

# Fulfen Primary School

Rugeley Road, Burntwood, WS7 9BJ

**Inspection dates** 16–17 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school's good improvement since the last inspection is due to the very skilled headteacher, the very effective leadership team and to good teaching.
- In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils of all ages made good gains in skills and knowledge in 2014 as the school accelerated their progress.
- Pupils now achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6.
- Disadvantaged and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs now make good progress.
- Provision for children in the Early Years has improved and is now good. The setting is well-organised and welcoming. Resources, both inside and outdoors, are good which has helped to consolidate children's good progress.
- Pupils feel safe, behave well and enjoy school.
- Teaching now is almost always good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers check on pupils' progress regularly and help them to improve their work.
- The activities teachers provide for pupils make learning relevant and fun. Pupils' learning is enlivened by regular visitors, trips to places of local interest and a wide range of enrichment activities. These support pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very well.
- The school's leaders, including governors, make sure that any emerging weaknesses are quickly addressed. They are taking effective action to improve teaching and achievement further.
- Governors are very knowledgeable about the school's work. They visit regularly and closely monitor all aspects of its work. They provide effective support and are rigorous in holding leaders to account.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, individual pupils are not given challenging enough work to do. When this happens they lose concentration and progress slows.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in the use of spelling and grammar as they do in reading and other subjects.
- Teachers do not consistently provide clear guidance or feedback that will help pupils understand how to improve, or check that they act on this advice in their subsequent work.
- Staff do not share their skills and expertise sufficiently to improve their teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, three of which were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books during lessons and scrutinised their work in previous exercise books.
- Meetings were held with staff, two groups of pupils and two members of the governing body. A conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them informally at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors took account of the 106 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They had conversations with parents and carers as they dropped off their children at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the 27 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- School documentation was examined, including data on pupils' current progress and records of governing body meetings, teachers' performance, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Documentation relating to the care of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs was also reviewed.

## Inspection team

Andrew Stafford, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maria Rees-Johnson	Additional Inspector
Carol Deakin	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Fulfen Primary school is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes in each age group, including Nursery and Reception.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action, at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. Only a very small number of pupils has an Education, Health and Care plan.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is lower than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In September 2013, the governors appointed a new headteacher and a teacher to lead the Nursery. In January 2014, they appointed a teacher to lead on the coordination of English. In February 2014, they appointed one teacher and, in April 2014, three teachers, including a new leader of the Early Years and a new special educational needs coordinator. In addition, two new teachers also started at the school in September 2014.
- Recently completed major building work took place in the school last year.
- There is a before-school breakfast club that is not managed by the governing body and did not form part of the inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and thereby achievement by ensuring that:
  - pupils achieve well in the use of grammar and spelling
  - pupils are set challenging work in all lessons so that they reach their full potential
  - teachers mark work clearly so that pupils know what and how to improve, and check that pupils respond to the guidance they receive
  - staff are given more opportunities to share and learn from the outstanding teaching already evident in the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has led the school exceptionally well since her appointment. She is very well supported by other senior leaders and the effective governing body, and this has led to rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Leaders and managers work well together and share the same high expectations of staff and pupils. This has contributed very effectively to the improvements noted. As one parent observed, 'The school has improved immensely over the past twelve months.'
- Teachers are set demanding targets which are linked to the national *Teachers' Standards*. It is a reflection of the senior leaders' effectiveness that the quality of teaching has become consistently good despite the recent changes of staff and the building works. A combination of very strong internal support and careful mentoring by senior leaders has enabled teachers to improve quickly.
- Performance management and salary progression are linked closely and effectively to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The school's strong caring environment has a huge impact on the daily life of the school. It places high value on developing pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills, enjoyment of learning and all individuals' self-esteem.
- Other leaders and managers, who are subject or phase leaders, are well supported by senior leaders and are becoming increasingly confident in their roles. However, opportunities for staff to observe, share and adopt the outstanding practice already evident within the school are not yet sufficient to impact on their own practice.
- The subjects that are taught are described by pupils as 'really fun'. The wide range of subjects and activities the school offers contributes very strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Lessons are enriched well through a range of after-school activities and by opportunities for pupils to learn a foreign language, to play musical instruments and to sing and dance. Visits, including residential visits, together with opportunities to develop sporting and artistic skills and links to the local secondary school, also enhance the learning opportunities the school offers its pupils.
- The school is developing its preferred approach to assessment and is awaiting guidance about the descriptors for attainment, due to be published this term.
- The school is making good use of the primary sports funding. A number of initiatives have been successful in raising attainment. For example, the school is using specialist teachers to provide additional activities while supporting the training of staff. This is increasing participation in sport and in successful inter-school competitions and, along with the healthy school meals provided, contributes effectively to pupils' well-being.
- The school develops very effective relationships with parents and carers. As one parent said, 'I know how well my son has done well before we get home. He can't wait to tell me.' Many parents speak about how approachable staff are.
- The local authority has provided recent support to the school and is monitoring provision and pupils' progress in Key Stage 2, following the dip in 2013. The local authority's expectation that the school would fully meet its predictions and targets for this year have been confirmed.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors challenge and support the school well as a result of effective training and their own broad experience and expertise. They regularly visit the school and monitor its work. They have a good knowledge of how well pupils are progressing and understand the data about pupils' outcomes. They know the school's strengths and areas for development. They are aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact it has on progress and attendance. They know about the quality of teaching. They ensure that teachers are set high targets and reward staff when this is appropriate. Any

staff underperformance is tackled decisively. Safeguarding arrangements are rigorously applied and meet all statutory requirements. Governors have close links with individual members of staff and regularly meet to discuss developments in the quality of teaching and improvements in pupils' achievement. This contact is also providing opportunities for governors to monitor how well the curriculum is preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In almost all lessons, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and are keen to take part in all activities across the full range of subjects they are taught. They cooperate well with staff and with each other. The way pupils collaborated in many lessons observed was a good indication of their high levels of confidence and respect for others. All pupils are polite and well mannered. The absence of any litter or graffiti reflects on how well pupils respect the school.
- Very occasionally, when teaching is not as effective as it mostly is, a few pupils lose concentration and do not complete their work as well as they should. Even then, they are careful not to spoil the learning of others. No disruptive behaviour was seen during the inspection and pupils report that it rarely occurs. On those very few occasions when it does, pupils say that it is dealt with very quickly by staff. Pupils are well aware of the school's system of rewards and sanctions and say these are fair and that they make them work hard. School records show that exclusions from school are well below average.
- Pupils behave sensibly when moving around the school between lessons and at lunchtimes. This was tested out to the full during the inspection because of the warm and sultry weather. Pupils' behaviour reflects the value the school places on rights and responsibilities, and pupils are aware of the contribution they make to the harmonious learning community. Pupils appreciate the responsibilities they are given to help run the school and to support younger children. As a result, they meet a very wide variety of pupils, with a vast range of experiences, and say this leads to a tolerant understanding of the differences that exist in modern Britain.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are knowledgeable about different forms of bullying, including those related to internet use and mobile phones. Pupils told inspectors that, while name calling and minor bullying incidents occur from time to time, they are confident in the ability of staff to manage these well. Pupils have good strategies for keeping themselves safe and preventing any discrimination.
- Inspection evidence shows leaders make effective use, both of the school's own staff and external agencies, employing more extensive support for those few pupils with known problems. Those pupils with behavioural and emotional challenges are fully included in school life.
- Attendance has improved and is above average.
- The vast majority of parents, and all staff who completed the questionnaire, consider that pupils behave well and are kept safe in school.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is good because it enables pupils to achieve well. Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well.
- Teachers know the pupils well and enjoy teaching them. Teachers' good subject knowledge means that work is presented in stimulating and exciting ways which capture pupils' imagination. Teachers plan their lessons very carefully to ensure they interest pupils. They check carefully that pupils are clear about what skills, knowledge and understanding they are meant to be learning. For example, pupils are taught how to test out ideas and evaluate each other's work well. This enables all pupils to enjoy their learning and grow in confidence as they move through the school.

- The teaching of mathematics has improved and is now good. Teachers systematically develop pupils' ability to use and apply mathematical concepts. This gives pupils the confidence to use their mathematical skills creatively and accurately in their appropriate ability sets.
- The newly refurbished and well-equipped accommodation provides a good learning environment. Display is colourful and used well to clarify key learning points that pupils use in their work.
- Specialist teachers are used very effectively to challenge pupils and extend their learning. In music, for example, records show that the progress pupils made is very rapid. One parent described a recent musical production as, 'Fantastic! I could not believe the standard of singing and dancing and the confidence pupils showed.'
- Teachers work closely with teaching assistants, who play a valuable role in aiding learning, especially for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants, when planning lessons. These additional staff help assess pupils' progress and provide good support for them, in small groups and on a one-to-one basis, to help them improve their reading skills. These pupils not only progress well but, as the school's data show, are closing the gaps on their classmates successfully.
- Homework is set regularly and, in discussion with pupils, it is evident that they work equally hard to complete it, as they do their class work.
- Most teachers have increasingly high expectations of pupils' achievement which are reflected in the often challenging targets and work set for them. However, the level of challenge is sometimes too low in the use of grammar and spelling tasks pupils are given, and this affects pupils' rates of progress in this aspect of literacy.
- Marking is regular, up to date, and accurately describes what pupils know and can do. However, teachers do not always make clear how pupils might improve or check that they act on the advice given to correct mistakes and avoid them in future.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Achievement has improved since the previous inspection and now pupils in all year groups, including more-able pupils, make good progress from their different starting points. The headteacher closely monitors the quality of teaching in all year groups. This has led to pupils' progress increasing rapidly.
- For the most-able pupils in Year 6 in 2014 (those that attained the highest levels at the end of Key Stage 1), three quarters made better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's records show that the vast majority of the other most-able pupils in the school are also on track to make better than expected progress.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2013 were broadly in line with the national averages overall but stronger in reading, mathematics and English grammar than in writing, especially for boys. Some weaker teaching contributed to this dip in standards. The school's extensive tracking information shows that the standards of all pupils currently in the school are on track to exceed the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, both girls and boys in Year 6 achieved standards in reading, writing and mathematics which were above the latest national averages. This represented good progress in relation to their broadly average starting points. However, progress in the use of grammar and spelling was not as good.
- In 2013, the results at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average. School evidence shows that pupils in Key Stage 1 in 2014 reached standards that were slightly above those in 2013. This represents good progress from their starting points at the end of the Early Years. Pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are making good progress and a high proportion are now reaching standards that exceed age-related expectations.

- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is now consistently good for the younger children. The outcomes of the phonics screening check for pupils in Year 1 in 2013 were above average, maintaining the above-average 2012 results. Those pupils who re-took the check in Year 2 also showed improved results. There was a slight dip in 2014 partly as a result of pupils having less experience of sounding out 'pseudo' words. However, recent retesting has shown that good phonics teaching has led a large majority to achieve the nationally expected standard.
- All pupils, including those from lower starting points, are now making good progress with early reading skills and spelling. The school has developed reading particularly well, and there is good support for reading at home. Pupils work out unfamiliar words confidently and have a good understanding of the stories they are reading. Pupils read books that are appropriate for their age with fluency and expression.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are successfully meeting the challenging targets set for them and often make very good progress. The school has high expectations of all these pupils, regardless of any barriers to learning they have to overcome.
- Pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium are also making good progress. At the end of both 2013 and 2014, there were too few pupils in Year 6 to compare results with those of their classmates or with their peers nationally without the risk of identifying individuals. Current school records show that all the pupils throughout the school supported through the pupil premium made good progress in 2014. The gaps between them and their classmates are closing rapidly in English and mathematics. The school uses the designated funds well to support these pupils, including small-group support and special teaching and support programmes in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The rapid rate of pupils' progress demonstrates the success of the school in making sure that every pupil gets an equal chance to succeed while valuing differences in their backgrounds and beliefs.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children join the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are usually typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years.
- The Early Years provides children with an exciting range of activities that encourage them to wonder, ask questions, explore and discover things for themselves. The inspection took place early in the year when the youngest children had only been in school a short time. Despite this short experience of school, they were already enjoying the wide range of resources, confidently joining in with other children and actively taking part in discussions.
- Staff get to know the children quickly and intervene particularly effectively to support their speech and language development. Effective teaching and the very well-resourced learning areas ensure that children have a good range of activities and resources that help them make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff check children's progress carefully. Staff are skilful teachers and make learning fun, challenging children to think and work together. For example, children took turns and got shapes to fit together as they talked about building the tower taller.
- Childrens' rates of progress have improved since the previous inspection as a result of current good teaching, coupled with a more exciting and challenging curriculum, provided both inside and outdoors. This provision extends their physical activities, and the opportunities for investigation and creative development are promoted very well. Children make good progress in the Early Years and all are well prepared for the transition into learning in Year 1.
- Standards in writing have been lower than in other areas of learning, though childrens' current work shows that their rate of progress has improved as a result of the introduction of a structured programme that links sounds and letters.
- The recently appointed leader of the Early Years enthuses the staff and has ensured that provision is improving rapidly. Childrens' progress is monitored very effectively and recorded carefully in their

'Learning Journeys'. Parents are encouraged to make their observations of their child's development. There is close teamwork between all adults and a strong commitment to helping parents and carers support childrens' learning.

- Children are well cared for and procedures are in place to ensure that they are safeguarded effectively.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124209
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	442551

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	392
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Jeffries
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 510400
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