

Inspection of Fairway Primary Academy

Muirfield Gardens, Kings Norton, Birmingham, West Midlands B38 8XQ

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 April 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Darren Mann. This school is part of the Greenheart Learning Partnership trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Michelle Money, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sean Starr.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school life at Fairway. Most are eager to attend school and settle quickly and calmly into their learning when they arrive each morning.

Pupils understand the reasons behind the school's high expectations of their behaviour. These are focused on the school's values of being 'ready, responsible and respectful'. Pupils talk about how these values help them to 'be a better person'. They are polite, for example, holding doors open for pupils and adults. Most behave very well in lessons, and they manage themselves well at social times, even on rainy days.

In lessons, most pupils pay close attention to their teachers and complete their learning activities. Despite this, a significant number of pupils are not achieving well enough in some subjects because the curriculum is not always delivered well.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe and healthy. This starts with children in early years knowing about healthy snacks, through to older pupils talking about the importance of hydration and exercise. They learn about diversity and visit places of worship for different faiths. They take part in charity fundraising and community litter-picking, as they are keen to play an active part in helping others and the environment.

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

The school's curriculum has recently been updated because leaders rightly identified areas that needed strengthening. It is ambitious and now organised in a way that helps pupils to build their knowledge over time. In some subjects, the curriculum has changed significantly. This means that older pupils do not always have the secure foundational knowledge needed for their new learning.

The curriculum is not implemented to a consistent standard across the school. In some lessons, teachers do not model effectively the language and thinking processes pupils need to master. Assessment is used with varying degrees of success. Sometimes the checking of pupils' understanding 'in the moment' helps teachers to adapt activities well because they know what pupils have understood. However, there are times when misconceptions go unnoticed, or pupils do not successfully secure each step in their learning before moving on.

There is also variation in how well pupils are taught to read. Some of this is because not all staff are confident in delivering the phonics programme. The whole class reading curriculum used in key stage 2 is well-sequenced and helps pupils acquire the skills needed to become fluent, confident readers. However, there is not enough urgency to how those pupils who are not yet reading at an age-appropriate level will catch up. Pupils enjoy reading in school and at home. Children in Reception love learning the actions that help them to remember stories. Pupils in Year 5 are highly engaged in their work on 'Clockwork'. Older pupils value the range of books on offer

for them to read independently and know how to make sure they choose books that support their level of reading skill.

The school knows that this variation means some pupils have not been achieving well enough, especially in mathematics. There is a strong ambition to ensure that all pupils achieve well and are ready for the next stage of their education. However, there are not always clear and focused plans for how this will be realised.

The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength. Their needs are identified quickly and staff use the 'toolkit' targets well to make sure that learning is adapted effectively. The school's inclusive ethos supports these pupils in making good academic and social progress.

The school has worked hard to create a culture of good attendance. They work closely with the families of pupils who are persistently absent. When the school faced the challenge of most pupils being educated at another school site due to the presence of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC), leaders ensured that pupils were able to maintain high attendance throughout. Parents and carers praised the school's management of this challenging period.

The school's 'curriculum promise' means all pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to enrich their learning and develop their character, for example building resilience on residential trips. Important cross-curricular skills, including debating and discussion, are woven into lessons across all subjects.

Trustees and leaders work well together to ensure that the school is meeting its responsibilities. The trust has provided more support so that there is additional capacity to increase the pace of improvement around the quality of education. Leaders are consciously working to ensure staff workload is not increased by the improvements needed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Key stage 2 pupils who are not yet secure readers do not receive the additional focus and time they need to become better readers. They miss out on the valuable reading lessons experienced by their peers. As a result, these pupils are not making enough progress to catch up and be able to read at an age-appropriate level. The school should ensure that its strategy for these pupils

means they make rapid progress in developing the reading skills needed to read at an age-appropriate level and successfully access the curriculum.

- Not all staff model language and thinking to a consistent standard. This means that some pupils are not developing their language skills as well as they need to. Some pupils develop misconceptions around mathematical processes because they have not been explained clearly enough. The school should ensure that all staff know how to model language and thinking effectively before asking pupils to apply this in their learning.
- The way teachers check for understanding varies in quality and effectiveness. Sometimes they have not checked whether there are any gaps in pupils' prior learning linked to the curriculum changes. There are occasions when staff do not listen carefully enough to pupils' responses or notice misconceptions 'in the moment'. As a result, misunderstandings or gaps in knowledge are missed. The school should ensure that assessment practice is strengthened and staff are confident in checking that all pupils have acquired the key learning they need to master.
- School improvement planning is often not strategic enough. The most important areas are not addressed with enough pace to bring about the rapid improvements needed. Staff do not always understand the 'why and how' behind the plans. This means that improvement is sometimes slowed by inconsistency in how change is implemented. The trust should ensure there is a clear strategy for sustainable school improvement and that all staff understand their role and responsibilities within this.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	139484
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10337823
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	204
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sean Starr
Headteacher	Darren Mann
Website	www.fairwayprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Greenheart Learning Partnership trust which comprises ten academies.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2022. The deputy headteacher started in September 2023.
- The school runs before- and after-school provision on site.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders, trust leaders and a trustee.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and visited other lessons, including those in the early years.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including comments submitted via the free-text facility, and spoke to some parents in person.

Inspection team

Nicola Beech, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mary Maybank

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 2024