

# Fairfield Infant and Nursery School

Bench Road, Fairfield, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 7PQ

## Inspection dates

23–24 October 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher joined the school last year. Most subject leaders are new to their posts this year. The headteacher has established a culture where staff are consulted, and heavily involved in making improvements.
- The headteacher and other leaders have wasted no time in identifying the strengths of the school and where further improvements can be made. Their swift actions are already making a difference to the quality of teaching and improving standards.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and enables most pupils to make good progress. However, the most able pupils have too few opportunities to work at greater depth across a range of subjects, including writing and mathematics.
- The majority of governors have been appointed this term. Governors are focusing on developing the skills and knowledge they need to undertake all of their responsibilities.
- Pupils behave well in school. They are polite and keen to talk about their learning. The school is a calm and caring place in which to learn.
- The culture of safeguarding across the school is strong. Staff are well trained and have a very clear understanding of their responsibilities.
- Leaders promote pupils' personal development and welfare. Pupils are keen learners. They are willing to have a go and learn from their mistakes, while keeping a positive attitude to learning.
- Teachers plan learning that builds on what pupils already know and can do. They develop pupils' language skills well.
- Children get off to a flying start in the early years. They make strong progress because adults provide interesting and engaging activities that promote learning well.
- Pupils' attendance is not good enough. Leaders have not been able to improve rates of attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils.
- Adults throughout the school know the pupils well. They speak kindly to them. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and caring.

## Full report

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by developing:
  - the skills of the recently formed board of governors, ensuring that they hold leaders to account
  - the curriculum so that the most able pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have more opportunities work at greater depth in writing, mathematics and across a range of subjects.
  - the roles of all leaders so that they can build on their recent actions and improve the quality of teaching and outcomes in their areas of responsibility.
- Work more creatively to improve pupils' rates of attendance.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher took up her post in October 2017. Since that time, leaders have acted swiftly to determine the strengths of the school and what needed to be done to improve it further. They involved staff in this evaluation and ensured that staff understood the need for the changes that were to be implemented. Staff at all levels support the sharp focus that has been placed on improving further the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders encourage staff to be outward-looking in their approach to school improvement. Leaders at all levels value the opportunities they have to work alongside colleagues in other local schools to develop their skills and share good practice.
- Almost all leaders are new to their posts this year. Without exception, they have made a good start to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders are making plans for further improvements.
- Subject leaders for English and mathematics have benefited from training to enable them to undertake their roles effectively. They have provided teachers with important training and introduced approaches to teaching that are being consistently applied across the school. They have clear action plans which outline their strategies for improving teaching and outcomes in these subjects further. They have made effective use of an external adviser to make certain that teachers have an accurate understanding of assessment. This has enabled teachers to use their assessments to adapt their teaching to better suit the learning needs of pupils.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics check that teachers plan learning in line with the requirements of the national curriculum. They talk with pupils about their learning. They have not evaluated the effectiveness of the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of the pupils or that it improves outcomes for pupils across all subjects.
- Effective use of the pupil premium funding means that pupils who are entitled to benefit from the funding receive the additional support they need for their learning and for their social and emotional needs. Leaders keep a check on the progress that these pupils make. However, while the majority of disadvantaged pupils make strong progress from their starting points, the teaching of the most able disadvantaged pupils is not making sure that they make as much progress as they should.
- Leaders and other members of staff have established good links with external services so that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities can receive the support they need. Leaders draw upon their knowledge of the strengths that staff have to match the right support to pupils. They have also forged strong links with parents and carers, so they are kept informed about their child's learning and progress. They are improving the checks they make on the additional support pupils receive to gain a clearer understanding of the progress individual pupils make and the success of the strategies used to teach them.
- Leaders have developed a clear strategy to ensure that the additional funding for primary school physical education (PE) and sport is well spent. They have purchased

new equipment, provided teachers with useful training and ensured that pupils can participate in a wide range of sports, such as cricket, dance and cheerleading. They keep a careful check on which pupils participate in PE lessons and extra-curricular activities, making certain that pupils participate in a range of sports.

- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well. Pupils are encouraged to respect differences, be proud and make the right choices. They raise money for charities. They are gaining an understanding of British values through exploring the school's values, such as respecting each other's differences. Some older pupils take part in concerts at a local theatre. Pupils say that they enjoy music in school. They learn how to take turns, share and listen to each other. In assembly, they reflect respectfully on their learning and enjoy celebrating the achievements of others. Pupils make a good start to learning about faiths and cultures that may be different from their own.

### **Governance of the school**

- Almost all governors are new to their role in recent months. Evidence from governors' minutes and school leaders demonstrates that the outgoing governors paid visits to school to see it in action for themselves. They held regular meetings to discuss the work of the school.
- The chair of governors took up his post in April 2018, having already served as a governor for 12 months. Since he took up his post as chair, he has been steadfast in his determination to establish a transparent and honest working relationship with school leaders. He has a clear vision for future governance at the school.
- Supported by the headteacher, the chair has intentionally sought out governors who can bring a wide range of skills and experience to form a new board of governors. New governors share his determination to support and challenge leaders to improve provision and outcomes for pupils further.
- Governors have undertaken a full self-evaluation of their skills, knowledge and experience to determine their strengths and development needs. They will use the resulting analysis to plan for further improvements to their effectiveness as governors.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff receive up-to-date training. The headteacher provides staff with frequent information and updates so this important aspect of the school's work is at the forefront of their minds and remains a high priority for all staff.
- The single central record of vetting checks is well kept. Leaders undertake the necessary recruitment checks when adults start to work or volunteer at the school.
- Leaders keep secure and detailed records relating to child protection. They have forged strong links with parents and local services, so they are able to provide early help where this may be necessary for the safety or well-being of pupils.
- Leaders provide carefully targeted support for the safety and emotional well-being of pupils and sometimes their families.

- Staff at all levels know the potential signs of abuse to watch out for. They are fully aware of their responsibility to report any concerns and how to do so.
- Pupils say that they are safe in school and that there is very little bullying. The overwhelming majority of parents agree. Pupils say that an adult in school would help them if they had any worries.
- Teachers make sure pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Police officers come into school to talk with pupils about safety. Pupils can talk, in a way that is appropriate for their age, about how to stay safe when they use the internet.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Senior leaders have ensured that teachers' understanding and use of assessment is accurate. Teachers use assessment well to plan learning that builds on what pupils can already do.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to explain new ideas to pupils. They make effective use of resources and ask carefully considered questions to help pupils grasp concepts such as place value in mathematics.
- Reading is taught well. Leaders have improved the approach to teaching phonics this year. This was in response to an unusual dip in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2018. Teachers' assessments of pupils' understanding of phonics are accurate, so they can build on what pupils are learning at a level that is just right for them. Pupils at an early stage of reading make effective use of their phonic knowledge to read unfamiliar words. In lessons, teachers take every opportunity to encourage pupils to use their phonic skills to help them spell words when they are writing. Older pupils enjoy reading books written by their favourite authors and the wide range of books that are available to them.
- Leaders have made improving standards in mathematics a priority. Two teachers have received useful training which they have shared with their colleagues. There is a consistent approach to teaching mathematics across Year 1 and 2. Teachers make effective use of mathematical resources to help pupils understand new concepts. Teachers and teaching assistants ask well-considered questions to encourage pupils to think about what they have already learned as they tackle the work they have been set. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, to help them to master the skills they are learning.
- Teachers plan learning that builds on what pupils can already do. For example, they provide opportunities for pupils to use their skills in writing interesting sentences to create fact sheets and posters about famous local people, such as the sailor, Dame Ellen MacArthur. Teachers provided useful resources, including photographs, to help pupils structure their writing. They model writing well for pupils so they are clear about the features of different types of writing.
- Teachers provide pupils with homework, such as spellings and reading to practise, in line with the school's policy.
- Teachers do not provide frequent enough opportunities for the most able pupils to

work at greater depth in writing and mathematics. Sometimes teachers do not expect enough of these pupils and wait too long to provide opportunities for them to develop and explore their mathematical understanding further.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders focus on promoting strong attitudes to learning such as being positive and having a go. During an assembly, the headteacher used a story and her own experience of learning to play the guitar to explain the concept of perseverance to pupils.
- Most pupils are keen learners. They readily offer answers to their teacher's questions in class, listening respectfully to each other's ideas. Pupils are not afraid to have a go and make a mistake. Pupils explained to inspectors, 'It's good if you get it wrong – you can learn more.' They demonstrate pride in their work by their eagerness to talk about it with visitors.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said they enjoyed school. They take responsibility by being appointed as a 'VIP' pupil who can take the dinner register to the office and bring the snacks to class. They can represent their classmates on the school council. They volunteer willingly to light the battery-operated candles in assembly.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of keeping themselves healthy by having a balanced diet and taking exercise.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. On the playground, they play sensibly together, making good use of the equipment that is provided. Pupils are well supervised. They demonstrate kindness to each other, for example by seeking help from an adult if a friend falls over. When the bell goes, pupils immediately stop and stand quietly. They line up, when instructed to do so, without fuss so they are ready to go indoors.
- Pupils behave well in class. They are attentive and follow instructions given to them by an adult sensibly. Those few pupils who need support to modify their own behaviour receive the support they need so that they can learn successfully alongside their classmates.
- Teachers consistently implement the school's behaviour policy. It is well understood by pupils. They understand the school's Golden Rules. They enjoy the rewards they receive for abiding by them.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are not consistently good. Leaders promote the importance of attendance through assemblies. They keep a close eye on pupils' attendance and work with parents and external agencies if this is necessary. Nevertheless, this has not had the impact that it should. In three out of the last four years, attendance has been below the national average.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children start school in the Nursery or Reception classes with skills, knowledge and understanding that are lower, and sometimes much lower, than those typical for their age. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2, pupils have made strong progress so that their attainment is only just below, and sometimes broadly in line with, the national average.
- Published data shows that for three years the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard, in reading has been broadly in line with the national average, and sometimes a little above. Just less than a quarter of pupils achieve a greater depth of understanding in reading.
- Pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 improved from 2017 to 2018. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in writing in 2018 rose markedly from that seen in 2017 so that it was just below the national average. In mathematics the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was very close to the national average. This represents a sharp improvement from 2017. Pupils' books show that the recent strategies to improve the teaching of writing and mathematics are beginning to be successful. Too few pupils are working at greater depth in writing and in mathematics.
- The difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others is diminishing in each of reading, writing and mathematics year on year. In reading, the difference has almost been eliminated. The majority of disadvantaged pupils make strong progress from their starting points.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose year on year to 2018 so that it was in line with the national average. There was a sharp dip at the end of 2018 and fewer pupils achieved this milestone. Leaders wasted no time in evaluating the reason for this. They have improved the school's approach to teaching phonics and the frequency with which they check that the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. Pupils of all ages now make good use of their phonic knowledge when they read and spell words.
- Pupils' books show that they make strong progress from their different starting points. This includes those pupils who are disadvantaged. However, the most able pupils do not have frequent enough opportunities to work at greater depth and achieve as well as they could.

## Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is well led. Over recent months the adults in the early years have evaluated the provision, written an action plan and carefully implemented it. They have already introduced new strategies and approaches. For example, they have shared good practice to improve assessment and planning.
- Leaders have forged strong links with external agencies and with parents. Teachers get to know the children before they start school, by talking with parents. Parents are welcomed into school for workshops to learn how to help their child with learning at

home.

- The provision for the two-year-olds is strong. These very young children have access to appropriate resources and learning experiences to develop their skills well. There are no breaches of welfare requirements.
- Teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes plan learning that develops children's skills well. Phonics is well taught. Teachers encourage children to use correctly the sounds they have learned in their early writing. During one phonics session, children practised recognising items beginning with the 'r' sound. They took turns sensibly choosing items from a basket and deciding what the initial letter was. The teacher carefully demonstrated how to write the letter. As the children practised writing the letter, they were very well supported by the teacher to form it correctly. After just a few minutes, many children had made marked improvements.
- Teachers in the Nursery plan activities that link learning together very well. Children develop a wide range of skills that are important for learning. During the inspection, children were carving pumpkins, rolling pumpkins down open chutes, making potions, constructing models of broomsticks and frogs to match the pictures in a story they had heard, and pretending to toast marshmallows over a pile of autumn leaves that acted as a fire.
- In the Reception classes, teachers use their assessments of what children can do to plan their next steps. For example, when they assessed that several children had a limited understanding of ice, they provided an exciting activity where toy dinosaurs had been frozen into different-sized blocks of ice. Children were challenged with rescuing the dinosaurs by finding ways to defrost the ice. This activity created opportunities for children to develop their language skills, cooperate with each other and improve their reasoning skills.
- Adults show great care for the children. They promote independence and self-care skills well. They have established clear routines and high expectations, so children feel safe and are confident to approach an adult if they need help or simply want to share what they have been doing. Children behave well, responding quickly to the instructions given to them by adults.
- Many children start school in Nursery or Reception classes with skills that are below those typically seen for their age, and sometimes well below. By the end of the early years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is only slightly below that seen nationally. The children make good progress across the early years and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- At the end of the school day, adults in the early years supervise the children closely. They make sure that every child is collected by a responsible adult before they can leave.

## School details

Unique reference number	112699
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10052957

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

Type of school	Infant and nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Kirk
Headteacher	Jennifer Allin
Telephone number	01298 22441
Website	<a href="http://www.fairfieldinfantandnurseryschool.co.uk">www.fairfieldinfantandnurseryschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@fairfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk">headteacher@fairfield-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2018

## Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller-than-average-sized infant and nursery school.
- The majority of pupils are of white British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average.
- Almost all governors have been appointed since the last inspection in February 2018.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the learning taking place in 14 lessons, sometimes alongside the headteacher. They listened to eight pupils reading and paid short visits to the 'positive play' and nurture sessions. They observed pupils arriving at school in the morning and children in the early years as they were dismissed at the end of the day.
- Inspectors held several meetings with the headteacher. They also met with leaders with responsibility for English, mathematics, history, PE, pupil premium funding, the early years and the special educational needs coordinator. Together with the leader for religious education (RE), an inspector reviewed the displays around school to consider the breadth of the curriculum and learning opportunities afforded to pupils
- Inspectors met with two governors, including the chair. They met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school on both mornings of the inspection and considered their views through the 55 responses, and nine free-text responses, to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors met formally with a group of five staff and they spoke informally with several staff around school. They took account of the 21 responses to the staff online survey. There were no responses to the pupil online survey, but inspectors spoke with pupils informally in class and on the playground. They also met more formally with two groups of pupils.
- Alongside the headteacher, inspectors examined a range of pupils' work from across the school. Inspectors observed a whole-school assembly and observed pupils at playtime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, leaders' action plans, governors' minutes and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Di Mullan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Peter Stonier

Her Majesty's Inspector

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