

The Fairfield Community Primary School

Carnforth Drive, Worcester, WR4 9HG

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Early years provision		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders have not been successful in creating a culture where pupils behave and achieve well.
- Leaders are not able to provide clear summaries of the progress made by classes and groups of pupils. They do not analyse information about attendance and behaviour to help them set priorities.
- The curriculum is not well planned to help pupils make progress from one year to the next and does not prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The records kept when concerns are raised about pupils' well-being lack detail and some concerns have not been acted upon with sufficient urgency.
- Governors have not ensured that teaching is effective and pupils achieve well. They do not provide appropriate challenge and support to school leaders.
- Attendance is consistently well below the average nationally and part-time attendance is used inappropriately; pupils are away from school too often and for too long. Exclusions are used too frequently.
- Poor behaviour from a minority of pupils disrupts learning and makes pupils feel unsafe. Some pupils ignore instructions from adults and speak and behave aggressively towards them.
- Teaching does not always build upon what pupils of different abilities already know, understand and can do.
- Some teachers are not effective in teaching basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not explain well enough how pupils should improve their work.
- Teaching assistants are not always used in the best ways to help pupils learn.
- Attainment is below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Not enough pupils, including some with special educational needs, make the progress they should.
- In some classes, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is well below that of their classmates.
- Children in the early years do not make as much progress as they should.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher has made some recent improvements to school policies and systems including those related to keeping pupils safe. He has also clarified leaders' roles and responsibilities.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses in teaching.
- The majority of pupils behave well and are keen to learn.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005 with an initial focus on behaviour and safety. It was subsequently deemed a Section 5 inspection. The school received 10 minutes' notice of the inspection.
- The headteacher has been absent due to ill health since summer 2014 and was not present during the inspection. The inspection team liaised with the acting headteacher, who is the substantive deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors observed learning in 14 lessons. Five of these observations were carried out jointly with the acting headteacher. All classes were visited at least once.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and listened to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the English and mathematics subject leaders and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).
- Inspectors talked with pupils and staff informally and a discussion was held with a group of older pupils.
- Lunchtime and playtime activities were observed and inspectors visited the breakfast club.
- Inspectors considered the school's own surveys of parents' views and spoke to parents informally at the start and end of the school day. There were not enough responses to the on-line survey (Parent View) for inspectors to view these.
- Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered a number of documents including records of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, a range of school policies and information about the curriculum and about pupils' achievement. Records relating to safeguarding and to pupils' behaviour and attendance were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Morag Kophamel, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Morris-King

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- There has been a significant turnover of staff since the last inspection. There are several part-time and temporary teaching staff.
- The English subject leader is new to this responsibility.
- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British.
- Three fifths of pupils are disadvantaged and eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children). This is much higher than average.
- Approximately a third of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs. This is more than double the national average.
- The early years provision comprises a Nursery class and a Reception class. Children in the Nursery attend in the mornings only. Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The governors manage a breakfast club which runs in the school hall each morning.
- The school does not meet the current government floor standards which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have the knowledge and skills to teach essential skills in reading, writing and mathematics well
 - teachers plan and teach logical sequences of lessons which take account of pupils' previous learning and develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject
 - the tasks in each lesson meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able and those with disabilities and special educational needs
 - teachers' feedback, both written and verbal, helps to move pupils on in their learning
 - all teachers use teaching assistants effectively so that they have a positive impact on pupils' progress in every lesson.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by:
 - ensuring that all pupils know how they are expected to behave in lessons in order to learn successfully and all staff consistently and positively reinforce this
 - minimising the use of physical intervention and exclusion by developing a broader range of strategies to support pupils with more complex and challenging behaviour and checking that all staff apply these strategies consistently
 - ensuring that staff on duty at lunchtime act as role models and teach good manners and social skills.
- Improve pupils' attendance by:
 - making clear to families the links between attendance and achievement
 - promoting and rewarding good attendance
 - eliminating the use of part-time timetables for pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and provision in the Reception class so that it is at least good and ensure

that children's safety is given the highest priority.

■ Improve leadership and management by:

- ensuring that leaders use their knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in teaching to prioritise training and support for teachers so that they all develop the skills that they need to be effective
- regularly producing a succinct analysis of the progress that different classes and groups are making in reading, writing and mathematics and ensuring that leaders and governors understand how this compares to achievement nationally
- analysing information about behaviour incidents, exclusions, physical intervention and pupils' attendance so that patterns and trends are identified and variations for different groups are spotted so that appropriate action can be taken
- ensuring that child protection concerns, and the actions taken by the school, are carefully documented and that staff follow the clear guidance in the school safeguarding policy about when referrals should be made to the local authority
- ensuring that governors develop the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities and provide appropriate challenge and support to school leaders.

An external review of governance and a review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders and governors have not been successful in tackling poor behaviour and inadequate achievement or in addressing the inequalities that arise from differences in teaching between classes.
- Leaders are not able to give a clear summary of the progress that pupils make from their different starting points. This means that they cannot accurately compare the progress of classes and groups of pupils either within the school or with all pupils nationally.
- Leaders do not analyse information about pupils' attendance and behaviour or about the use of exclusions and physical intervention. This means that they are unable to identify any patterns and trends or use their findings to set priorities for action.
- The curriculum has been adapted because of the changed requirements of the new National Curriculum but it is not planned well enough to ensure that pupils make good progress in different subjects as they move through year groups.
- The curriculum does not do enough to tackle discrimination or to prepare pupils well for life in modern democratic Britain. Pupils have little understanding of what it means to be British. The Year 5 and 6 pupils who spoke to inspectors were unclear about the difference between nationality and faith. For example, they did not understand that a person could be both Hindu and British. Many pupils know little about life beyond the local area.
- Leaders and governors do not evaluate the impact of the ways that they spend the pupil premium well enough and so cannot demonstrate whether it is raising achievement or improving well-being for disadvantaged pupils. Published data indicate that their use of the pupil premium is not effective in closing gaps in attainment between these pupils and the others nationally.
- When concerns are raised about pupils' safety or well-being, written records do not always contain sufficient detail or log all the actions that have been taken. Referrals to the local authority have not always been made when they should have been. Consequently, the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are not as effective as they ought to be.
- The acting headteacher has made improvements to record keeping but this is very recent. The new safeguarding policy is comprehensive and is well understood by staff so that they know what to do if they have concerns. Leaders and governors have ensured that all appropriate checks are made on new staff prior to appointment.
- The acting headteacher and other leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Together, they have begun to put support in place for subjects and individual teachers but this work is hampered by high staff turnover and by gaps in permanent staffing. Subject leaders say that the acting headteacher has given them clear roles and responsibilities and this is helping them to do their jobs more effectively.
- The primary physical education and sport premium has been used to employ specialist coaches who teach lessons and provide additional sporting activities at lunchtime and after school. As a result, more pupils participate in regular physical activity. Leaders have not evaluated the impact of this provision for different groups of pupils.
- Since last summer, when the local authority became aware of the significant weaknesses in the school, it has supported the school in a range of ways; such as by working with the acting headteacher to improve systems for evaluating and improving the quality of teaching. The local authority has also commissioned consultant leaders from other local schools to advise on issues including behaviour management. These actions have not yet been successful in remedying the weaknesses within the school.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is not effective. Governors do not know enough about the quality of teaching and about the achievement of different groups of pupils. Prior to this school year, governors had not ensured that appropriate performance management arrangements were in place for teachers. This means that they had not rewarded good teaching or tackled underperformance effectively. Leaders and governors recognised that improvements were needed and a more effective performance management system, with clear links between performance and pay, has been introduced this year. Minutes from their meetings show that governors do not evaluate or challenge the reports that they receive from school leaders. Consequently, they do not know the impact of school policies and spending decisions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. The poor behaviour of a minority of pupils disrupts learning for others.
- Some pupils show a lack of respect to adults by ignoring them, answering back, swearing or being physically aggressive.
- Lunchtimes are disorderly. The dining room is noisy. Leaders and lunchtime staff do not ensure that pupils develop their social skills and manners when eating together.
- Some pupils are very boisterous when playing outside which sometimes results in others getting hurt. During the inspection, several older boys ran onto the grass or hid behind playground equipment when they were asked by an adult to come inside. This set a very poor example to younger pupils and wasted lesson time.
- Many pupils behave well in school, try hard in lessons and pay attention to their teachers.
- The acting headteacher has recently introduced a new behaviour policy which has provided some structure to the school's systems for managing pupils' behaviour. However, this is not applied consistently by all staff. Some staff, parents and pupils told inspectors that the new policy is starting to lead to improvements but others say that it has not yet had an impact.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. Some pupils say that they feel unsafe at times because of the misbehaviour of other pupils.
- Many pupils do not attend school regularly. Overall attendance is very low in comparison to all schools nationally and shows no sign of improvement. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is particularly poor. Many pupils arrive late to school.
- The school does not have well-established and effective systems for managing pupils' behaviour. Rates of fixed-term exclusion and physical intervention are high. Too many pupils, mainly those who exhibit challenging behaviour, are on part-time timetables for lengthy periods; sometimes more than a term.
- Pupils told inspectors that anti-bullying messages have been made clear in lessons and assemblies. They said that this has helped and that bullying is now unusual.
- Older pupils talked confidently about the ways that they have been taught to keep themselves safe; for example, when using the internet or mobile phones, when crossing roads or with regard to drugs and alcohol.

The quality of teaching**is inadequate**

- Not all teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils' behaviour well. Teachers sometimes do not notice or challenge pupils when they do not listen or when they chat to their friends instead of working. Some classrooms are too noisy and this has an adverse effect on pupils' ability to concentrate on their work.
- Teachers do not always plan and teach sequences of lessons which build logically on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding in order for them to make the next steps in their learning.
- Teachers do not plan pupils' work well enough to meet the wide- ranging needs of learners. Too often teachers ask all pupils to complete the same task which results in some becoming confused and others becoming bored. For example, in a lesson about the sounds that letters make (phonics), all pupils were asked to read and write the same words. Some most-able pupils could do this easily and so made little progress. Other pupils, including some with special educational needs, were unable to read and write the words correctly. They too made little progress.
- Basic skills, such as mental recall and calculation skills in mathematics and spelling and grammar in writing, are not consistently well taught. This is because not all teachers have the knowledge and skills to teach these important skills effectively. The high turnover of staff means that some teachers were not present when training was provided to help them develop their skills in teaching these aspects of mathematics and English.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils, both verbally and in their marking, is sometimes too general and so pupils are not always clear enough about how they should improve their work.
- While some teaching assistants actively support learning in whole-class lessons, others are too passive and so have little impact on pupils' progress. Teaching assistants are usually effective when they are delivering intervention programmes for small groups and individuals. This is because they have been well trained in teaching specific skills.
- Some examples of more effective teaching were seen during the inspection. For example, in a Year 2 writing lesson the teacher skilfully structured her teaching and the activities so that all pupils could participate and achieve, which they did enthusiastically.

The achievement of pupils**is inadequate**

- In 2014, the attainment of pupils leaving the school in Year 6 was well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. On average, pupils were more than two years behind other pupils nationally.
- Compared with all pupils nationally, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils leaving Fairfield in 2014 was very low. They were almost three years behind in mathematics, two and a half years behind in writing and nearly two years behind in reading. Compared with others in the school, disadvantaged pupils leaving Year 6 were around half a term behind their classmates in reading but were a term and a half ahead in mathematics. Their attainment in writing was similar.
- School information shows that the progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school varies considerably from class to class. However, in some year groups disadvantaged pupils are as much as 18 months behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Rates of progress vary across different classes and different ability groups. However, in most classes and subjects, particularly in writing and mathematics, not enough pupils are making the progress expected of them.
- Less-able pupils, including those with disabilities and special educational needs, are sometimes given work in class which is too difficult for them. This means that the work does not meet their needs. As a result, they become de-motivated and fall further behind.

- In contrast, some interventions carried out with individuals and small groups of pupils to help them catch up, are successful in developing specific skills.
- In 2014, few pupils reached the higher levels at the end of Year 2, particularly in mathematics and writing. No Year 6 pupils reached the higher levels in either mathematics or writing and only one pupil reached Level 5 in reading.
- The work in pupils' books shows that some teachers do provide a good level of challenge for the most-able pupils in their class. Some of these pupils are highly motivated. They approach their work with positive attitudes and perseverance and so make good progress. However, in other classes teachers set work for the most able which is too easy and so their achievement is limited.

The early years provision

is inadequate

- Teaching is not good enough across the early years to ensure that children make as much progress as they should. Almost two thirds of children do not reach a good level of development by the time they leave the Reception class. This means that they are not well prepared for Year 1.
- The Reception classroom is noisy, disorganised and untidy. Some activities and resources in the classroom and outside have not been well thought out and pose a safety risk to children. Although most children behave well, some become silly and do not co-operate well with one another when they are not closely supervised by an adult.
- Some children in the Reception class do not recognise numbers up to five and many are not able to recognise or form letters correctly. These important skills are not taught well enough.
- Although information about individual children's progress is recorded, the early years leader is not able to provide an overview of progress for each class or say how the progress of different groups varies in different areas of learning.
- The Nursery classroom provides a calm, orderly and welcoming environment. Adults have developed nurturing and positive relationships with children. Children are helped to feel settled and safe so that they are confident to participate in the range of interesting activities provided.
- Records of pupils' achievements in the Nursery class provide evidence that most children are making at least typical progress across all seven areas of learning. Records in the Reception class are not as thorough and do not provide secure evidence of a broad curriculum.
- At snack time, staff take opportunities to talk to children about healthy eating and lifestyles and to promote good manners and model social conversation.

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	134707
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	456445

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Girling
Headteacher	Justin Schiffmann
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2012
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