

Fairholme School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132264
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	315998
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Barnard Payne

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	401
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss D Turner
Headteacher	Mr K Noakes
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2003
School address	Peacock Avenue Bedfont Feltham TW14 8ET
Telephone number	020 8890 2584
Fax number	020 8844 2297

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils attending this large primary school are from White British backgrounds. The percentage from ethnic minorities is average. Around 10% of pupils have a first language other than English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average and most of this group have problems with reading and writing. The school serves communities that include a high level of social and economic deprivation. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is high.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Fairholme provides a good quality of education that enables pupils to develop their skills and knowledge through a wide variety of activities. One parent noted, 'My child likes going to school and is doing really well.' The school has managed a high turnover in staff well and has improved its provision and standards in recent years.

Children make an excellent start in the Foundation Stage. Nevertheless, given their very low starting points they enter Year 1 with attainment below that found in most schools. They have limited literacy skills and their reading is well below average. In Year 2, they reach the national average in writing and mathematics due to effective teaching. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, they reach the national average in English and mathematics. Science results have been at the national average until the most recent national tests, when the number of those reaching the expected level was a little below average. The school has identified pupils' investigative skills in science as a weakness and has put into place strategies to improve attainment. The school has also accurately identified as a priority increasing the number of pupils achieving higher levels in mathematics and science, as these numbers are low, compared to national figures. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with a first language other than English make good progress because the school identifies their needs effectively and targets support well.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is due to the school providing a wide range of activities that enable pupils to work well together. These range from Bhangra dancing and samba drumming to providing healthy food for one another at break-time. Additionally, pupils take on responsibilities around school and the school council is an influential voice that has brought positive changes. Pupils adopt excellent healthy attitudes and take part in a wide variety of sports activities. The school effectively uses physical activity as a way to stimulate pupils and prepare them for work in class. Pupils learn a good range of key skills, including using literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, which prepares them well for their future lives.

Teachers plan their lessons well, using a good range of activities to interest and motivate pupils. Pupils enjoy lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. They value the caring and happy working ethos. Teachers carefully track pupils' progress in order to identify those at risk of falling behind. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets. For example, the reading scheme encourages pupils to raise their own level of reading in a competitive but friendly way.

The school is led and managed well. Staff share a sense of purpose and have a clear understanding of the school's improvement priorities. Many are new to the school, but they have received the training and support necessary to implement strategies that focus particularly on improving pupils' reading, writing and mathematics. However, the links between improvement strategies and pupils' progress are not clear enough in the school development plan. The school has improved markedly since its previous inspection. Standards are higher, the school meets pupils' needs more effectively and governors have significantly developed their role. The school has good capacity to make further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision for younger children gives them an outstanding start to their education because it is led and managed extremely well. A wide range of stimulating activities brings the curriculum to life, making learning fun. Children typically start school with skills and abilities much lower than those normally expected for their age. A large majority join the Nursery with little or no English and many others have insufficient vocabulary skills. Outstanding teaching ensures they make excellent progress in most areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is close to the expected levels except in language skills, which are below. A very good balance of teacher-led and children's own chosen activities provide valuable opportunities to develop independent learning skills. However, staff miss some opportunities to show children how to improve their language or encourage more than simple one-word answers to help children develop their communication skills more quickly. Assessments of children's learning are accurate and are used very effectively to match work to their abilities and to track progress. Staff keep parents informed and fully involved in their child's development. They give children's personal development a high priority and, as a result, children know the routines and build strong positive relationships.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 and improve pupils' investigative skills in science.
- Improve the school development plan to make clearer links between actions and expected, measurable gains in pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Reading is improving due to the strategies the school has put in place. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in writing and mathematics and standards are improving. Pupils reach the national average in both areas by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, the percentage reaching the expected national level in English in the most recent national tests was similar to other schools. The percentage reaching the expected level in mathematics significantly exceeded other schools. Girls did better than average in English and mathematics but not quite as well in science. Boys were broadly average in mathematics but below in English and science tests. Strategies to improve boys' results are increasing motivation and ensuring good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties did well in English and mathematics compared to similar pupils nationally and achieved the same level as them in science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and are clear about how to stay safe outside school. They appreciate the importance of staying healthy and very enthusiastically take part in sports and other physical activities. Pupils know how to choose healthy lunches and are aware of the importance of good nutrition. Pupils carry out a range of responsibilities with pride. They contribute effectively to the wider community through fund raising and charity events.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are well planned and interesting. Teachers give clear explanations so that pupils know what they need to do and use questioning well to check progress. Lessons have a lively pace and teachers use interactive white boards well to make learning more interesting. Pupils enjoy learning and comment, 'Lessons are fun and we like using the computers'. Teaching assistants support pupils very effectively, both in classes and in withdrawal groups, because of the excellent training they have received. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and information is being used with increasing skill to plan lessons to meet the needs of all. Teachers effectively use opportunities for speaking and listening, through talking partners and group work, to develop pupils' own ideas and help them to communicate these confidently.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good range of learning opportunities that pupils enjoy. There is particularly strong provision for music, with all pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 learning an instrument. The school is responsive to local needs and works with parents to improve their own literacy and numeracy skills. The establishment of well-defined programmes to improve reading and writing across the school has led to good progress and motivation. The school provides well for pupils' personal development and successfully provides them with the key skills necessary for their future economic well-being. The school provides a wide variety of activities beyond the statutory curriculum that enable pupils to develop other skills, including learning French, dance and music from different cultures. Good take-up for after-school activities, which include a good range of sports, reflects pupils' enthusiasm.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils with complex social, emotional and behavioural needs as well as those who are new to English are well supported because of the excellent relationships with staff. The school works closely with pupils' homes and communication with parents is very effective. New pupils settle quickly. Guidance to pupils on their work is good and they all have targets to help them improve. Arrangements for safeguarding children ensure a safe and supportive learning environment. However, the school is aware that it needs to maintain up-to-date records. The school has successfully targeted raising attendance, which is now satisfactory and improving.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors have a good focus on pupils' personal and academic development. The headteacher has managed the staff changes effectively by establishing team leaders to support the new and less experienced staff. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and the school provides appropriate training to ensure improvement. Analysis of performance information and data is thorough and its use to improve achievement

and standards is improving. For example, the school accurately identified improving standards in reading and writing as a priority and implemented successful strategies. A new team-based management structure led by senior leaders provides good support in developing skills and knowledge to lead and monitor subjects. The governing body provides good support. Their training has enabled them to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is helping them develop their role as an effective critical friend.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

03 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fairholme School, Feltham, TW14 8ET

Thank you all for making us feel so welcome in your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and finding out about Fairholme. Your contribution to the inspection was very valuable and we got to know the school well even in such a short time.

We agree with you that Fairholme is a good school. It provides you with the help you need to do well and gives you opportunities to learn a wide variety of new skills. It was wonderful to see pupils dancing together and learning about different cultures. You have excellent opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and to take part in sports. Many of you find reading and writing difficult when you start school, but your progress is good so that you reach the same level as other children by the time you leave. You do the same in mathematics. The school needs to be clearer about the ways in which its planning will lead to further improvements in progress. The school would also like more pupils to reach higher levels in mathematics and science. We agree, as this is an aspect that is not as good as other schools. We have therefore asked the school to:

- increase the number of pupils reaching higher levels in science and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and improve pupils' investigative skills in science
- improve the school development plan to make clearer links between the actions the school wants to take and measurable gains in pupils' progress.

You can help the school by setting yourselves challenging targets in science and mathematics and finding out how to reach them.

Barnard Payne

Lead Inspector