and wonder in the provision.
- Safeguarding and welfare arrangements in the provision meet all statutory requirements, ensuring that children have a safe and happy start to school life.

School details

Unique reference number	125943
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10002297

This inspection 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	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frances Strickley
Headteacher	Bridget Davison
Telephone number	01342 713691
Website	www.fairway.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	office@fairway.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school provides full-time early years provision in two Reception classes.
- Since the previous inspection, two teachers have left and two teachers have joined the school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is very low compared with the national average. This is additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below that found nationally.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school works closely with other schools in the locality as part of the East Grinstead Group of Schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in each class and also made shorter visits to a number of lessons. Many of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other school leaders, four governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class, in the dining hall and on the playground, to seek their views about the school. They also met with a group of children more formally to talk about their work, and heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documents including: assessment information; newsletters; reports to parents; minutes of governing body meetings; improvement plans; and records about the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors considered the 47 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and spoke to some parents before school at the beginning of the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 18 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

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