

Fairfield Community Primary School

Rochdale Old Road, Bury, Lancashire, BL9 7SD

Inspection dates 15–16 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught consistently well. They make good progress and are ready for learning in Year 1.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress and are on track to reach above average standards in mathematics, writing and especially in reading.
- Key Stage 2 pupils have made good progress this year. By the end of Year 6 attainment is rising to above average with more pupils reaching higher levels especially in mathematics.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Marking is thorough and pupils reflect on teachers' comments to improve their work.
- Well-targeted support, delivered by both teachers and well-trained teaching assistants, ensures that all pupils are making at least the progress expected of them and often more.
- Pupils are well-behaved, polite, happy and feel safe. They relish the many and varied opportunities to hold positions of responsibility.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have acted with determination and rigour to bring about rapid improvement across the school. Pupil attainment, the quality of marking and the monitoring of teaching are all areas that have improved significantly.
- Governors know the school well. They actively support and challenge the school to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able pupils are not always challenged well enough to do their best especially in reading and writing.
- Leaders do not always make the best use of data to check the levels of progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2.
- The capacity of middle leaders to sustain on-going improvement has been limited by staffing issues.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or part-lessons, including two joint observations with the headteacher. They also observed pupils' behaviour around the school, at play and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors held many informal discussions with pupils from all year groups and formal discussions with pupils from Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. They met with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors talked to a number of parents and listened to Years 1 and 2 pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of 11 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View), 123 parental views expressed in a school questionnaire completed during the inspection, one letter from a parent and 11 responses to staff questionnaires.
- They observed the school at work and also reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school improvement plan and the school's view of how well it is doing. They also looked at documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance and considered data on pupils' achievement over time and predictions for this year.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, minutes of governing body meetings, performance management outcomes and a range of reports from external agencies.

Inspection team

Fiona Dixon , Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Dave Blackburne	Additional Inspector
Ben Cox	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Fairfield Community Primary School is a slightly larger than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding allocated to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action has risen to well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- 'The Ark' pupil learning centre in Bury is used to support the emotional, social and behavioural needs of specific pupils.
- There have been several changes in staffing since the previous inspection and considerable instability in staffing this year owing to illness and maternity leave
- The school offers a daily breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve even more the quality of teaching to accelerate progress and raise attainment further by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are always challenged effectively to do their best, particularly in reading and writing
 - extending the sharing of the good and exemplary teaching which exists in the school and in other schools.
- Further strengthen leadership and management by:
 - increasing the capacity of the leadership at middle leader level to ensure that improvements are sustained
 - making even better use of data to monitor pupils' progress more closely.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children generally enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. The exciting opportunities they are given to play, explore, create and learn leads to them developing at a good and often better pace so that the majority is ready for the step up to Year 1. Children's physical development, their listening and communication skills and their knowledge and use of literacy and number are particularly impressive.
- Pupil progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 has improved since the previous inspection and has been good this academic year. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 rising and is on track to be above average.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. In the 2013 national phonics (letters and their sounds) screening check pupils attained in line with the national average and inspection evidence shows standards will be similar this year. In the current Year 2, attainment is rising because the proportion of pupils on track to reach the higher National Curriculum Level 3 is higher than ever before.
- Pupils are also making good progress in Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the consideration of school data, demonstrates that attainment is now moving to above average. More pupils are now operating at the above average Level 5 than last year in all subjects but especially in mathematics. The data also shows that a greater proportion of pupils is making more than expected progress than last year.
- Overall by the time they leave school the most-able pupils make good progress. They achieve particularly well in mathematics, with a fifth of all Year 6 predicted to achieve the highest Level 6 in mathematics this year. Lack of enough challenge in some years especially in reading and writing means that these pupils do not always achieve as well in these subjects.
- The gap between how well pupils supported through the pupil premium are achieving and their classmates is closing. In 2013 the gap in attainment had narrowed so that they were about two terms behind their classmates in writing and mathematics and one term behind in reading. The progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is accelerating as they receive well-targeted support and the gap is continuing to close.
- Focused support for individuals is beginning to ensure that there is no difference between the progress made by boys, girls or those who receive support from the pupil premium in mathematics, writing and reading. This reflects the school's determination to tackle all discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for all.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points as they receive teaching that closely matches their individual needs. They make particularly good progress in mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good across the school and there are examples of outstanding teaching over time in each key stage.
- An impressive balance of activities based around a topic is offered in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A good variety of opportunities to work alone or with an adult is available. Adults know the children well and carefully plan opportunities for the rapid development of skills and knowledge. Reception children were excited to hunt for mini-beasts and motivated to extend their vocabulary when explaining the differences between insects and other creatures. As children said, 'A worm wiggles as it has no legs.'
- Pupils throughout the school are often fully involved and confident in their learning. In Year 2, pupils used their recently-gained knowledge of meteorites within a formal letter of thanks. Pupils confidently recalled and shared both facts and features of writing a letter, before completing the

task.

- An exciting and motivating range of learning opportunities capture the interest of pupils and increase their progress. In a Year 6 science lesson pupils were enthralled investigating the properties of light and maturely discussed, using scientific language and examples of what they had already learnt, the results of their tests and the possible conclusions they could make.
- Good use of information about what pupils already know is used in order to challenge and extend learning. This is particularly effective in mathematics when pupils are set hard tasks that make them apply their skills at a high level. This challenge is not yet consistent in all classes and subjects and the progress of the most able is sometimes slowed when they remain on an activity that they can already do for too long.
- Literacy and numeracy are taught well across the curriculum. In the Year 5 topic on World War Two pupils wrote about the experiences of an evacuee and produced flow diagrams to plan the construction of an air raid shelter.
- Marking is thorough and increases the progress that pupils make. Pupils are fully aware of what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve their work even further. They always reflect on their previous learning and regularly apply their new skills to future work, ensuring that progress is clearly seen in subsequent written work.
- Teaching assistants skilfully work with groups and individuals in and out of class to enable them to make progress from their individual starting points. They ask pupils searching questions to get them thinking and to see how much they have learnt and understood.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy 'Lola the Leopard', which helps them learn their letters and sounds. Younger pupils are regularly heard reading by school staff and volunteers. Pupils comment on the wide range of texts available for topic work and school activities like the 'One O'clock Club' to help develop a love of reading. As one pupil remarked - 'It helps in so many ways and will do throughout life.'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very polite and courteous towards each other and all adults. When one pupil held the door open for another, the exchange of comments was, 'Thank you' with the response of 'You are welcome.' This is typical behaviour seen around the school.
- Pupils play well together in the playground and the younger pupils enjoy the Year 5 play leaders organising games and activities for them. Pupils respond immediately to the end of play whistle and take pride in lining up quickly and quietly for the purposeful walk back to class.
- The school council gives the pupils a strong voice which they use wisely. Pupils have initiated the improvements in the toilet areas, the remarking of the playground, the purchase of basketball hoops and staging in the hall.
- Pupils are aware of all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and say that it, along with intolerant language, is extremely rare. All pupils say they know what to do if there is a problem and confidently report that it would be dealt with quickly and effectively. In their words, 'It would not be tolerated.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The vast majority of parents agree that their children are safe and well looked after in school.
- Pupils say that behaviour in lessons is good. However, a minority of pupils sit back and let others answer questions or take a lead role in group activities. To try and encourage, particularly these pupils, to have a greater thirst for learning the school includes philosophy on the curriculum.
- Pupils wear their uniforms well and keep their classrooms neat and tidy. There are class monitors for many different tasks, including the emptying of the recycling bins.
- Attendance is above average and punctuality is excellent.

The leadership and management are good

- 'A focused and determined leader who never loses sight of the care of the children.' This comment from the governors of the school is shared by the staff and parents and reflects the work of the headteacher.
- School leaders have acted with rigour and determination to improve the school since the previous inspection. The school has an accurate view of its performance. Plans for improvement are precise, frequently checked and clearly show what and where improvements have taken place alongside what is still required to move the school forward.
- The whole-school development of marking has helped pupils learn more quickly. The school's systems for checking pupil attainment is now regular and thorough and has had a rapid impact on pupil progress and the levels of attainment predicted for this year.
- Teachers are now held accountable for pupil progress and their salary is linked to pupil performance. School leaders have undertaken rigorous training with Her Majesty's Inspectorate so that they can confidently and regularly check the quality of learning in lessons. The school recognises, however, that the sharing of good and exemplary practice which already exists in school and in other schools is underdeveloped.
- The school leadership's capacity to make improvements has been slowed by staffing difficulties and absences. The school is now attempting to strengthen leadership at middle leader level. Nevertheless, middle leaders in place monitor all aspects of work in their area of responsibility. Pupils' progress is closely checked in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 the procedure for checking the progress that is being made to ensure that pupils make not just the progress expected of them, but more than expected progress over time, is not as thorough.
- Pupils are provided with a curriculum that meets their different needs and often reflects their interests. The regular use of 'real life' problems, visits and visitors helps develop a love of learning. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning are carefully planned and help pupils to prepare for life in Britain today.
- The primary school sport funding has increased the level of participation of pupils in after-school sports activities. Teachers are working alongside specialist coaches to increase their skills and ability to teach a wide variety of sports, including gymnastics. Some talented pupils are now attending specialist sports clubs so that they can develop their skills.
- A breakfast club offers a healthy meal to start the day. Pupils are able to take part in educational and social activities. Pupils are happy and enjoy the calm, pleasant start to the day.
- Parents are overwhelmingly happy that the school meets the needs of their children.
- The local authority has provided well-targeted support for the school since the previous inspection, especially in checking the quality of teaching, learning and the systems used for managing data. It has also helped in the provision of training for teachers to help them improve their skills.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are knowledgeable about the school and are passionate to provide an education in line with the school ethos 'Happiness and High Standards.' Following the previous inspection, they have attended training to increase their skills and now have greater confidence in fulfilling all aspects of their role. Governors speak with great understanding about school data and the quality of teaching in the school; they know all areas of strength and weakness. Governors' minutes show regular challenges to the headteacher with regard to pupil performance and provision.
 - Governors are fully aware of the spending and impact of both the pupil premium funding and the primary sport funding. Governors ensure that the school fully meets statutory requirements, including those regarding the good management of financial resources and safeguarding. They fulfil their role in ensuring rigorous performance management for the headteacher and teachers.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105287
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	442361

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 of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	D Miller
Headteacher	Chris Ashley
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2013
Telephone number	0161 7641559
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