

Inspection of Fairhaven Primary School

Barnett Lane, Wordsley, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 5PY

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The headteacher and staff have created a nurturing school where the adults really care about the pupils. Pupils are happy and friendly. They respect adults and trust them to sort out any bullying should it occur. Parents appreciate the warm, friendly greetings they receive from leaders on the school gate.

Everyone is treated with respect. Staff teach pupils to value differences. The 'fair' in Fairhaven shines through. Pupils say, 'It would be a boring world if we all looked the same, talked the same, behaved the same'.

Despite these positive features, pupils do not achieve well enough. Some pupils do not learn to read fluently. Quite often, pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught. Pupils do not build on their learning well from the early years through to the end of Year 6. This is because leaders have not given enough thought to what they want pupils to know in each subject in key stages 1 and 2.

Pupils behave well. Those who have additional behavioural needs are well supported, including those within the nurture provision. Pupils value the opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as peacemakers. They help pupils get on together.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Children get a secure start to school in the early years. They achieve well across the whole curriculum. Staff are well trained and know what children should learn at each stage. The new nursery provision is proving popular. The early years provides a good foundation for what pupils will learn in key stage 1.

In key stages 1 and 2, the school teaches the full range of subjects. However, in some of these subjects, leaders have not agreed what is the most important content for pupils to remember. Leaders' plans do not show the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn clearly enough. Teachers are unsure about the prior knowledge pupils need before they tackle new work. Weaknesses in curriculum planning mean that pupils sometimes find it hard to remember important information from earlier learning. Teachers tend to focus on testing pupils rather than checking how well pupils remember what they have been taught in each subject.

Teaching pupils to read has been a focus for leaders. Reading is taught regularly across the school. However, there are inconsistencies in the way phonics is taught and in the resources that teachers use. Reading books in Reception closely match the sounds that children know. This is not the case for pupils in other year groups. This slows their ability to use their phonics to read words they have not met before. Pupils enjoy texts from the 'Reading River'. They talk fondly of books they have read. For example, speaking of a particular book, they said, 'It talked you through the ups and downs of life'.

Leaders have a structure in place to help teachers plan and teach mathematics effectively. Teachers know what they will teach pupils and when they will teach it. They check what pupils know and can do. Pupils use their knowledge to tackle challenging problem-solving activities. Leaders use schemes to help them develop subjects such as science and design and technology (DT). This is beginning to help teachers to know what to teach and when.

The special educational needs coordinator works diligently to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Additional teaching and pastoral support are well focused on ensuring that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive because they find the extra help valuable. Parents appreciate the professional and sensitive support that their children get. They say it makes a difference.

Most staff feel well supported by leaders and are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the training that leaders provide.

Governors are proud of the school's kind and caring ethos. However, leaders' planning for improvement does not set clear actions and measures. As a result, governors are not able to provide enough challenge to leaders on the way the curriculum is designed and how this is helping pupils learn.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Skiing, sightseeing in London, theatre and museum visits all add to pupils' experiences. The local area is used well to support visits and learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these visits. The 'adopt-a-chef' programme helps pupils to understand healthy eating and how to prepare food safely. Parents comment positively on the way staff work hard to bring back a little happiness and normality since the pandemic.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and prioritise their welfare. Staff are well trained. They understand their duty to keep pupils safe and report any concerns. Leaders work closely with external agencies to help pupils and their families. They follow up their actions in a timely manner.

Pupils feel safe at school. They know who to go to if they have any worries. Pupils learn to identify and manage risks. For example, they learn about water safety, road safety and how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- The curriculum is not coherent or sequenced well. Pupils do not remember enough about what they have learned. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum plans for all subjects set out the knowledge that pupils should know and when

they should know it. Leaders should check the progress pupils make through the curriculum and if they understand and remember it.

- The reading programme is not effective for all pupils. Some pupils fall behind. Leaders need to ensure that the teaching of phonics is accurate and consistent. Leaders should ensure that reading books directly match the sounds pupils are learning in Year 1 and Year 2.
- Governors have not held leaders to account well enough for the quality of education and pupils' achievement. Governors need to improve their skills so that they can hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance.
- Leaders' planning for improvement is not matched closely enough to the weaknesses in the school. At times, the actions taken have not been sufficiently focused on the most important areas for improvement or carried out quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure that action plans clearly set out what is required to improve the quality of education in a succinct and manageable manner.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	103786
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10201037
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Annette Whalley
Headteacher	Thomas Garner
Website	www.fairhaven.dudley.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	9 December 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school opened a governor-led nursery provision for two- and three-year olds in September 2020.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders, pupils and members of the governing body. An inspector met with the chair and two members of the local governing board, and looked at the minutes of local governing board meetings.

- The lead inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority and the school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history and DT. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were checked. This included checks on the single central record, and staff training and safeguarding records.
- An inspector discussed the school's records on attendance and behaviour with leaders.
- An inspector analysed the school's self-evaluation document and plans for improvement. A range of policies and documentation on the school website were scrutinised.
- Inspectors talked informally with pupils in lessons and at break times, as well as in pupil group meetings.
- Inspectors talked to a number of parents as they dropped their children off at the start of the school day. They also took account of the 53 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey.
- Inspectors met with a number of staff and took account of the 23 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Kirsty Foulkes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Devinder Riat	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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