

# Fulfen Primary School

Rugeley Road, Burntwood, WS7 9BJ

**Inspection dates** 3–4 October 2012

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress is not strong enough in writing and mathematics from Years 3 to 6 due to inconsistencies in teaching.
- The more capable pupils are not being stretched enough to reach the highest standards.
- Learning and progress in writing is held back because pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to sharpen their skills in all subjects.
- Teachers do not provide enough work for pupils to tackle mathematical problems.
- Checks made by senior leaders and the governing body do not always focus clearly on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress and achievement.
- A small minority of parents are concerned about the lack of school's response to their concerns.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children's progress is consistently good in Nursery and Reception classes.
- Good teaching of reading leads to above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The most effective teaching is found in Years 5 and 6, which speeds up pupils' progress by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy being at school and feel safe; they behave well.
- Attendance remains above average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, three of which were jointly observed with senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors made two short visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, the Chair of Governing Body, as well as with senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 78 parental responses registered through the electronic questionnaire (Parent View) and an email from a parent.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' recent progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

## Inspection team

Krishan Sharma, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Debbie Vials	Additional Inspector
Kathryn Skan	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils who are supported at school action and school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are below average.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected of pupils' attainment and progress at the age of 11.

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

- Improve the teaching of writing and mathematics so that more pupils consistently make better than expected progress and achieve well, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
  - checking work in lessons more closely and adjusting it to provide a greater challenge, particularly for the more-able and others who are ready to move on to the next steps in their learning
  - giving pupils suitable opportunities to apply and develop their writing skills in a wide range of subjects
  - checking pupils' choice of vocabulary and grammatical accuracy in all their written work
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to practise their growing number skills in working out mathematical problems.
- Fine-tune the school's self-evaluation by:
  - focusing more precisely on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and achievement in lessons and in their written work
  - involving the governing body further in challenging and holding to account senior leaders for their success in tackling weaknesses in teaching and pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2
  - examining and responding to parents' concerns and their need for further information.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Standards are not improving fast enough and remain broadly average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. This is because pupils make mainly the expected progress from their starting points in Year 3. Too few make better than expected progress.
- Children in Nursery get off to a brisk start and make good progress in all areas of learning and development. Pupils continue to make good progress in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 and achieve well.
- Pupils' progress is uneven, particularly in Years 3 and 4, and mirrors the variable quality of teaching. As they move through these years, pupils' progress speeds up and makes up some of the lost ground.
- The more-able pupils and others who have the potential to improve faster do not always make the progress they are capable of. Too often, they remain busy in consolidating what they can do relatively easily.
- Progress in reading is consistently better than in writing. Pupils achieve above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6. They read with good understanding and are able to discuss the text confidently. Most pupils are articulate and express themselves well.
- Pupils make slow progress in writing. They concentrate well on improving their writing in their work in English, but do not transfer their skills well and correctly in other subjects. Consequently, pupils miss out on opportunities to develop their writing.
- In mathematics, pupils' skills in solving practical problems are weaker than their mechanical handling of number work. On balance, most of the work they do relates to making calculations.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make the expected progress, as do those for whom the pupil premium provides support. Extra help given to them is carefully adapted to ensure that they make secure progress towards goals set for them.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because over the past two years pupils made steady, rather than good progress, particularly during Key Stage 2. Pupils' recent and current work, and lessons seen during the inspection indicate that teaching has many strengths, but it has weaknesses and inconsistencies too.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 teaching is typically good. It is not consistently strong in Key Stage 2. The most effective teaching takes place in Years 5 and 6, where it has some outstanding features.
- In the very best lessons, teachers prompt pupils through their persistent questioning to think for themselves. For example, pupils rose to the challenge in a Year 6 English lesson, when they

critically and correctly assessed pieces of writing against demanding benchmarks.

- Expectations are not consistently high. Sharply focused planning develops all areas of children's learning in Nursery and Reception. In the rest of the school, work given does not always demand enough of the more-able and some others who would benefit from greater challenge.
- Reading is taught effectively across the school. The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is systematic and pupils are well prepared for reading independently, but group reading is not effective in all classes.
- The teaching of writing is conscientious, but not consistently effective. The purposes for which pupils write are not always motivating. The teaching of writing skills through other subjects is not given due recognition. When marking writing, teachers do not sufficiently check correct use of vocabulary, accuracy of grammar and quality of presentation.
- The emphasis on teaching of number work is helping pupils to gain a good understanding of basic calculations. The systematic development of pupils' skills in using and applying number in solving mathematical problems has not received the attention that it deserves.
- Teachers and other adults create a lively environment for pupils' learning and they use resources well. Consequently, pupils maintain their interest in lessons.
- Assessment of pupils' written work against the National Curriculum levels has improved and is used well to set targets for pupils to aim at. Marking has inconsistencies, particularly in conveying clearly and precisely what pupils have done well and in checking that pupils have followed the guidance given to them.

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

- Pupils are keen to learn. Even in the few lessons when the quality of teaching does not fully capture their interests, they remain on task and rarely cause any disruption. Positive attitudes are also on display when pupils purposefully work in pairs and small groups.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes develop their social skills well. They enthusiastically participate in well organised practical and play activities. Many of them develop into confident and independent learners.
- In lessons, and in and around the school, pupils behave well and are considerate towards each other and adults. Senior leaders have established a clear set of expectations, which successfully contribute to pupils' good behaviour. Pupils are aware of the consequences of their actions and the rewards and sanctions that they can expect.
- Teachers' management of behaviour is effective. As a result, pupils willingly accept responsibility for their conduct in lessons and around the school. Parents and carers, staff and governors are rightly well satisfied with standards of behaviour in the school.
- Pupils feel safe at school and are confident that there will always be someone to listen to their concerns, if they have any. They are aware of their own and others' safety. Bullying is rare and is dealt with promptly by adults. Pupils are aware of the different forms it can take, including

that which is cyber- and prejudice-based.

- Attendance is above average. Senior staff have successfully maintained the high levels over many years. Their attention to detailed analysis and follow up of absence has paid off.

## **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Senior leaders and the governing body are keen to improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. The school's current plans reflect this commitment and recognise that there are areas that require improvement. Improvements in reading show the impact of recent strategies.
- Pupils' progress is regularly checked and analysed. The system has assisted the school in identifying pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Extra help given, as a result, enhances equality of opportunity for different groups, such as those receiving the pupil premium.
- The monitoring of teaching gives senior leaders a generally accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. However, observations of lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' written work do not focus enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress and achievement. Occasionally, this leads to imprecise conclusions.
- The training programme for teachers has contributed to the improving profile of the quality of teaching in the school. As inconsistencies in pupils' progress and the quality of teaching remain, performance arrangements are not yet fully effective and require improvement.
- The curriculum provides planned opportunities for all groups of pupils, but it does not always stretch the more able. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved pupils' cultural awareness. The provision for personal, social and health education and the range of enrichment activities on offer promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - is supportive of senior leaders and takes a keen interest in the school's overall performance
  - does not sufficiently hold senior leaders to account for the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Parents and carers are well satisfied with the level of care shown to their children in school. A small minority is not satisfied with the school's response to their concerns and the level of information that they receive about their children's progress at school.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Staff have successfully raised pupils' awareness of safety in the school.
- The local authority provides support at termly review meetings with senior leaders. The support has been effective in crystallising future actions, but to date has made limited impact, as some of the weaknesses identified still persist.

## 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>	406222

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	425
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Jefferies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Robert Baker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 December 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 510400
<b>Fax number</b>	01543 510405
<b>Email address</b>	office@fulfen.staffs.sch.uk



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