

Inspection of Fernhurst Primary School

Haslemere Road, Fernhurst, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 3EA

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Fernhurst pupils treat each other with respect and kindness. The first of the school's three rules is to 'stay safe'. This message permeates through the school. Pupils feel safe and are safe. Leaders expect pupils to behave well and they do. Unkind behaviour and bullying are rare. Pupils know that if this does happen, adults will help them fix any issues. One pupil explained the school's restorative approach to managing conflict by saying: 'All teachers support us. They are really nice; they don't take sides. They don't give solutions but encourage us to solve our problems.'

Teaching pupils to be responsible and how to look after their mental and physical health has high priority. Pupils start their day with a 'wake and shake'. Pupils are proud of the leadership roles they have, such as being peer mediators or young governors. Although pupils enjoy school, some do not attend regularly enough.

Since the last inspection, there has been significant changes in staff, including a new headteacher. Leaders' plans for the curriculum, and what they want all pupils, including those with a special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve is not fully embedded. This means that pupils are not learning as much as they could across all subjects.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are working on an ambitious curriculum and have provided training and selected resources to support teachers in the delivery of lessons. Leaders engage well with staff. There is a team approach to the work that needs to be done. Staff feel well supported and looked after, particularly by the headteacher.

Leaders and teachers appreciate the support they receive from within the trust to strengthen their own subject knowledge. This is especially true in mathematics and science. In these subjects, teachers are confident to select activities and break learning down into logical steps. This enables pupils to remember what they have learned. In Reception, children are beginning to show their early mathematical knowledge through counting objects and identifying shapes. Activities are adapted, or adult support provided, so that the carefully identified needs of pupils with SEND can learn the same curriculum as their peers.

However, the exact skills and knowledge pupils need to learn have not been mapped out precisely enough in some subjects. Consequently, pupils cannot always connect new learning to something they already know. This means that they learn and remember isolated facts, some of which are recalled incorrectly. In lessons, including in Reception, teachers do check what pupils remember. However, teachers do not always use this information to adapt the sequence of learning appropriately or quickly enough. This leads to pupils having too many gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders have invested time and resources into the teaching of reading. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of stories and texts, especially in the newly refurbished library.

Reception children enjoy listening to a range of stories and rhymes, joining in when they know the words. Adults are trained to deliver the phonics programme. In Reception, children get off to a quick start in the autumn term in order to learn their sounds. Adults check what pupils have remembered and identify any gaps in phonics knowledge. However, this is not always swiftly acted on. This means that some pupils fall behind and do not catch up quickly enough. Too many pupils, therefore, do not learn to read as confidently or as fluently as they should.

All adults have high expectations for behaviour. Pupils are polite and courteous. Learning is rarely disrupted. Some pupils find it more difficult to manage their behaviour. Leaders work with pupils and families to put in the right amount of support and help needed.

Leaders provide a wealth of opportunities to inspire pupils beyond the taught curriculum. For example, the choir have performed at the O2 Arena and an Olympian gymnast has visited the school. Leaders make sure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or with SEND, can take part in these activities. Pupils have recently enjoyed a trip to see a pantomime, and a highlight for pupils is attending the planned residential trips in Years 3 to 6.

Leaders provide a curriculum that tackles stereotypes and helps pupils to understand that Britain is a multi-cultural country. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on differences between most towns and cities in comparison to the village in which they live. Pupils have enjoyed finding out about their new friends, including pupils who have joined from other countries. They are always keen to welcome them into their school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All adults are well trained to spot the signs that a pupil may be at risk from harm. They know how and who to refer their concerns to, including if they have any concerns about the actions of adults in school. Leaders follow up on any concerns raised quickly. They work with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils and families get the support they need. Appropriate checks are also made on adults before they start work in school, whether this be in a paid or voluntary role.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and when out in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum planning does not detail the essential knowledge and skills pupils should learn clearly enough. This means that pupils do not always build their understanding or remember all they have learned. Curriculum

leaders should ensure that the key knowledge is clearly identified so that this is taught explicitly.

- Pupils have gaps in their knowledge in a wide range of subjects, including phonics. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the knowledge and expertise they need to adapt the curriculum effectively. This includes checking that any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are closed before moving on to new content.
- Assessments in the early years are not used effectively by adults. This is because some of the small steps children need to move through have not been thought through in enough detail. As a result, teaching is not adapted well enough to ensure that all children make progress. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in the early years is carefully mapped out so that teachers are able to make checks on how well children acquire knowledge and skills.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	141266
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10242122
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	145
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Professor Jane Longmore
Headteacher	Jennifer Thornton
Website	www.fernhurst.w-sussex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 to 13 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average size primary school.
- The school is part of the University of Chichester Academy Trust.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to staffing, including a new headteacher. The headteacher joined the school in September 2020.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, members of staff, the CEO and other members of the trust leadership team including a trustee, and two representatives from the local governing body. An inspector also held a telephone discussion with a representative from Surrey Local Authority.
- Inspectors considered the 73 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written responses.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' books, curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors looked at the school's own evaluation and development plans.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils, parents and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. They considered a range of safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Clare Haines, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lesley Fisher-Pink

Ofsted Inspector

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