

Fairfield Endowed CofE (C) Junior School

Boarstone Lane, Fairfield, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 7NA

Inspection dates

30 April – 1 May 2019

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| 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 |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have shown determination and resolve to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. These are now good.
- Leaders have worked closely with a range of partners. This has helped leaders to make significant improvements to the quality of education.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have positive relationships with each other and with staff. They are consistently polite, friendly and helpful.
- The curriculum is stimulating and engaging. It is enriched by experiences that capture the pupils' interest. This contributes well to the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils.
- Activities are generally well matched to meet the pupils' academic needs. However, some activities do not stretch the most able pupils sufficiently, especially in reading and writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make strong progress.
- Staff ensure that the safety and well-being of the pupils is given the highest priority. The school provides effective support for families and pupils.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Their questioning promotes pupils' reasoning and thinking skills effectively.
- The quality of leadership at all levels is good. Middle and subject leaders are effective and staff morale is high.
- Governors have a secure understanding of the strengths of the school and key priorities for further improvement. They hold the school leaders to account effectively.
- The school is highly inclusive. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is very effective. However, not all the required documentation linked to this area is in place.
- Additional funding to increase and improve sporting provision is well spent. However, too many pupils do not meet the statutory requirements for swimming at the end of Year 6.
- There has been good progress made in the teaching of reading. Despite this, some pupils do not enjoy reading and do not read regularly enough to fully develop their comprehension.
- Errors in grammar and punctuation detract from the quality of some writing across the curriculum.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that all statutory requirements linked to planning and reporting on pupils with SEND are met.
- Improve pupils' outcomes by:
 - encouraging them to read widely and regularly
 - strengthening their reading comprehension skills
 - reducing errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - providing greater challenge in lessons
 - ensuring that the vast majority of pupils can swim competently by the time they leave school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have demonstrated drive and determination to improve the school. They have galvanised the efforts of pupils, staff and parents to raise expectations and ensure better outcomes for pupils.
- The vision of 'Happy. Proud. Successful' permeates the school. All members of the school community are committed to this vision. Fairfield is a calm, orderly and welcoming school where everyone is valued.
- There is a strong leadership team which is growing in knowledge and expertise. Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. They have developed clear and effective plans which support continued improvement. Leaders have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- Leaders ensure that staff access good-quality professional development. This has improved the quality of teaching throughout the school. For example, teachers benefit from professional discussions and training when attending local networks. They also study for national qualifications to improve their leadership skills. In addition, there is a wide range of training for support staff to increase their areas of expertise.
- All staff value the care that is taken by leaders to improve staff well-being.
- Parents and carers have confidence in the school and praise the support they are given as partners in their children's learning. A parent commented, 'This is an excellent school. I have moved my children here and they are making much more progress.'
- Leaders have constructed a curriculum that is interesting and pertinent to the needs of the pupils. Meaningful links are made between subjects. Regular, extensive dialogue takes place between staff to devise creative ideas to make learning fun and memorable. During the inspection, many active learning sessions were observed. Of particular note was the enthusiasm and engagement of all pupils while they were simulating the earth and the position of the tectonic plates using an orange.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The engaging curriculum provides a wealth of opportunities to learn about British values. For example, visits by local councillors and members of Parliament strengthen pupils' understanding of the democratic process. Involvement in programmes such as the Global Neighbour Award help pupils to gain an understanding of cultures and faiths different to their own.
- A myriad of musical and artistic activities promotes a love of the arts. Displays around the school celebrate the high-quality learning in these areas as well as the involvement in the wider community. For example, visits from local theatre groups, artists, musicians and poets enhance pupils' cultural understanding.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used extremely effectively to help them to make similar progress to their peers. Pupils and families particularly value the range of activities which pupils have access to.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sports funding is used highly effectively to widen pupils' experiences of different sporting activities. These successfully build pupils'

confidence, self-esteem and the enjoyment of being part of a team. Sporting activities are inclusive and genuinely enjoyed by the pupils. However, less than half the pupils leave school being able to swim with confidence and using a range of swimming strokes.

- The provision for pupils with SEND and the few pupils who speak English as an additional language is strong. Leaders work in collaboration with several external partners to benefit the pupils. Leaders' plans are detailed and carefully evaluated. However, not all the required documentation linked with SEND is in place, for example an accessibility plan.
- Most pupils value the homework they receive. They understand they need to practise what they have learned in school and particularly enjoy using the e-learning platforms as they 'make learning fun'.

Governance of the school

- Since the previous inspection, governors have improved their skills, including how to hold the school leaders to account. They have a strong working relationship with the headteacher and other members of staff. They work cohesively to promote positive outcomes for all pupils.
- Governors are well informed and visit the school regularly to meet with leaders to discuss pupils' progress and outcomes. They receive detailed information from the headteacher as well as other members of staff about the progress towards school priorities. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and their involvement is contributing positively to the improvements in school provision.
- Governors ask pertinent questions to gather more detailed information about pupils' progress, including for those pupils who are disadvantaged and those with SEND.
- Governors ensure that all statutory safeguarding duties are fulfilled and that pupils are safe in school. They regularly audit the safeguarding procedures, such as staff recruitment and safeguarding training. They respond swiftly if there are any safeguarding concerns and review provision, practice and training to keep the school community as safe as possible.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The safeguarding team give the highest priority to keeping the pupils and the community safe. They ensure that policies and procedures meet statutory requirements. Safeguarding records are detailed, updated promptly and securely stored.
- Fairfield provides a haven for families encountering difficulties. Staff know the local community well and help families gain appropriate professional support when it is required. Parents that inspectors spoke with explained how much they appreciated the help that staff provide.
- Leaders ensure that all members of staff and governors receive relevant safeguarding training. Staff recognise potential indicators of abuse and have a secure knowledge of

the local safeguarding concerns. Teaching staff are rigorous in following procedures. They address child protection cases with expertise and sensitivity.

- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe in school and that they would know who to speak to if anything was worrying them. They are fully aware of the benefits and dangers of the internet and know how to keep themselves safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is much improved since the previous inspection. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and engagement in lessons. Pupils with SEND or who speak English as an additional language are well supported.
- Teaching successfully promotes pupils' independent learning. Pupils understand what to do if they get stuck. They have a range of strategies to try, such as asking a friend or using the classroom displays before seeking help from the teacher. These are helping them become more confident learners.
- Teachers assess pupils' work accurately. They have a good understanding of the expectations for each year group. Although most work is well matched to pupils' needs, teachers do not always provide enough challenge in lessons to accelerate progress for all pupils. This is particularly the case in reading and writing.
- Teachers skilfully thread opportunities for pupils to apply literacy and mathematics skills in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils have written poetry and in history they have used a Venn diagram to compare the Anglo-Saxons with the Vikings.
- The teaching of mathematics has significantly improved since the last inspection. Daily problem-solving tasks have increased pupils' ability to apply their reasoning skills. Teachers use carefully chosen questions to encourage pupils to articulate their answers and explain their reasoning.
- Teachers make effective use of resources in mathematics lessons. During the inspection, there were good examples of pupils using apparatus to aid their problem solving, such as using an electronic device to measure the length of a pillar, or by cutting cakes to work out equivalent fractions.
- Since the previous inspection, staff have responded well to training in phonics. As a result, pupils can accurately decode words and apply their phonic knowledge across the curriculum. During the inspection, highly effective phonics teaching was observed.
- Teaching is successfully helping pupils to expand their vocabulary. Pupils' writing books show that they select words carefully to match the style of writing they are undertaking. For example, pupils in Year 6 wrote very effectively following a discussion about the palm oil industry.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects such as geography, history and science. However, errors in grammar and punctuation detract from the quality of some writing. The school's handwriting policy is not consistently followed and pupils do not always present their work with enough care.
- Improving reading skills has been a priority for the school. Increasingly teachers are using reading lessons to increase pupils' vocabulary and to develop their inference and

deduction skills. However, despite the recent improvements, pupils' reading comprehension and vocabulary are not as developed as they should be.

- While some pupils enjoy reading, many pupils do not read regularly enough. As a result, some pupils struggle to understand some of the vocabulary in the texts they are reading or to remember what has happened previously in a story.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is a strength of the school. Pupils learn to take a high level of responsibility for their own behaviour. They care for others and the world around them.
- Pupils appreciate the opportunities they are given to take an active role in the life of the school. Pupils are proud of their Class Charters and their involvement in the writing of school rules. Pupils feel that teachers listen to, and act upon, their suggestions about how to improve the school.
- Respect is a value which is central to the school community. There are numerous displays promoting mutual respect and the half-termly awards ceremony celebrates improvement in attendance, effort and progress. In addition, successes in sporting events and contributions to the community are given the recognition they deserve.
- Work by leaders and the school council to promote anti-bullying is highly effective. Pupils are knowledgeable about different types of bullying and know what to do if it occurs. They are proud of the leaflet they have produced to promote good behaviour. Pupils that the inspectors spoke with say that bullying is rare and any disputes between pupils are quickly resolved.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy and value their educational visits. For example, some pupils expressed a desire to progress to higher education following a visit to a university. The wider curriculum and forest school activities have increased pupils' resilience, confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils know how to lead healthy lifestyles. They understand what constitutes a balanced diet and why it is important to engage in physical activity. They particularly enjoy their PE lessons and active sessions.
- Pupils speak with confidence about how to stay safe online. They know about the dangers of giving personal information and how they might be tricked when playing interactive online games. The consequences of drug and alcohol abuse are clearly understood by the older pupils. Visits from the police and fire brigade foster strong links with the community as well as promoting personal safety outside of school.
- There is considerable investment by school staff to ensure that pupils are emotionally and mentally well. Staff are vigilant and offer pupils therapy and external counselling sessions when they are experiencing problems with their mental health. Pupils who have accessed the external counselling have made very positive gains in their mental health and well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Consistently in lessons and around the school, pupils demonstrate good manners by being courteous and polite. During the inspection, pupils held doors open for inspectors as well as for each other, waited patiently during discussions and listened carefully to the views and opinions of others.
- Pupils' good behaviour is maintained throughout the school day. During breakfast club and after-school club activities, pupils play and cooperate in their games and have great fun.
- Some pupils occasionally exhibit challenging behaviours. However, staff are appropriately trained and this ensures that pupils with challenging behaviour are well supported in school.
- Leaders, alongside the family support officer, have worked tirelessly to improve pupils' attendance. Staff help parents to understand the importance of regular attendance. Initiatives such as the fully funded parent cookery club and walking group have been highly successful in building relationships between home and school. The breakfast and after school activity clubs have been effective in improving punctuality and attendance.
- Pupils' overall attendance, as well as the attendance of different groups, is close to the national average and very few pupils are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics has increased since the previous inspection. It is now in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels of learning in these subjects is increasing.
- The majority of pupils read accurately and with increasing confidence. In addition, the explicit teaching of more advanced reading skills, such as seeking information from the text, is helping pupils develop their understanding of complex writing.
- Over the last three years, pupils have made much better progress from their starting points. However, some pupils, particularly boys and more-able readers, still do not yet make sufficient progress.
- The effective use of pupil premium ensures that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress. Their attainment is below that of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress. The support given to these pupils is well planned and evaluated frequently in order to determine its effectiveness. The targets that pupils work towards are addressed well during lessons.
- Pupils typically achieve well in most subjects. They benefit from many opportunities to engage in artistic and sporting activities. Their understanding of the world around them is deepening because of carefully selected educational visits and visitors who come into school.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 112806 |
| Local authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 10087342 |

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

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 203 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Caitlin Bisknell |
| Headteacher | Jayne Mercer |
| Telephone number | 01298 22551 |
| Website | www.fairfield-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk |
| Email address | headteacher@fairfield-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 22–23 March 2017 and 9 May 2018 |

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized junior school.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is more than double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. They listened to pupils read in all year groups and met with groups of pupils to talk about learning and school experiences. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work with the leaders of English and mathematics and looked at work in other subjects. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes and observed the school's activity-club provision.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, the family liaison officer, the school business manager and members of the governing board. A phone call was held with a local authority representative. A phone call was held with the leader of the local alternative provision centre.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including those related to safeguarding, minutes from governors' meetings and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the inspection. They considered the 19 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as well as the recent internal school questionnaire. Inspectors spoke to a range of staff. There were no responses from the pupil or staff survey.

Inspection team

Kate Nash, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gary Nixon

Ofsted Inspector

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