

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



15 May 2018

Mr Matthew Carroll
Headteacher
Fairway Primary School
The Fairway
Offerton
Stockport
Cheshire
SK2 5DR

Dear Mr Carroll

Short inspection of Fairway Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 April 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have tackled all of the areas identified as needing improvement at the previous inspection with rigour. For example, in the past two years, overall attainment and progress measures in mathematics have improved and are now better than those for reading and writing. You have also improved subject leadership and the enthusiasm of leaders is testament to their increased responsibility for, and understanding of their curriculum areas.

You and your deputy headteacher's enthusiasm and wholehearted commitment to ensuring that the pupils receive the best possible quality of care, guidance and support are tangible. You work effectively in partnership and share the same vision and aspiration to provide the best possible provision for each pupil. Staff support you well and demonstrate a strong commitment and clear understanding of the needs of the pupils. Fairway is a school that prides itself on being ambitious for pupils and cultivates mutually respectful relationships.

You and your staff have created a warm, welcoming, bright and stimulating environment where pupils enjoy their school experience. Indeed, pupils say that Fairway is 'brilliant, friendly and fair'. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers, both those spoken to before school and those who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, agreed that the school is well led. One comment which typifies views was, 'the headteacher is fantastic – children adore him.' One parent commented, 'nobody has a bad word to say' about the school.

School assessment information shows that pupils make good progress as they go through the school. This is as a result of secure, consistent teaching and learning. Leaders have worked hard to make improvements in English and mathematics. At the expected level overall, attainment in these subjects at the end of key stages 1 and 2 is above national averages. There have also been improvements at the higher levels, particularly in writing and mathematics. However, I agree with you that, in key stage 2, outcomes at the higher levels are not as strong as they could be in reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling.

During our discussions, you also recognised that, although disadvantaged pupils' outcomes improved in 2017, there is still more that could be done to improve the achievements of these pupils in both key stage 1 and key stage 2.

The early years foundation stage unit works well because of the effective leadership in this area. In the past two years, the number of children who have achieved a good level of development has been just above the national average. However, you acknowledge that if teachers challenged children more throughout the setting, particularly the boys, this would accelerate progress and as a result, outcomes would improve.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Parents and staff are united in their view that all pupils are safe at your school. Effective working relationships with other agencies ensure that pupils are protected well. All staff and governors have completed relevant safeguarding training. Consequently, they have a good awareness of safeguarding procedures. The school's safeguarding policy meets requirements. This satisfied my first line of enquiry.

Pupils told me that they feel 'happy and safe' in school. They were adamant that bullying is rare and when it does occur is dealt with immediately. They told me that they learn about how to stay safe online and said, 'Teachers care about us and look after us well.'

Inspection findings

- My second line of enquiry was to find out what actions the school was taking to ensure that all pupils achieve what they are capable of in reading, and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Current pupils are attaining well. Across the school, there is a higher proportion of pupils attaining well than in recent years. This is reflected in the current pupils' reading comprehension workbooks and in their writing. In a few examples, particularly in reading comprehension and written work, the work that was set did not allow the middle- and higher ability pupils to develop their learning and attain higher standards. Similarly, in a few examples, adults missed chances to ask these pupils more challenging questions to enable them to attain higher standards. Some chances were also missed to correct errors in spelling to improve the standard of writing.

- The school's published assessment information indicated that, in the last two years, children's outcomes at the end of Reception were just above the national average. We agreed that, relative to the children's starting points, the end-of-year outcomes could be improved. This formed my next line of enquiry. The early years curriculum meets requirements. During the inspection, you and I observed children writing their own names and using scissors safely. We also saw one child completing a 'rainbow' challenge about money. There was a good balance of child-initiated activities and adult-led provision, with additional adults intervening appropriately to move children's learning on. The children were developing their fine motor skills well and some were making good progress. Children made gains in their learning about spring and, in particular, planting seeds. My observations of teaching and learning, and scrutiny of the assessment information revealed that the children's progress, particularly that of the boys, is hampered slightly because they are not challenged consistently throughout the early years unit and in all areas.
- In 2016/17, a greater proportion of pupils attained well and demonstrated improved progress at key stage 2. This was a significant improvement on the outcomes for 2015/16. Establishing whether these improvements are sustainable formed my fourth line of enquiry. The school has already initiated strategies to improve reading outcomes. A typical comment from pupils was, 'We read every day and the teachers check our books to make sure they are suitable.' In 2017, the proportion of pupils who improved their reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling scores at the expected level increased, both for all pupils and disadvantaged pupils. However, at the higher levels in reading, there was a dip in outcomes for all pupils and these were below the national average for the second consecutive year. Disadvantaged pupils' reading at the higher levels improved, but it was still well below the national average. Similarly, in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, all pupils' scores at the expected standard improved, but at the higher levels there was no improvement and they were still below the national average.
- During the inspection, I noted that improvements are being made in the proportion of pupils who are attending school. Data from the previous three years highlighted that absences and persistent absence were higher than the national figure. However, your analysis demonstrated very clearly that currently you have improved the figures so that overall attendance is now around the national average. You have also had some success in improving the attendance of a tiny minority of persistently absent pupils. For example, one pupil improved from 86% to 100% attendance.
- Behaviour is exemplary in and around the school. In the classes we visited, pupils were attentive, listened well and worked cooperatively. Mutually respectful relationships are the norm and the pupils are a delight and credit to the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they raise achievement further for all pupils, particularly in reading, and English grammar, punctuation and spelling, and ensure that more pupils reach the higher standards
- support for disadvantaged pupils continues to maximise their opportunities to achieve all they are capable of
- provision in early years is challenging enough for Reception children, especially boys, so that they are well prepared for Year 1.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Stockport. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Daley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your deputy and, after your deputy had left to go back to class and accompanied by you, we carried out a learning walk across the school. I looked through samples of work. I spoke with a group of pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2. I considered the views of 39 parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. I met with the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I met a small group of subject leaders. I also met the member of staff responsible for maintaining safeguarding records and the school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. I looked through a range of documentation, including that related to safeguarding, pupil premium funding, attendance and external reviews.