

# Fulfen Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124209
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359608
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Tim Bristow HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	391
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Jeffries
<b>Headteacher</b>	Robert Baker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Rugeley Road Burntwood WS7 9BJ
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<b>Email address</b>	office@fulfen.staffs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 15 teachers and visited 26 lessons. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, lesson plans, school policies and questionnaires from 153 parents and carers, 31 pupils and 22 staff.

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

- Has there been sufficient improvement to the progress made by pupils in writing to support the school judgement of achievement as satisfactory?
- Is the school's assertion that the curriculum and teaching are much closer to a judgement of good accurate?
- Has there been sufficient improvement to the outcomes for pupils since the last inspection to warrant good grades for leadership and governance?
- Is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage good as judged by the school or is it satisfactory?

## Information about the school

The school is an above-average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and from homes where English is not the first language is well below average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school has achieved National Healthy Schools status.

Since the last inspection the Tree Tops Nursery that was separately registered and subject to its own inspection requirements has amalgamated with the school. Consequently, it was included in 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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Overall the quality of education that pupils receive is satisfactory. However, very strong leadership from the headteacher and good governance have led to some significant improvements since the previous inspection. The Early Years Foundation Stage now provides children with a good start. While teaching is satisfactory overall, the good use of assessment has strengthened it considerably. In 2010 assessment results for the end of Year 6 show that for the first time in a number of years attainment was above average. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities is good because of the good quality of the care, guidance and support that they receive. These improvements have been brought about because of the accurate self-evaluation by school leaders based on robust monitoring of the school's work. Consequently, the school demonstrates good capacity for improvement.

Achievement is satisfactory because in most years pupils leave Year 6 with standards that are broadly average after making satisfactory progress. While progress is satisfactory overall, it is uneven. For example, in lessons that are satisfactory, pupils make slower progress than they do where the lessons are good.

Pupils demonstrate good behaviour both within lessons and around the school. They make a good contribution to the community. For example, a group of older pupils have the role of learning platform champions. This means that they support other pupils and adults when they are learning to use the school's information and communication technology (ICT) learning network. Pupils' moral and social development is good. Their cultural development is limited because there are not yet sufficient opportunities for them to develop this aspect.

The school has successfully ensured that teaching is never less than satisfactory by establishing a consistency of approach among all teachers, such as the use of learning objectives and success criteria in lessons, that ensures pupils know what it is they are learning about. In nearly all mathematics and English lessons assessment information is used well to group pupils by prior attainment. However, for the more-able pupils, the work is not sufficiently challenging in a few lessons so that they do not make progress that is as fast as it could be. In some satisfactory lessons the pace of learning is slower than it could be, particularly when pupils are sitting on the carpet listening to the teacher. There are some strengths to the curriculum, such as the good range of extra-curricular sporting activities that help to ensure the pupils' good healthy lifestyles. The school is in the process of developing a creative curriculum, but currently the opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are less effective than they could be. Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Pupils report how much they enjoy coming to school to learn happily in this safe and secure environment.

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The school has accurately identified where it needs to promote community cohesion, but the plans for a few improvements to be made are in the early stage of development. School leaders have tried hard to establish partnerships with schools in contrasting localities. However, the impact of this has been less effective than it could be.

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

- Ensure that teaching is good overall so that achievement continues to improve by:
  - improving the pace of learning in satisfactory lessons
  - challenging the more able more effectively
  - strengthening the cross-curricular links so that literacy and numeracy skills can be applied in other subjects
  - sharing the good practice that exists within the school.
- Improve pupils' cultural development and the promotion of community cohesion by:
  - prioritising the identified improvements to community cohesion and implementing them
  - indentifying more opportunities within the curriculum to develop cultural awareness
  - establishing stronger links with contrasting communities.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

<b>3</b>
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Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress so that usually their standards are significantly above average by the end of Year 2. In the last few years the progress of pupils at Key Stage 2 has been slow, but improvements to teaching have ensured that progress in reading and mathematics is at least satisfactory. Weaknesses across the school in writing have now been successfully tackled, so that the progress they make, that was previously inadequate, is now satisfactory and accelerating. In 2010 results for Year 6 shows that the very large majority made the expected progress in English and mathematics.

In lessons, the engagement of pupils in their learning is generally good. For example, a group of Year 4 pupils spoke very knowledgeably about the benefit of writing targets and the teacher's advice on improving their work. In the lessons that are satisfactory, a few pupils do not complete as much work as they could, particularly if the teacher or teaching assistant is working with others. More able pupils generally receive work that is harder than others in the class, but it is not as challenging as it could be. It does not concentrate sufficiently on pupils applying their skills to develop their creativity, independence or problem-solving ability.

Pupils report that they feel safe in school and that there is very little bullying. During the Arctic conditions experienced during the inspection they were all observed appropriately dressed and playing very sensibly at break and lunch time. Usually attendance is above

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average. In Key Stages 1 and 2 this was particularly impressive given the very poor weather conditions during the inspection.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

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

## How effective is the provision?

A very small minority of parents expressed their concern that the school is not meeting the needs of their children. This is because they think that their children are not making as good progress in some classes because of the differing quality of teaching. Inspectors agree that the quality of teaching varies, but the school has successfully ensured, through its robust monitoring procedures, that teaching is no less than satisfactory with an increasing proportion that is good or outstanding. There are some excellent teachers who the school agrees need to be used better to share their good practice with others. Assessment is used well by teachers in a number of ways. They carefully track the progress of pupils to ensure that those that need extra help with their work receive it. Marking is particularly good at advising pupils on the next steps they need to take to improve their work. In all English and mathematics lessons teachers group pupils successfully according to ability and for most of these groups the work is pitched accurately to meet their needs.

The steps taken to establish a creative curriculum are beginning to bear fruit. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils worked enthusiastically together to devise experiments to investigate evaporation. This activity was successfully developing their

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creativity and skills in problem-solving and independence. In other lessons, particularly those that are good, pupils are applying their literacy skills in other subjects. For example, in Year 6, pupils were learning the necessary literacy skills to produce a newspaper article for the history topic based on Pompeii. In other lessons the opportunities to make these meaningful links are not as well embedded.

Procedures to support vulnerable pupils are secure. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by a range of good quality activities led by well trained teaching assistants. Parents reported how much they appreciate this additional support. School leaders have accurately identified the need to provide swifter support to pupils who may be assessed as being dyslexic. Staff are now trained so that they are proficient in the assessment and support for these pupils. A good feature of the care of pupils is the good quality of the lunches that they receive that is playing a strong part in developing pupils' healthy lifestyles.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Under the strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher the school continues to improve at a rapid pace. Leaders are supported by a dedicated team of teachers who all demonstrate a very professional approach to the desire to improve the quality of their teaching. Robust procedures for performance management and tracking pupils' progress are successful in holding teachers to account for their work. There are some strong middle leaders, such as the special educational needs coordinator, and others are newly in post. They demonstrate a good understanding of their role and what improvements need to be made, but understandably, they are currently less effective than they could be as they develop their leadership skills. The governing body demonstrates great knowledge and insight into the work of the school and its strategic development. They regularly hold the headteacher to account for school development.

The response to the parental questionnaire shows that the school has the support of the very large majority of parents. Initiatives such as the learning platform are successful in giving parents up-to-date information about the school.

The rigorous procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils, combined with the improvements to provision have been instrumental in ensuring the equality of opportunity of nearly all pupils. School assessment information shows that the school is well placed to ensure that the above-average standards attained this year will become a regular feature each year because of the current acceleration in progress of all groups of pupils.

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Procedures to safeguard pupils are currently robust and effective. Governors demonstrate that they are effective in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.

While the promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory, the current business enterprise partnership with another school to raise money for children in Gambia is an example of good practice that is broadening pupils' understanding of life for children in other parts of the world.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Skill development of children on entry to Nursery, particularly in communication, language and literacy, calculation, emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world is below those normally found at this age. Good progress is made in all areas so that by the time children enter Year 1, the large majority have skill development that is in line with national expectations in all aspects of development.

Provision has improved considerably in the last year so that, for example, in the Reception classes children now receive their full entitlement to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Both in the Nursery and Reception classes, children take part in a range of interesting and stimulating activities. For example, in the Nursery, children thoroughly enjoyed sandwich making. Under the high-quality guidance of a teaching assistant who questioned them expertly, they were encouraged to choose their own fillings, discuss the order of activities and explain the need for good hygiene procedures. In the Reception classes children's writing skills are being developed particularly well. In a creative learning environment children were happily choosing to write their Christmas present lists, while others had the close attention of the teacher who was developing and assessing their writing skills very effectively.



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The successful amalgamation of the Nursery and Reception classes into an Early Years Foundation Stage unit is ensuring the good progress made by children. Leaders have improved provision considerably and have now rightly identified that even stronger links, particularly to the curriculum, can be made between the Nursery and Reception classes.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

In answer to all questions the very large majority supported the work of the school. For example, most parents and carers agree that they are happy with their child's education. Nearly all parents agree that their child enjoys school and is safe. There were many positive comments, particularly about the school leadership, care and provision for pupils. Some parents also voiced concerns about different aspects of the school's work. Other than the concern about pupil progress due to differing quality of teaching that has been investigated in the report, there was no apparent trend to these concerns, but they were brought to the attention of the headteacher.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fulfen 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 153 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 391 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	58	60	39	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	99	65	53	35	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	35	94	61	6	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	38	74	48	16	10	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	60	39	82	54	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	38	83	54	7	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	40	84	55	6	4	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)	67	44	76	50	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	42	68	44	14	9	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	63	41	76	50	7	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	33	86	56	10	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	56	37	83	54	11	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	80	52	65	42	7	5	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



9 December 2010

Dear Children

**Inspection of Fulfen Primary School, Burntwood, WS7 9BJ**

If you remember, I came with my colleagues to inspect the work of the school and to check how well you were doing. Thank you for the help you gave us. Taking everything into account, we decided that yours is a satisfactory school. We enjoyed meeting you and thought you were friendly and polite to us. You are well behaved, kind and considerate to each other. Most of you work hard in lessons and the very large majority of you leave school having reached the expected standards in your work. Some of you who occasionally find the work easy could be set more challenging activities to complete. Your writing has improved a lot lately. We were pleased to find that your attendance is good and that you are developing good healthy lifestyles. We think that you could learn more about the differences between people in society in this country and abroad in order to develop your appreciation and awareness of other cultures.

The headteacher, governors and staff are working very hard to make improvements in school and in many areas they have been successful. You get a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. Your standards are going up because of the improvements made to your lessons. We also think that the school looks after you well.

To make things even better, we have asked the school to do the following.

Try and make sure that all your lessons are good so that you do even better.

Give you more opportunities to practise your literacy and numeracy skills.

Give greater challenge in lessons to some of you who may find the work easy.

Teach you more about different cultures in society.

Make stronger links with communities that are different from the one that you live in.

You can help by continuing to work hard in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow

Her Majesty's Inspector

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