

# Kingsfield First School

Gunn Street, Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent, ST8 6AY

**Inspection dates** 11–12 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement.

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have fallen steadily since 2011.
- Teachers do not move pupils on fast enough in their learning, including those of higher ability, to bring about the rapid improvements in achievement that are needed in English and mathematics.
- Teachers do not sufficiently develop pupils' descriptive or technical language to support them when writing or solving mathematical problems. Nor do teachers provide enough opportunities for them to practise and develop their writing skills in longer pieces of work.
- When teachers mark pupils' work in writing and in mathematics, they do not give them enough guidance and support so pupils do not build their confidence, particularly in mathematics or always know how to improve.
- In some classes, pupils' behaviour is not good enough, particularly when the work is either too challenging or too difficult or not designed well enough to hold their interest. As a result, pupils do not always listen to their teachers or concentrate on their work sufficiently.
- Systems introduced to help improve the quality of the work of subject leaders are very new and there has not been time for these leaders to lead improvements in pupils' achievement in the areas for which they are responsible.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving rapidly as a result of decisive action taken by governors to improve leadership capacity.
- The executive headteacher has acted quickly to improve the quality of teaching. As a result pupils currently in the school are making better progress.
- The school ensures pupils are safe, happy and well cared for. Pupils conduct themselves well around school and play sensibly together in the playground.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team was made up of three inspectors, one of whom inspected for the first day only.
- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons across the school. A number of these were observed jointly with the executive headteacher and acting headteacher. A series of short walks was carried out to look at aspects of the school's work.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books with the acting headteacher, heard some pupils read and watched an assembly.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and talked to pupils in lessons, in the playground and as they moved around school.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher and acting headteacher, other senior staff, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and the school's improvement adviser from the local authority. Inspectors spoke informally with other members of staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 34 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and one letter written by a parent. They spoke informally to several parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the day and to one parent who requested a formal meeting. The 19 questionnaires submitted by members of staff were considered.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation which included: the school's checks on how well it is doing and plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress and records of observations of the quality of teaching; minutes of meetings of the governing body; the school's information about pupils' progress over time; and records relating to safeguarding.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of these services.

## Inspection team

Sandra Hayes, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Karen Davies

Additional Inspector

Michael Onyon

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized school.
- Almost all pupils in the school are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that found in most schools. Pupil premium is extra funding from the government to support the achievement of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, are looked after by the local authority or who have a parent serving in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, who need extra help and are supported through school action, is a little above average. Those supported by school action plus or who have a statement of educational needs is much lower than in most schools.
- In October 2013, the headteacher of Knypersley First School, who is a local leader in education, began to provide support to the school, following the resignation of the headteacher. She has since been appointed executive headteacher.

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

- Improve pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, including that of more-able pupils, by ensuring all teachers consistently:
  - provide pupils with work that holds their interest and is pitched at the right level, and move pupils on to harder work as soon as they are ready
  - insist pupils behave well, listen carefully to their teachers and concentrate on their work in lessons
  - provide pupils with good examples of creative and technical language which they can use when writing or solving mathematical problems
  - provide more opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their writing skills by completing longer pieces of work
  - use their marking to build pupils' confidence, particularly in mathematics, and give pupils clear advice on how they can improve, checking regularly that pupils act on this advice and avoid the same errors in their subsequent work.
- Provide further training and support for subject leaders and opportunities for them to lead developments in their areas of responsibility effectively and know what to do to check that these are having the desired impact on pupils' achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Standards have declined in recent years because pupils have made too little progress in reading writing and mathematics in Years 1 to 4.
- Children enter the Early Year Foundation Stage in the Nursery class with skills that are below those typical for their age. However, pupils make rapid progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes and this ensures the majority reach a good level of development by the time they enter Year 1; consequently, they are well prepared to start the National Curriculum.
- National assessments for Year 2 pupils show that, in recent years, they have made slow progress from these good starting points. Consequently, standards have been low. Results in 2013 were well below those in other schools. More-able pupils do not always achieve as well as their good progress in Reception indicates they should.
- This underachievement has been halted because teachers now have higher expectations of the levels pupils should reach and so set more challenging work. As a result, standards for pupils currently in Year 2 are at least average in writing and mathematics, although still a little below average in reading. Even so, this represents notable improvement from the very low levels reached last year.
- Progress is not yet consistently good for all pupils. Fewer pupils make good progress in reading and writing than do so in mathematics. Nevertheless, almost all pupils are currently making at least the minimum progress expected of them.
- Differences in achievement between some groups of pupils remain. In last year's national assessments, results for pupils supported by the pupil premium showed these pupils were around a year behind others in reading, writing and mathematics. Additional support and resources funded by the pupil premium have helped eligible pupils to make better progress this year and this gap is closing. Similarly, boys' results were much lower than those of those of girls last year but there is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls currently in Year 2.
- In the past, pupils have not been taught to use phonics (letters and the sounds they make) sufficiently well. Consequently, some older pupils struggle to read fluently. This hinders their progress. Teachers are now teaching phonics effectively, so younger pupils use these skills confidently to read and spell new words.
- Pupils' books show too few opportunities to apply writing skills in longer pieces of work. This is one reason why progress in this subject is not good. In most classes, pupils' spelling is improving because teachers now teach these skills more explicitly and expect pupils to correct mistakes in their work.
- Pupils' achievement is sometimes limited by their inability to say or write the words they need. For example, pupils writing about 'superheroes' did not spell the word 'favourite' correctly. This led to many spending time working out this important word and left little time to focus on choosing quality adjectives.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs varies widely across the school. Their achievement reflects the same variation in the quality of teaching that

has limited the progress of other pupils.

- The primary school sports funding has been used well to ensure teachers are more skilled at teaching physical education. It has also been used to provide pupils with more opportunities to be physically active at lunchtimes and to participate in a wider range of competitive sports.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **requires improvement**

- Pupils, including more-able pupils, do not make consistently good progress in all classes and subjects. Therefore, while it has improved considerably in recent months, the quality of teaching is not yet good.
- Pupils do not always know how well they are learning. Often this is because teachers' marking is less clear than it needs to be. Teachers' comments do not show pupils exactly what they have done well or what they should do to improve. Some comments seen in books gave a negative view of the work and so did not serve to build pupils' confidence.
- Some teachers do not ensure activities are pitched at the right level or move pupils on to harder work as soon as they are ready. This means some pupils spend time struggling with work that is too difficult whilst others, such as the more-able, are given mundane tasks that repeat things they can already do.
- Teachers do not always support pupils to use correct technical words or high-quality creative language in lessons. This hinders pupils' ability to talk about their learning and lowers the quality of their written work.
- Some lessons do not sufficiently capture pupils' interest. On these occasions a number of pupils easily become distracted from their work and sometimes disrupt the learning of others.
- When pupils make consistently good progress it is often because teachers have questioned pupils carefully to check if they have understood what they have been learning, and have then increased the level of challenge in the work as appropriate.
- Similarly, where lessons are interesting and pupils are well challenged, they work hard and enjoy learning. This was seen in a mathematics lesson in which pupils were learning different ways to add two numbers together. The teacher skilfully challenged pupils of different abilities to use larger and larger numbers. When pupils went off to practise what they had learnt, there was a positive 'buzz' of enthusiasm around the classroom.
- Pupils also make good progress, for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage, when teachers and teaching assistants work closely together as effective teams to plan work that is at just the right level of difficulty for the individual children and groups they are working with.

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

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently good. Pupils report that a minority do not behave well in lessons. They say that teachers try to minimise disruption, but some pupils become easily distracted when lessons are not planned carefully enough to stimulate their interest. Inspectors observed some pupils being slow to settle and others creating low-level disruption such as calling out or talking at the same time as the teacher in some lessons. This hinders their learning and that of other pupils.

- Conversely, pupils conduct themselves well around the school and during break times. They are polite and respectful toward adults and friendly towards each other. In lessons that capture their interest, pupils show good attitudes to learning and try hard to do well. In such lessons, pupils also work sensibly together and show respect for each other's opinions.
- The school has recently started to keep a close check on pupils' behaviour. The school's records show that systems for improving behaviour are having a positive impact as the number of incidents dealt with has reduced considerably over the year.
- Similarly, the school's actions to improve pupils' attendance are working. Attendance rates have been low for a number of years. Over recent months, attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Most pupils say they enjoy coming to school and that they feel safe and well cared for. Parents agree with their children.
- Older pupils know about different ways bullying can happen. They say there is bullying in the school, but adults usually deal with it, so it stops. Most parents are satisfied that this is the case.

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

- The current leadership arrangements have been in place for only a few months and key initiatives and systems designed to improve the school are still very new. There has not been time or opportunity for subject leaders to have sufficient impact on the quality of teaching in the subjects for which they are responsible. Consequently pupils still do not make consistently good progress in literacy.
- In a short time, the executive headteacher has resolutely established a culture of high expectations for all. She has acted swiftly to make teachers accountable for pupils' achievement by setting clear targets for the levels pupils are expected to achieve and making it clear that decisions about salaries will be linked to the successful achievement of these outcomes.
- Staff are positive about the changes in the school. They say they have a clear view of what is expected and feel well supported to achieve it. Subject leaders feel they now have the opportunity to make a difference to pupils' achievement.
- The executive headteacher and acting headteacher have a detailed and accurate view of the quality of teaching. They have matched challenge, support and guidance precisely to where these are needed most. As a result teaching, which had declined since the previous inspection, is improving quickly.
- Pupils say the school has improved this year. They told inspectors they have to work harder now and also say that their views are now listened to. Most parents are happy with the way in which the school is led.
- Leaders have asked teachers to focus on improving pupils' mathematics and English skills but have ensured these subjects are taught in interesting and innovative ways to make learning meaningful and memorable. Other subjects are taught through interesting topics. Visits out of school enhance pupils' experiences and bring learning to life.

- The school values the high degree of challenge and support received from the local authority. This has helped secure more effective leadership and set the long term direction of the school. Teachers have benefited from the local authority’s carefully-designed package of support and training commissioned to help improve the quality of teaching in mathematics. Similar support is planned to begin soon in literacy. Frequent meetings of a core group of local authority officers, senior leaders and governors have effectively held the school to account for the rate of improvement and have ensured that commissioned support meets the school’s needs.
  
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have high expectations for pupils to achieve well and accept no excuses for underachievement. They have striven to build an accurate view of the school’s effectiveness for themselves and took decisive action to secure strong leadership when their concerns about achievement were confirmed. The school is improving rapidly as a result of governors’ actions.
  - Governors have a clear expectation that teachers’ salaries will reflect pupils’ achievement. They know where teaching is strong and where it needs to improve. Governors are supportive of the executive headteacher’s strategy for tackling weak teaching.
  - The governing body has reviewed its committee structure to ensure the impact of spending decisions is measured in terms of outcomes for pupils, including the use of pupil premium funding.
  - Governors ensure all statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding are met.

## 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>	124059
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	440596

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	255
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Edward Roberts
<b>Headteacher</b>	Abigail Rourke
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 297800 or 01782 485400
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