

New Ford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124023
Local authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	380776
Inspection dates	1–2 May 2012
Lead inspector	Judith Straw

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	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pam Abbotts
Headteacher	Sam Ashley
Date of previous school inspection	March 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Judith Straw
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Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 26 lessons or part lessons taught by 19 teachers. In addition, they visited small group sessions and heard pupils read. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation evidence, improvement planning, safeguarding arrangements, the tracking of pupils' progress and the work in pupils' books. The inspectors also analysed questionnaires completed by 172 parents and carers as well as those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

New Ford is a much larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school meets the current floor standards that are minimum standards of attainment and progress expected by the government. The school holds several awards, including Healthy School status, the gold Quality Mark and Bike-It bronze award.

A new headteacher took up post in September 2011 and a new deputy headteacher in September 2010.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because more can be done to raise attainment consistently to above average and some opportunities are missed in child-initiated activities to promote the learning of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils, including those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Attainment is rising rapidly and securely but is not yet consistently above average by the end of Year 6, especially in writing. Children settle happily in the Nursery class and overall make good progress in their learning. Pupils achieve particularly well in reading where attainment is above average in both key stages.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Pupils enjoy lessons and rise eagerly to the challenge of high expectations. Most lessons move at a fast pace and provide many opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. The school's precise, individual target setting for each pupil is accelerating progress and motivating pupils to do their best. Marking is detailed, helpful and consistent in its good quality.
- Pupils are intensely proud of their school. A recent focus on identifying the school's vision and values has ensured that all pupils, even the youngest, know what they are aiming for and the principles by which the school stands. Behaviour is good and in some lessons it is outstanding because of pupils' very positive attitudes to learning.
- The headteacher's and deputy headteacher's drive and determination have been key factors in raising achievement. Their effective management of performance is resulting in high quality teaching. All staff share their vision and ambition. Under their leadership pupils' achievement has improved and attainment is rising rapidly. Senior leaders know where further improvements need to be made and have the knowledge and ambition to tackle them successfully.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by improving the quality of teaching so that it is consistently at least good and a higher proportion is outstanding by:
 - making sure that all pupils, and especially the higher-attaining pupils, are always appropriately challenged
 - ensuring the pace and variety which is evident in the best lessons becomes standard practice across all teaching
 - ensuring that all teachers are flexible in their planning and ready to reshape the direction of learning once it is clear that pupils are ready to move on.
 -
- Accelerate progress further in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - maximising learning in child-initiated activities and increasing the interaction with adults
 - improving the planning and range of resources for outdoor learning.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

In lessons, pupils are well motivated to learn, concentrate and understand what they must do to reach their targets. A recent focus on improving writing is bringing about rapid and secure improvement. For example, Year 6 pupils were using their skills to write postcards, from two different points of view in the best possible English. All were keen to succeed, regularly checking their targets to improve their work.

In the past, children have entered the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities below those expected for their age. However, over the last three years these starting points have been rising so that currently children enter the school broadly in line with age-related expectations. Children make good progress in the bright and attractive indoor learning areas where a wealth of resources is provided to engage their interest and concentration. For example, children were very engaged in finding words to describe an elephant, enjoyed spotting 'missing' numbers, finding the starting letters for different objects and explaining the life cycle of a butterfly. Sometimes, however, children lose focus when working independently and progress is not as rapid when children work in the outdoor areas.

Progress is accelerating rapidly and securely in Key Stages 1 and 2. Validated data for 2011 show that the progress made by Year 6 pupils was much better than all pupils nationally, given their starting points. However, the proportion attaining the higher levels in the national tests, especially in writing, was not as high as in reading or mathematics. The school is tackling this effectively. Current school data, confirmed by inspection evidence, show that the trend of rapid improvement in attainment and progress is being maintained, with an increasing proportion of pupils on track to attain the higher levels in writing. Pupils supported by school action plus, those who have special educational needs and those known to be entitled to free school meals all achieve well and often higher than similar pupils nationally. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading and achieve well. Attainment in reading is above average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Many pupils read fluently, with expression and understanding and have good skills in decoding new words

Parents and carers who returned questionnaires were unanimous in their view that their children make good progress and develop the necessary key skills to be successful. Inspection evidence endorses this view.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children learn best when teachers direct activities or when they work in small groups with an adult. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend children's learning when they are doing self-chosen activities because there is not enough interaction with adults and this is especially the case when children learn outdoors because the planning for outdoor learning is not as detailed as it is for indoor activities. The teaching of reading and letters and sounds is very effective and results in pupils making rapid progress in reading.

In most lessons, teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge and ensure that pupils practise and develop key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) effectively across the good and engaging curriculum. New strategies introduced since September are already accelerating the progress of all pupils and particularly more-able pupils who, in the past, have not always achieved their potential. Very flexible planning ensures that not all pupils listen to the same introduction and higher-attaining pupils can start on tasks immediately. Teaching assistants work very effectively with different groups of pupils during lessons. Highly accurate target setting ensures that in the majority of lessons each pupil works at exactly the right level. In outstanding lessons, pupils often develop their own success criteria, think deeply, solve problems and understand precisely how well they are progressing towards their targets. Teachers are adept at assessing and checking pupils' understanding. They redirect their lessons accordingly. For example, pupils in Year 2 working on number bonds tackled a wide variety of strictly timed activities, during which all pupils experienced some direct teaching, some working with the teaching assistant and some working independently. Consequently, all made excellent progress. In a small minority of lessons where teaching is less successful, the pace of learning is sometimes too slow and the work is sometimes too easy or too hard for different groups of learners. Occasionally, questioning and discussion are not used effectively to re-shape the lesson to further embed pupils' understanding.

Teaching has long been successful in ensuring that lower-attaining pupils and pupils supported by school action plus and those with special educational needs achieve well. Teachers are now bringing their expertise to bear successfully on the higher-attaining pupils, with the result that the proportion of pupils attaining above-average levels at the end of Year 6 is rising rapidly and securely.

The vast majority of parents and carers indicate that teaching is good and that the school meets their children's needs. Inspection evidence confirms their views.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Nearly all pupils and parents and carers agree that behaviour is good. Behaviour observed in lessons and around the school during the inspection was consistently good. School records show that instances of unacceptable behaviour over time are rare and are dealt with swiftly and appropriately. Pupils know about different kinds of bullying and name calling but insist that it is very rare in school. If pupils have any concerns they are confident the staff will act quickly to help them. Pupils have enjoyed contributing to the school's vision and values and

say that everyone is treated with respect in school. Through the positive ethos of the school and the exciting curriculum pupils are prepared well for the future, not just academically but also as good future citizens. Pupils feel safe in school. They understand the nature of potentially dangerous situations, for example, when using the internet, and know the necessary steps to take to avoid them and/or deal with them.

The school has a systematic and well thought out approach to behaviour management that is very effective. Because pupils, parents and carers have also contributed to writing the behaviour policy everyone has a sense of ownership of it and incidents of poor behaviour are rare. The school's records of poor behaviour shows a steady decline in the number of such incidents. The school has been notably successful in supporting pupils in danger of exclusion from other schools. Attendance is consistently at least average and in some academic years it is above average. Parents and carers are almost unanimous that their children are safe in school and the vast majority of pupils agree.

Leadership and management

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, well-supported by the deputy headteacher, is bringing about rapid and secure improvements to all aspects of school life. The leadership and management of teaching have resulted in significant improvements. Regular progress meetings ensure that staff are held accountable for pupils' progress. Specific mentoring is provided for staff who need extra support. Consequently, morale is high and all staff feel valued and appreciate the professional development they receive. Leaders and managers at all levels understand fully the strengths of the areas they manage as well as the weaknesses that need to be tackled.

The curriculum is rich and engaging. It makes a significant contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their enthusiasm for learning. All pupils in the school, even the youngest, are able to talk about values such as empathy, resilience, self-belief and independence. The introduction of 'wow' days has enhanced learning and enjoyment in every year group by making learning intriguing and fun. For example, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage investigated the theft of their gingerbread man with the help of the community police officer.

Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on improving pupils' basic skills and developing a sense of community values and willingness to take on responsibilities. Pupils are proud to serve on the school council and understand the importance of self-belief and independence.

The governing body is very supportive. It ensures that statutory requirements are met with regard to safeguarding and that the school promotes equality of opportunity well for all pupils. Discrimination is not tolerated.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



3 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Ford Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 1PY

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and listened very carefully to what you had to say. We were very impressed by your good manners and the thoughtful way you treat adults and each other. You behave well and told us that you all feel safe in school.

Yours is a good school because you make good progress. This is because you are well taught and have very positive and responsible attitudes to your own learning. The teachers plan really exciting and interesting activities such as the 'wow' days so that you all want to succeed and do your best. We think the new target setting system is really good for you because you all know exactly what you need to do to improve.

The leaders and managers in school are doing a good job and are working hard to make your school even better. We have asked them to make sure that lessons outside help children to make even better progress, especially when they are learning on their own. We have also asked them to make sure that all lessons across the school are as good as the best. This means that work should be set at the right level to allow everyone to achieve as highly as possible and lessons move at a fast pace with lots of different activities.

You can help by continuing to try very hard in all your lessons and enjoying school.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw
Lead Inspector

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