

Fairview Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134904
Local Authority	Medway
Inspection number	341567
Inspection dates	19-20 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Jon Carter

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	518
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sean Bodkin
Headteacher	Deborah Willis
Date of previous school inspection	10-11 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They spent the majority of their time observing learning and observed 23 lessons and an assembly and saw 19 teachers. Meetings were held with staff and representatives from the governing body and three groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked a range of school documentation including strategic and operational planning, tracking information, records of correspondence with stakeholders and minutes of the governing body. They scrutinised questionnaires from 75 parents, 125 pupils and 17 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how effective the school's leadership at all levels has been at improving the quality of teaching and assessment across the school so that all pupils are appropriately challenged in their learning.
- how effectively the school is ensuring that all pupils make progress commensurate with their ability, particularly in ICT.
- the impact of the school's curriculum on pupils' engagement and their enjoyment of learning as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- the impact of leadership and management on improving provision and outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Fairview is a larger than average primary school which serves an area of favourable socio-economic backgrounds. Most pupils are of White British heritage although there are a range of other ethnic groups on roll. There is an above average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication needs, although in Key Stage 2, there is a sizeable group who experience social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school holds the International School Award and the Healthy Schools Award. There are a breakfast club and an after-school club within the school, as well as on-site day-care provision. These are not managed by the governing body and were not part of this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The findings of this inspection are well summarised by the sentiments expressed by a grandparent who wrote to the inspection team: 'This is a good school with priorities firmly set on giving pupils a good standard of education and every help they need individually'. Pupils very much enjoy coming to school as shown by their very high attendance. This enjoyment of learning, which both parents and pupils comment upon positively, is due to the excellent quality of care and support provided to pupils and the outstanding curriculum which is planned for them. The quality of teaching is good because rigorous monitoring and robust, but supportive, action by the school's senior leaders has enabled staff to improve their skills. As a result, pupils make good progress in their learning. The school has successfully improved the quality of teaching and learning in English and ensured that literacy is well promoted across the curriculum. School leaders are now planning to bring standards in mathematics to the same level as in English. At present teachers' expectations in mathematics and planning for numeracy across the curriculum are satisfactory rather than good.

Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils work well collaboratively and develop strong relationships with each other and their teachers. Behaviour is excellent across the school. Arrangements for safeguarding children are outstanding as procedures, actions and the evaluation of impact are all carefully managed.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are equally well cared for. However, while their progress is improving as a result of a clear focus on raising attainment, there are inconsistencies across classes. The indoor learning environments are generally well planned to stimulate and excite young children, but not all learning activities within them support children's language development sufficiently well, particularly for those who are more able. Links between learning activities in the classroom and those in the outdoor area are not always well established and children are not able to make secure connections in their early writing and numeracy to develop their learning more quickly.

The headteacher and her deputy have the support of the overwhelming majority of parents and carers as they work determinedly to improve the school. Systematic action has led to sustainable improvements in the quality of teaching and the curriculum since the last inspection. A model of shared leadership has been introduced throughout the school and has been successful in giving staff greater ownership of the improvement agenda. Senior managers are well supported by

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governors who act effectively as critical friends. This, together with the improvements made since the last inspection and the clear commitment of all staff to ensure that students receive the best possible education, confirms that there is good capacity for improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of progress across all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that:
 - all children, but especially the more able, are suitably challenged and supported to extend their language development through more purposeful learning activities and more effective use of questioning
 - all outdoor learning environments reflect and extend the effective opportunities available in the classroom to develop children's early writing and numeracy skills.

- Accelerate pupils' progress in numeracy and mathematical skills across the school by:
 - raising expectations of pupil performance amongst teachers
 - increasing the range of opportunities across all subjects for pupils to use and apply mathematics.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils leave Fairview having achieved broadly average levels of attainment. They usually make good progress in lessons because work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. This is especially true for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication needs whose progress is carefully tracked. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls overall. A recent focus on English has led to high expectations and improved progress and attainment. Mathematics, however, is not as well linked as English into other subjects in the curriculum, and expectations are not consistently high enough across the school. Consequently, pupils do not make as good progress in mathematics as they do in English. Progress in ICT is now good and much improved since the last inspection. This is because pupils' skills develop well through a significant increase in access to and use of information and communication technology (ICT), and because of the clear links with a wide range of curriculum subjects.

Pupils' outstanding behaviour leads to well-paced learning in lessons and a positive atmosphere at break times. This contributes strongly to pupils feeling very safe at school. Pupils demonstrate their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through their interactions with their peers and the way they embrace diversity in their involvement with other schools locally. The school's language clubs, which have recently included Latin, Polish and Chinese, strengthen this, particularly where they have been organised and run by pupils. There are an exceptional number

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of pupils involved in taking responsibility within the school, such as the Helping Hands in Year 2 and the Year 6 Lunchtime Squad. Pupils’ involvement in the school and wider community is excellent. The school council runs a stationery shop and all classes contribute to charitable work, including both the wider community (for example, visiting residents of a local care home for the elderly) and more globally (fundraising for Life Straw), helping pupils to develop an understanding of their responsibilities towards those who are less fortunate.

Younger pupils are able to explain the benefits of exercise and many pupils participate enthusiastically in the exceptional range of sports clubs provided by the school. The school has successfully worked to improve its attendance rate, which is very high with no pupils who are persistent absentees.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The staff team has worked hard to establish an ethos and culture of partnership and mutual respect which extends out to pupils and parents. All pupils are extremely well cared for but parents and carers specifically praise the school for the way in which it supports pupils with a wide range of special educational and medical needs, including those pupils who experience social, emotional and behavioural difficulties for a variety of reasons. These pupils benefit from very high quality support and consequently make good progress. Where appropriate, the school works actively with external agencies and introduces alternative curriculum arrangements to meet pupils’ needs. This helps to ensure that vulnerable pupils are successfully included in the life

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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of the school and that their education progresses well.

While most teaching is now good or better, there remain some inconsistencies which school leaders are addressing through training and support. Teachers make effective use of their knowledge of pupils’ progress and understanding from previous lessons when planning their next learning experiences. In one lesson, for example, a teacher correctly identified misconceptions that pupils had with square numbers and started the following lesson with an activity which reinforced the correct concepts using techniques that pupils had previously understood. Work is usually well matched to the needs of different ability groups within the class and the pace of learning is maintained well through the use of short, interactive tasks and appropriate use of resources. Dialogue between staff and pupils is often of good quality and marking is generally well related to the lesson’s learning objectives. This helps pupils make better progress by identifying what it is they need to do to improve their work.

The outstanding curriculum plays a significant part in engaging pupils and motivating them. Their very positive attitudes to school reflect pupils’ enjoyment of their learning experiences. During the inspection, for example, pupils in Year 6 were following a curriculum based upon A Midsummer Night’s Dream. The way in which subjects are being connected is particularly effective in filling pupils with enthusiasm as they work towards a performance at the end of term. Examples of this approach being used successfully through the school are proudly displayed, including such examples as work on ‘coasts’ from Year 5. The school has been successful in ensuring the high profile of English across the curriculum, and recognises the need to promote mathematics more effectively in a similar way. The classroom curriculum is enriched with an extremely broad and varied programme of theme days and off-site visits and participation in the wide range of cultural, sporting and social clubs is very good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection, the headteacher and her deputy have successfully implemented systems which share the leadership of the school more effectively. As a result, there is a collective enthusiasm for improving outcomes for pupils amongst all staff. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and assessment has been particularly rigorous and strongly focused upon raising pupil achievement. This has led to significant improvement in the overall quality of teaching and is leading to improved

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pupil progress in lessons.

The school’s leaders have ensured that they have an excellent understanding of the context of the community which they serve. Consequently, they have been able to take extremely well-targeted action to ensure that pupils develop a strong understanding of the diversity of the local, national and global community in which they live. This has been achieved through links with ethnically more diverse schools and charitable organisations abroad as well as extra-curricular activities such as language clubs.

The school is successful in establishing a secure partnership with parents and carers who are wholeheartedly supportive of all aspects of the school’s work. The school’s effective use of information about pupils’ progress ensures that equality of opportunity is well promoted. Pupils’ needs are understood well and every pupil has access to a curriculum which meets their needs. As a result, there are no groups of pupils who achieve significantly less well than the rest of the school.

Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding because procedures are comprehensive and secure and their impact is monitored by thorough evaluation. There is appropriate emphasis placed upon the safe use of ICT which is clearly understood by pupils at an age-appropriate level throughout the school, with Key Stage 2 pupils able to speak confidently about the risks associated with mobile telephones, for example.

The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support to the school’s leadership team and is fully aware of the significant changes made under the leadership of the headteacher.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy their learning because the activities engage them well. They enter the Nursery with skills and experiences broadly in line with those expected for their age and make satisfactory progress overall. This is because staff support learning and development effectively through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. This was seen in the nursery, for example, where children explored the texture and scent of jelly and were supported by staff in developing their language skills, discovering that it is slippery, cold, gooey and smells of strawberries. However, opportunities to develop children’s communication skills further are not always well supported by developmental, open-ended questioning. As a result, more able children do not always make progress in line with their capabilities because they are insufficiently challenged.

Children are well motivated and develop good attitudes to learning, especially where they have been involved in choosing themes. In reception, for example, boys have an interest in Dr Who and their role play area includes a Tardis. This is reflective of the overall good quality of the indoor learning environment which staff generally ensure is stimulating and lively. However, learning activities which children choose for themselves are not always sufficiently purposeful to ensure that children make progress in the areas of learning that are least well developed. Outdoor learning areas are not as consistently stimulating as those in the classrooms and this hinders children’s transfer of skills from one environment to the other.

Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Staff with day-to-day responsibility for the area have developed a good understanding of pupils’ strengths and needs, and track their progress well. However, this information is not yet used sufficiently well to ensure that learning activities are strongly focused on those needs across the facility as a whole.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Many commented positively upon the work done by the school to ensure their child enjoys learning. They are particularly pleased with the way the school communicates with parents,

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especially where this is in connection with their child's special educational or medical needs. Some parents write of their child's good progress and developing confidence due to the school's efforts and recognise the changes that have taken place in the last three years. The inspection team generally agree with all of the positive comments made by parents. Very few questionnaires included a negative comment. One comment highlighting a concern with paving slabs was investigated and found to be resolved satisfactorily.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fairview Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 581 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	76	17	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	73	18	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	46	61	25	33	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	59	28	37	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	64	25	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	68	23	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	60	30	40	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	41	55	28	37	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	55	73	18	24	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	55	29	39	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	49	32	43	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	50	67	22	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	75	16	21	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fairview Community Primary School, Gillingham, ME8 0NU

Thank you for welcoming us warmly into your school when we visited recently. We very much enjoyed talking with you and watching your lessons. We think Fairview is a good school that looks after you in an outstanding way and helps you make good progress.

We were particularly impressed with how well you get on with each other and your teachers. Your behaviour is outstanding and that makes your school a really pleasant place to be – well done! The teachers who lead your school have made sure that your lessons are well taught and that you have an outstanding range of different learning activities to take part in. You tell us that you find these interesting and enjoyable. It was really good to see how well you are learning about being part of the global community through your work with pupils in other schools and your fundraising for people in need around the world. Many of you are keen to take on responsibilities in school and you do this well.

Your headteacher wants to make your school even better, so we have asked her to:

- help all the children in the Nursery and Reception make better progress, and
- speed up everyone's progress in mathematics by making sure you are challenged and get to use mathematics regularly in different subjects.

You can help the school to be better by letting your teachers know if you think you need work which is more challenging.

Yours sincerely
Jon Carter
Lead inspector

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