

Inspection of a good school: Fairfield Infant School

High Road West, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 9JB

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 February 2023

Outcome

Fairfield Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Fairfield Infant School love their school. They make lots of friends and feel safe. Pupils say there is no bullying. If anyone is unkind, adults rapidly sort this out. Pupils are confident to talk to adults if anything is worrying them. Behaviour in lessons, on the playground and around the school is exemplary.

All adults have very high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils like their teachers, and listen attentively in lessons. Pupils enjoy learning and work hard. Pupils make strong progress in most subjects. In a few subjects, teachers pack too much into their lessons. Pupils do not remember as much as they could by the end of a topic because there is too much to learn.

Pupils know, understand and live out the school's values. Everything that happens in school is linked to the school values. This contributes well to pupils' strong personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain and for the next stage in their education.

Pupils have many opportunities to take part in projects in their local community. Pupils care about their community and the environment. Pupils enjoy the many clubs, educational visits and visitors provided.

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

Leaders at all levels are highly ambitious for what pupils can achieve. In most subjects, the curriculum is carefully designed, teachers follow the plans and pupils learn well. In a few subjects, subject plans are either too ambitious or teachers add too much content into their lessons.

In most subjects, teachers have good subject knowledge. Subject leaders provide effective training. Leaders make sure teachers have time to plan and assess pupils' work together in year groups. Teachers do not have concerns about general workload.

Reading is given the highest priority by leaders. Pupils learn phonics from the moment they start school. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained. They support pupils' learning effectively in daily phonics lessons. Pupils rapidly learn to read simple books. All are successful readers by their second term in Year 2.

Reading books are well matched to pupils' phonic knowledge. Pupils love to read their books, and use their phonic knowledge well. Older pupils are enthusiastic readers. They can talk about their favourite authors and why they enjoy their books.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development are strong. All adults have very high expectations for how pupils behave in school, on the playground and in lessons. Pupils are fully committed to the school values. They listen attentively to one another and to the adults they work with. In all classes, pupils contribute well to class discussions. As soon as the teacher signals, pupils seamlessly refocus their full attention on the teacher.

Teachers adapt the curriculum and classroom well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils join in lessons and learn and behave well. Leaders support teachers exceptionally well. They give teachers expert advice on how best to manage pupils' learning and behaviour. They are tenacious in pursuing external expertise when needed. They ensure pupils rapidly get the right support to meet their individual needs.

Children quickly settle into the Nursery and Reception classes. Leaders work well with parents and know about children's needs when they start school. Children are keen to learn, and behave exceptionally well. The curriculum is interesting and well planned. Leaders make sure children learn early phonics and number from the start of school. Children have many opportunities to explore and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in all the areas of learning. Adults know when and how to join in with children's learning activities to move learning on. Children are well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum.

Pupils gain a lot from visits, visitors and community projects. For example, they benefit from specialist teaching in physical education lessons. Pupils enjoy contributing to charities and the local community. Pupils recently succeeded in preventing the local council from cutting down trees, persuading councillors to plant more. There are strong links with the junior school, and pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Governors provide excellent challenge and support to school leaders. Many are experienced in governance, and bring a wide range of skills and expertise. They make regular visits to school to monitor the work leaders do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are strong systems in place to ensure all pupils are safe, including when leaders appoint new staff. Staff are well trained, and clear about when to make a referral. They

complete referral forms with appropriate detail. Leaders stringently follow up any concerns and work effectively with families and external agencies. Safeguarding processes and procedures are carefully scrutinised by governors.

Leaders ensure the curriculum covers all aspects of safety. For example, pupils know how to keep themselves safe in the local community and when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum is too full. Occasionally, teachers pack too much content into their lessons and sequences of lessons. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is appropriately broken down so that pupils know and remember more by the end of each unit of work.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2017.

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	124582
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10255213
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	304
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Allison Coleman
Executive headteacher	Mark Girling
Website	www.fairfieldandcolneis.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 July 2017

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average infant school.
- The leadership structure and team have changed since the last inspection.
- No pupils attend alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the phonics and reading leaders, the assistant headteacher and special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders for mathematics and history, the early years leader, teachers, support staff and groups of pupils.
- The inspector met with a group of governors and a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. This included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, meetings with staff and pupils and scrutinising pupils' books.
- The inspector spoke to leaders and scrutinised curriculum design and pupils' work in art and design, design and technology and geography.
- The inspector focused on other aspects of the school's work, including safeguarding, pupils' wider development, staff's workload and off-rolling.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. The inspector considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text messages.

Inspection team

Julie Winyard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023