

Foley Infants School

Fairfield Drive, Kinver, Stourbridge, DY7 6EW

Inspection dates

11–12 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and achieve well. Progress is good throughout the school, and attainment is consistently well above average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well and learn the rules quickly in the Reception classes. Bullying is very rare so pupils feel safe.
- The good and sometimes outstanding teaching means that pupils achieve well in all classes.
- Pupils say that they like the way teachers make their lessons fun and help them when they find the work difficult.
- The good spiritual provision means that pupils reflect deeply on the world around them and consider how they can help others.
- Parents speak highly of the very good quality of care and support that make their children feel secure and valued. Pupils say how much they like being part of a small school where they make such good friends.
- Good leadership and management have played an important part in maintaining good achievement over a long period of time.
- The school has embraced being part of a federation well, and benefits of this partnership are already evident.
- Teachers value the annual reviews of their performance that help raise achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While all groups of pupils make at least good progress, boys tend to achieve less well than girls and the attainment of pupils entitled to the pupil premium, particularly the most able ones, is currently lower than others in the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons of which two were joint observations with senior leaders. The inspectors also made a number of brief visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, leaders of subjects, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 66 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including records of the progress of every pupil, planning and monitoring files, behaviour records and documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Terry Elston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Onyon

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The proportion of the pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action are well below average, and those at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- The school has been federated with a nearby junior school since January 2013 and shares the same executive headteacher and governing body.
- The school has recently achieved Dyslexia Friendly status and gained The ICT Mark and Sing Up Gold awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Close the gap between the attainment of more-able disadvantaged pupils and others in the school by:
 - regular checking of their progress during the year
 - taking swift action to support those falling behind
 - ensuring that these pupils attend as regularly as others
 - the leaders and governing body evaluating the impact of the pupil premium funding to see how well the money is raising achievement.
- Ensure that boys achieve as well as girls in reading and writing by:
 - making tasks as motivating to boys as girls
 - checking that boys get down to reading and writing quickly
 - requiring boys to answer their fair share of questions in class discussions
 - the leaders checking on the achievements of these pupils during lesson observations.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skills that are typical of their ages and make good progress. Pupils feel they do well at school and all parents who responded to Parent View agreed.
- In 2012, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well-above average and continued the five-year trend. In 2013, pupils look to have maintained these levels of performance.
- Children in both Reception classes settle quickly into school routines and achieve well from their starting points. They make rapid progress in their reading, writing and number skills and enjoy many opportunities to practise them both indoors and outside. They use their imagination very well, whether it is acting as shopkeepers selling ice creams or talking about the sound of the sea when they put large shells to their ear. Children have many opportunities to develop their language skills, and one group learned much from discussing the many activities on a farm when playing with tractors and toy animals.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils maintain this good progress. They achieve very well in their phonics work and quickly learn how to build sounds into words. Their scores in the 2012 phonics assessment were above the national average and, by the end of Year 2, nearly all read confidently with good expression. Boys mostly read fluently, although not all find it interesting and their attention sometimes wanders.
- Pupils write well. They take care with the presentation of their work and ensure that they use full stops and capital letters. Boys often have very good ideas for their writing but, as in reading, are sometimes slow to get started and in some lessons, girls have written a few lines while boys are still doing the title. However, when the tasks capture their imagination, boys make rapid progress. For example, in one lesson pupils were learning the sound that 'ie' makes and boys relished the challenge of seeing how many times they could write the sound on a cut-out of a tie in one minute.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics because they learn the basic numeracy skills well and are able to apply them to solving problems. These skills are reinforced well in other subjects, as was observed when one teacher asked pupils to jump off equipment in a physical education lesson and make half a turn.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in both English and mathematics. They benefit from well-planned teaching and accurate assessment of their difficulties and needs.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding to provide individual tuition and small group work for disadvantaged pupils. While the gap between their attainment overall and other pupils is closing, by the end of Year 2 in 2013 those of above-average prior attainment were still almost a term behind other more-able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics who make very good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- In typical lessons, teachers make the learning expected clear and this helps pupils focus on the task. At the end, pupils have good opportunities to check on their learning and see if there is anything they can improve upon.

- Teachers make effective use of technology to add interest to their lessons. For example, they use the interactive whiteboards well to show how to organise their numbers in mathematics, and ask children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to draw pictures of ice creams as part of their work on the seaside.
- The teaching of reading is good, with regular phonics sessions and many opportunities for pupils to read in all subjects. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn how to build sounds into words quickly and enjoy searching for letters hidden outside.
- In writing, teachers pay good attention to the presentation of pupils' work and provide many opportunities for them to write in subjects such as design and technology and science. However, they do not always check on how well pupils are getting on, and sometimes this means that boys spend more time chatting about their work than actually writing.
- In mathematics, teachers are very good at teaching basic number skills, and the daily mental mathematics sessions do much to speed up pupils' calculations. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to solve number problems and this helps them understand how to use mathematics in everyday life.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and they respond well by listening carefully and always putting their hands up to answer a question. What sometimes happens, however, is that the girls are allowed to dominate whole class sessions, and often answer over 80 per cent of questions. Boys let them do this and make slower progress as a result.
- Teachers check on pupils' progress systematically, but do not focus well-enough on particular groups such as boys and girls and those supported by the pupil premium funding, either during lessons or through the year. Marking is thorough and provides pupils with helpful next steps in their learning.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good, particularly in English and mathematics. The teachers plan tasks that are challenging yet achievable and ensure that pupils have every opportunity to ask and answer questions.
- The school makes good use of the skills of teaching assistants to support lower attaining pupils but does not always employ them well enough to ensure the more-able pupils eligible for the pupil premium attain the high standards of which they are capable.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well because the rules are made clear and adults apply them consistently. Teachers make good use of rewards, and pupils know they will apply sanctions such as missing 'Golden Time' fairly. As a result, disruptions of any kind are rare.
- Pupils concentrate well and persevere well with challenging work. Some boys, however, need reminding to get on with their work, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils enjoy school, arrive punctually and attendance rates are consistently above the national average. The school places great emphasis on regular attendance and most parents respond well to the regular reminders about the importance of their children coming to school every day. However, the systems to check on the attendance of different groups of pupils, such as those

eligible for pupil premium funding, are not established well enough to eliminate all unnecessary absences.

- Pupils feel very safe at school, and say how well staff respond to rare instances of bullying and racism. Records show that such acts are decreasing year by year. Pupils know much about different types of bullying and know what to do if it happens. Parents agree that pupils are safe in school.
- Pupils show courtesy towards adults and one another. They listen carefully in discussions, and accept opinions different to their own. For example, they share ideas sensibly with their 'talking partners' and are not afraid to change their minds about an issue.
- Pupils are involved in the local community and develop a pride in their village by activities such as designing posters to keep it tidy.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership and management are the keys to the school's success and the maintenance of good levels of achievement. Leaders are ambitious and clear about how to make improvements. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and provides the leaders and governing body with clear priorities for the future.
- At the start, some staff had misgivings about becoming federated with the junior school but, in two terms, unanimously see the benefits. They have enjoyed cost-effective joint training and subject leaders appreciate the benefits from sharing expertise with colleagues from the other school. Transition arrangements have improved greatly and parents say how smooth this process has become. As one said, 'Now, it's as if they are just moving classes rather than going to a different school.'
- The executive headteacher has made an important contribution to the early success of this federation. He has organised team-building exercises, training days and provided staff with good opportunities to teach at the junior school and learn about how older pupils learn.
- The executive headteacher has observed all teachers and they say how helpful they find his evaluations. These provide good feedback on the lessons' strengths and weaknesses including useful targets for the future. What they lack is the sharp focus on groups such as boys and girls and those pupils eligible for free school meals that would help achieve the school's target of outstanding achievement.
- The leadership and management of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Areas for improvement are identified speedily and this has ensured that children make much better use of the outside area than was reported in the last inspection. Subject leaders make a good contribution to school improvement by monitoring achievement and supporting teachers in rectifying weaknesses.
- Good performance management systems help teachers raise achievement. Teachers value the annual meetings to review the past year's work and find the targets for the next year challenging but achievable.
- Safeguarding systems are effective and meet all requirements. These systems are reviewed regularly by the school's leaders and governing body to ensure that staff and pupils continue to

be safe.

- Good systems to manage the school's funding ensure the school achieves good value for money. Recent funding for physical education is targeted well at providing a sports coach and an extra member of staff to support the teachers and enhance provision for games after school.
- The local authority has had limited input to this successful school, but the leaders appreciate the support provided to improve provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Parents appreciate the high quality of the care and support offered to their children to help them feel secure. They appreciate the way the school informs them about the work of the school and their children's progress.
- Pupils find the activities provided for them interesting and appreciate the many clubs at lunchtime and after school that enhance their skills in areas such as music and sport. They enjoy the broad topics and the good opportunities to base much of their reading, writing and mathematics on themes such as 'The Seaside'. A wide range of visits enhance pupils' experiences and help to develop their academic, personal and social skills. Pupils learn much about different faiths and cultures and enjoy learning about the lives of people from different countries.

The governance of the school:

- The governing body has a clear awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses including its performance compared with other schools, gained through regular visits, meetings with the senior leaders and analysis of pupils' achievements. Members have the knowledge to challenge the leaders and they take a full part in school improvement. They are closely involved in the evaluation of teachers' performance and challenge the decisions about their pay. They have a sound grasp of the school's budget and know how the funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is spent. They know little, however, about its impact on these pupils' achievements.

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

Unique reference number	124095
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	427092

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Rumble (Acting)
Headteacher	Jason Willetts
Date of previous school inspection	4 December 2008
Telephone number	01384 872382
Fax number	01384 878156
Email address	office@foley.staffs.sch.uk

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