

Fairway Infant School, Copthorne

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125943
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	328425
Inspection date	18 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	166
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Brannagh
Headteacher	Loretto McKeown
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Fairway Copthorne Crawley RH10 3QD
Telephone number	01342 713691
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The evenness of high standards and progress across the school for different groups.
- The extent of good and outstanding teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement.
- The impact of leadership and management on sustaining high achievement through curriculum development, monitoring, evaluation and the process of setting targets. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, discussions with pupils and staff, a review of the assessment data the school use to track pupils' progress, and analyses of pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Fairway Infant School is slightly below average in size. Its pupils are often drawn from relatively advantaged backgrounds and few are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special education needs, is lower than that seen in most schools. These pupils mainly have speech and language difficulties. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception classes. The school has gained a number of national awards including Healthy Schools and Eco awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This school is outstanding. Its excellent climate for learning promotes pupils' academic standards and personal development exceptionally well. Pupils' excellent attitudes, behaviour and outstanding achievement mean they are prepared extremely well for the future. From the moment they start school, pupils are nurtured and receive exceptional levels of care. The learning of basic skills is given high priority and there are strong opportunities for pupils to develop their creative, practical and sporting talents. The inspiring curriculum captivates pupils and stimulates their love of learning. The vast majority of parents think highly of the school and one expressed the views of many, saying, 'A wonderful school. It is a privilege for my children to attend Fairway.'

Pupils' achievement is exceptional. From starting points that are above those levels seen in most schools, children's flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage leads to well above average standards on entry to Year 1. Standards at the end of the Reception Year have risen in recent years, especially in communication, language and literacy. Outstanding progress continues in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in reading and exceptionally high in writing and mathematics. At this stage, pupils write exceptionally well for many purposes and their creative writing is stunning. A carefully structured approach, combined with rich speaking, reading and practical experiences across the curriculum, arouse pupils' sparkling vocabulary and imaginative thinking. Pupils of all abilities make rapid progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Particularly well-focused programmes meet the wide range of learning needs of these pupils, with support staff making a valuable contribution to this. Throughout the school, pupils do very well in information and communication technology (ICT).

The high standards found in the school's last inspection have been maintained because the school continuously seeks ways of improving its performance. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, in partnership with a highly effective senior team and governing body, ensures that the focus on accelerating pupils' achievement is the central priority. Senior leaders have built a team which places the pupils at the very heart of all the school's plans. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures enable the school to evaluate itself accurately and to use this knowledge to drive improvements forward. Governors ask the right sort of questions to ensure the school meets its challenging targets.

The focus on providing high-quality teaching and learning and assessing pupils' performance has led to the high standards pupils reach. Teaching is never less than good and is usually excellent. Teachers capture pupils' enthusiasm by relating their learning to their interests and real life, and make good use of grouping arrangements to match work to their learning needs. They manage their pupils particularly well and are skilled in helping them make progress, through the direct learning of skills as well as through solving problems. Teachers systematically encourage pupils' independent learning skills. In addition, their exceptional use of high-quality resources helps to bring learning alive. Productive links with other schools, including training opportunities, enable teachers to keep up-to-date. Gifted and talented pupils are identified early in Reception and careful planning and enrichment opportunities, for example some specialist teaching in science, ensure they are stretched.

The curriculum gives pupils excellent opportunities in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and is particularly strong in ICT, environmental science, art, design and technology and sport.

Practical starting points and strong links between subjects bring excitement and meaning to pupils' learning. Art, design and technology, role play and outdoor learning, such as the wildlife area, are used particularly well to underpin academic learning. Extra-curricular activities and visits and visitors enrich pupils' experiences. They enjoy taking regular exercise and plenty of fresh air and are really committed to eating healthily. They understand the importance of protecting themselves from the sun and are vigilant about wearing sunhats.

Relationships at all levels are excellent and pupils feel safe and well cared for. Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements. Strong links with the local church help to create pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral and social development. Their good cultural development is evident in their interest in acquiring knowledge about other cultures and children's different lives in other countries. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and their community and further afield by raising money for those less fortunate than themselves. The school successfully promotes community cohesion locally but wider national links are relatively less well developed. Pupils develop their decision-making, leadership and teamwork skills particularly well, for example, through designing and conducting a project on 'Fabulous Fashion' with the help of their teachers. This included research into clothes in history as well as for different purposes, for example sport, and carrying out their own designing and making. Pupils contribute considerably to the care of their planet through their environmental work, including energy conservation and recycling activities. Good attendance is rigorously promoted and achieved.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Arrangements to help children settle are excellent because well-trained and qualified staff ensure that routines are firmly established. Safety, care and welfare are excellent. The classrooms are very caring and exciting places for children to learn. Children love coming to school because there are so many interesting things to do inside and outdoors. Children's attainment on entry varies but overall exceeds that typically found for their age. They make excellent progress because of the outstanding teaching they receive. By the time they begin Year 1, most have reached the expected levels and the majority exceed them, including in reading, writing and mathematics. They develop their independent learning and enquiry skills exceedingly well. There is a good balance for children to learn through focused sessions led by adults and purposeful play. Teachers create outstanding settings to help children learn through investigation, for example, 'Treasure Hunts' in the environmental area. Role play areas are linked particularly well to topics and provide excellent scope for children to develop their communication skills, knowledge and creativity. Contrasting projects, such as 'The Seaside' and 'The Countryside', help children to experience and think about different geographical localities. Children's enquiry skills are developed extremely well through investigating different habitats, for example, life in the pond and mini-beasts in the wild garden. The most capable children are quickly identified and given more challenging work. All adults are fully trained to extend children's learning through play but, very occasionally, adults miss opportunities to intervene to extend children's thinking during such times. Planning, assessment and recording systems are rigorous and the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the school's promotion of community cohesion and pupils' cultural development by giving them wider experiences of the diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

18 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Fairway Infant School, Copthorne, Crawley RH10 3QD

Thank you so much for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We really enjoyed finding out about how much you enjoy school and learning about the interesting things you do.

We think your school is outstanding and you make excellent progress. Here are some brilliant things about your school.

- You reach very high standards in English and mathematics by Year 2.
- Those of you in Reception get off to a fantastic start.
- You help to make your school such a special place because you are helpful, work hard and behave extremely well.
- You understand how important it is to keep fit and healthy and enjoy sport. You know you should not eat too many sweets and cakes.
- You have many really good learning opportunities, for example in ICT, environmental science, design and technology, art and sport.
- Your headteacher leads you all extremely well and all the staff and governors think very carefully about what is best for you.
- Staff take very good care of you. You get extra help if you need it so you can learn new things as quickly as possible.

This is what we are asking the school to do to improve.

- Help you learn more about all the different people living in other areas of the country.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and continue to work hard in all you do.

Yours faithfully

Eileen Chadwick

Lead inspector