

# Tower View Primary School

Vancouver Drive, Winshill, Burton-on-Trent, DE15 0EZ

**Inspection dates** 17–18 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although it is improving rapidly, attainment has been below national averages for some years. Standards are now average in reading and mathematics, but not in writing.
- The quality of teaching is improving but it is not yet consistently good or outstanding. Sometimes teachers' expectations for how much work pupils can complete in lessons are too low, and the work set for some pupils is not challenging enough.
- Marking is not used consistently well to show pupils how to improve their work, and teachers do not always make sure that pupils act on any advice given.
- Older pupils are still catching up. They make good progress in reading and mathematics but it is slower in writing.
- Information about how well pupils are doing is not used effectively by all teachers to provide activities that match pupils' abilities, or move them on to the next stage in their learning when they are ready. This slows their progress.
- Additional support given to pupils is not always checked to ensure that it helps them to make faster progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, other leaders and governors work effectively as a team. They are the driving force behind improvements in the quality of teaching and the rise in standards throughout the school.
- Teaching is often outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1. As a result, younger pupils make good or better progress.
- Pupils love coming to school and attendance is above average. They behave exceptionally well and take great interest in learning. They show concern for one another, and feel safe in school.
- The school's new systems for checking pupils' progress are helping leaders to focus additional support more effectively. High-quality training for staff is improving teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 20 lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors observed a number of groups receiving support from teaching assistants and listened to pupils read. Work in pupils' books was also analysed.
- Meetings were held with pupils, a range of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 38 responses from parents and carers to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They also met with parents and carers informally during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress, safeguarding documents, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and bullying. They also met with two groups of pupils and talked with them about their views of the school.

## Inspection team

Elaine Long, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Tracey Kneale

Additional Inspector

Malcolm Johnstone

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- Tower View Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or are in the care of the local authority, for which the school achieves additional funding from the government (the pupil premium), is above average.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. A below-average proportion is supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching in all year groups, particularly in writing, by:
  - planning activities that are consistently challenging and lead to good or better learning
  - matching activities to pupils' different abilities so work is not too difficult or too easy
  - providing pupils with clear guidance, when marking their work, on what they need to do next to improve it
  - making certain that pupils respond to teachers' comments, so they do not repeat mistakes and the quality of their work improves.
- Increase the rates at which pupils make progress and raise standards by:
  - ensuring that additional support is provided where it is most needed, and fully meets the needs and aspirations of the pupils receiving it
  - keeping a close check on the effectiveness of additional support in terms of the progress made by these pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children start in the Reception year with skills and knowledge well below those typical for their age. They make good progress because they are well taught and benefit from exciting learning experiences. By the end of the Reception year, attainment for many is still below the level expected, especially in reading and writing.
- In the 2013 Year 1 national screening of pupils' knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics), the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level was below average. Training for the whole staff in this area has led to improvements this year.
- The headteacher has set challenging targets for all pupils. Outstanding teaching in Year 1 is leading to accelerated progress and rising attainment in Key Stage 1. Pupils currently in Year 2 are making outstanding progress from the time they joined Year 1.
- Attainment in Key Stage 2 has improved in reading and mathematics but not enough in writing. Pupils' progress has been good in reading and mathematics but not as fast as it should be in writing. Last year the proportions of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics compared favourably with national figures. The proportion of pupils making faster progress than expected was similar to that found nationally in reading and was higher than nationally in mathematics.
- Effective staff training, especially in writing, means that pupils in the current Year 6 are making good progress in all areas and are on track to achieve broadly average standards in English and mathematics. The proportion on track to achieve the higher levels is showing a further improvement on last year.
- The new headteacher put in place substantial support for all pupils in the previous Year 6 which resulted in them achieving broadly average standards in reading and mathematics in 2013. Standards were still below average in writing in 2013. Pupils supported through the pupil premium made more rapid progress than in previous years but it was not enough for them to catch up sufficiently with other pupils in the school. They were half a National Curriculum level behind in reading, two thirds of a level behind in writing and three quarters of a level behind in mathematics.
- The headteacher has implemented a rigorous system to check pupils' progress and current data show that pupils in Year 6 supported through the pupil premium continue to make good to outstanding progress and gaps are closing. Pupils are now a third of a level behind in reading and writing and just over a quarter of a level behind in mathematics. In Key Stage 1 pupils supported through the pupil premium make outstanding progress in all subjects, gaps are closing rapidly and, on average, they are a few weeks behind.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. In the past, their progress has been slower in writing, but gaps are now narrowing, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. More timely support in these areas is resulting in these pupils learning more successfully.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching, particularly in Years 3 and 4, requires improvement because it lacks sufficient

challenge in too many lessons. Activities do not build upon what pupils already know and are able to do. In some cases, the checks teachers make in lessons about how well the pupils understand their work have not been used rigorously enough to speed up pupils' progress.

- The quality of marking varies. At times, it lacks focus and comments are too general and do not show pupils how they can improve their work. When marking does give guidance on what to do next, teachers do not always check that pupils respond to the advice. There is some effective marking, for example in Year 6, which involves a dialogue between the teacher and pupil, with clear pointers for improvement and strong evidence that the pupil has responded to them.
- In Reception and Year 1 classes, staff ensure children have a wide range of experiences and encourage them to make their own choices. Lessons are demanding and help children develop as successful learners. The promotion of speaking and listening is at the heart of learning. Here support is quickly in place and teachers regularly assess its effectiveness. This is not yet consistent across all year groups.
- Teachers do not always evaluate the appropriateness or impact of the support given to pupils, but, in lessons, teaching assistants are successful at asking questions and then allowing them to work on their own. This means that pupils develop confidence and make good progress.
- In a lesson in Year 1, pupils were asked to reflect on what makes them happy, sad and proud. Pupils were fully involved, confidently expressing their views and feelings and being sensitive towards one other. The warm relationships between adults and pupils, and also among the pupils themselves, help them to grow in confidence. They know their opinions and comments are valued.
- The teaching of early reading is now well organised and methodical. The teaching of sounds that letters make (phonics) is delivered at a good rate and in ways which interest and motivate the pupils. As a result, pupils make good progress and attainment in reading is rising.
- In the best lessons, pupils are excited about their learning and there is a 'buzz' as they extend their knowledge and skills. Pupils enjoy using tablet computers in their classroom and report that it really enables them to develop their research skills and think for themselves.

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

- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school, in assemblies, at break and lunchtime, and when on school visits is good. They treat themselves and others with respect. They are polite, friendly and courteous. They enjoy coming to school, and this is reflected in the above-average attendance figures and good punctuality. Pupils are proud to belong to the school. Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities, for example, as assembly monitors, mentors to younger pupils, belonging to the School, Youth or Eco councils.
- In lessons pupils show a strong engagement with their work and enthusiasm for learning. They support one another well in group work, taking it in turns to make contributions. When working without direct help from adults, pupils do not give up when the work becomes more difficult; they try harder, determined to do their best. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive.
- The school's effective approaches to responding to pupils' emotional needs and development have made a significant effect on improving behaviour. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. Instances of bad behaviour are rare and when they do happen they are dealt with in a

fair and measured approach. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

- The school takes a strong stance against bullying. In lessons and assemblies the school teaches pupils about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils interviewed knew what to do if they were bullied because they are given very clear guidance. They report that bullying is rare. They feel the school is a more friendly and supportive place where they feel safe and parents strongly support this view, too.
- Pupils work well with one another and understand the feelings of others, and this is a strong feature of school life. Pupils clearly understand the rules and appreciate their rewards. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent; there is a strong sense of teamwork.
- Throughout their lessons and assemblies, pupils are given the skills they need to manage everyday risks for themselves. For example, they know how to use the internet safely, and they are aware of the dangers associated with the road, fire and talking to strangers. They are clear who to go to in the school if they feel worried or upset. All parents and carers who responded to the Parent View questionnaire agree that their children feel safe and happy at school.
- Parents enjoy being invited into the school, whether it is to work alongside their children in class or to watch plays, concerts or assemblies. They talk about their children being happy and becoming more confident.
- The school has a range of strategies to support pupils and families who experience difficulties and these are welcomed by parents and carers.
- The school prepares pupils well for their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development through the subjects taught, assemblies and trips. Pupils are well equipped for their next steps in secondary education and are learning what it is like to live in a diverse society.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Attainment is rising as a result of strong leadership and effective teamwork. The headteacher is relentless in his drive to improve teaching and raise achievement further. The deputy headteacher and other members of the newly extended leadership team work well together and are held to account in their senior roles for improving the school's performance. There is a common sense of purpose amongst the staff and morale is high.
- Leaders' regular lesson observations, followed by detailed feedback, have ensured that teaching is now improving. The management of teachers' performance is detailed and rigorous and teachers are held to account fully for pupils' progress and achievement. There are clear links between pay increases and pupils' performance.
- The school has a wealth of partnerships within the local community and beyond. Their contribution provides pupils with opportunities to deepen their social, moral, cultural and spiritual education. An exciting programme of lessons provides pupils with many opportunities to explore and learn about the world, what others believe and why. The school encourages them to investigate and find answers for themselves. Pupils enjoy being given these challenges.
- The school has excellent links with its cluster of schools, the local community and church. They are currently working on developing their own nature reserve and each child will be allocated an allotment to grow produce.

- The school has a clear plan in place to use the primary sports funding to improve staff skills in physical education, particularly gymnastics. They plan to increase pupils' participation in sport, to develop skills, to make sure they develop healthy lifestyles and participate more in a wide range of community activities.
- The local authority has provided invaluable and timely support to the new headteacher. Officers from the local authority have worked closely with him, providing specific guidance and training within the school. They rightly have full confidence in the new leadership and its capacity to improve the school further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know the school's strengths very well and what still needs to be done. They are in school regularly, meet with staff and monitor the school's work very thoroughly. They have been closely involved with the new headteacher and the changes which have been made. The governing body has a good knowledge of how well the school performs in comparison with other schools. Governors have a strong understanding of what the data on pupils' progress is showing them, and they ask challenging questions. They check that the headteacher is setting appropriate performance management targets for teachers, rewarding good teachers and challenging underperformance. They also offer invaluable support. They make sure that the funds available through the pupil premium are used well to improve achievement, analysing assessment data for different groups of pupils half-termly in subjects and year groups. The governing body makes sure that all statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding children.

## 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>	124046
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426869

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>	304
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gavin Holden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Ridout
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 November 2011
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