

George Fentham Endowed School

Fentham Road, Hampton-in-Arden, Solihull, B92 0AY

Inspection dates 8–9 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has been high for a number of years.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is above that seen nationally.
- More-able pupils are set harder work, so they can make rapid progress from their starting points and achieve the highest levels.
- Teaching has been very effective in motivating and engaging pupils, and has enabled them to make excellent progress from their starting points.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and very well looked after.
- Behaviour in the school is excellent and makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning.
- George Fentham Endowed School is committed to equal opportunities and succeeds in its determination for all pupils to achieve well.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher who has a wealth of experience working in the school and has a very good understanding of its strengths and areas that can be developed further.
- The school's leadership team works very well and makes a strong impact.
- The governing body is very supportive, yet holds the school to account for the progress of all the pupils.
- The school's values and beliefs are shared with the pupils and these contribute to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School leaders, including governors, have worked well to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement since the last inspection. They have sustained pupils' high attainment over a number of years and are committed to developing the quality of teaching further.
- Pupils are very well prepared to move on to secondary school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 10 teachers and visited 16 lessons, and three small-group sessions. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the English and mathematics subject leaders, and other leaders, pupils and governors. The lead inspector had a discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed pupils' work, looked in their exercise books, listened to them read and observed them in an assembly.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, information on pupils' progress, and documents related to safeguarding and key reports and policies.
- The inspectors talked with parents at the start of the school day, and took account of the 69 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also analysed 22 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Millward

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- George Fentham Endowed School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils attend from the village and the surrounding area.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage caters for Nursery-aged and Reception-aged children.
- Most pupils are White British. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including a few from Traveller families attending the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding, which in this school supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school works in a collaborative partnership with local rural primary schools, and has links to local secondary schools.
- There was significant disruption to staffing in the last few years, including the long-term absence of several teachers, which affected Key Stage 1 and 2. Staffing has been much more settled in the last year.
- There is before- and after-school and wrap-around nursery provision on the school site. It is not managed by the governing body, and did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the pupils have clearer short-term targets that are linked to the tasks they are currently working on to make sure they progress rapidly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Overall attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 has been high for a long period of time and is significantly above the national average. The numbers of pupils in each year can be small, but the school has secured consistency in the high level of attainment for different groups of pupils.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics dipped slightly at the end of Year 2 in 2011 and 2012, although it was still significantly above average overall. In each individual subject, standards improved from being broadly average to being significantly above average in 2013. Staffing is now more settled in Key Stage 1 as a result of new appointments and teachers returning from long-term absence. Consequently, as the school's own data indicates, improvement is continuing this year.
- The progress pupils make between Year 2 and Year 6 is excellent overall and has been especially high in writing and mathematics.
- Children join the school with skills that are typical for their age, but in different years this can vary. The children make very good progress in the individual learning areas and are effectively prepared for learning in Year 1. Recent improvements in the amount of progress the children make are largely due to more and detailed assessments of how well they are doing.
- Reading is extremely well taught in the school, with older pupils reading with fluency and expressive intonation. One pupil was keen to share that she had already read 10 books this year. The pupils have a range of favourite authors, with Michael Morpurgo particularly being enjoyed.
- The school was very successful last year in the outcomes in the screening check of the pupils' understanding of phonics (how letters in words represent sounds). Younger pupils' skills and understanding of phonics are very good; their reading is good and developing quickly, with pupils able to use their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar and trickier words.
- Mathematics is very well taught across the school and, as a result, pupils' achievement is excellent, with pupils' attainment in national assessment tests consistently being well above the average for a number of years.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress from their individual starting points, compared with others in their classes, and achieve as well. There are a small number of pupils with some very specific needs and they are helped to develop and progress extremely well through very effective one-to-one support within the classroom. The school is determined that all pupils achieve well. Pupils from Traveller families achieve as well as their peers, as do the few pupils from other minority ethnic heritages.
- The very small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium in Year 6 in 2013 means that it is not possible to comment on their attainment without potentially identifying individuals. School records and samples of work show that the progress of this group of pupils across the school is similar to, or better than, that of other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics because of very good teaching from their class teachers and effective funded support in small groups.
- More-able pupils are very effectively challenged with specific work matched to their abilities. For example, some pupils in Year 6 are working on difficult tasks and succeeding with work usually given to secondary school pupils. The school has been able, in the past, to support a number of

pupils who have achieved the very high Level 6.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The excellent quality of teaching has enabled pupils to achieve highly in reading, writing and mathematics over a number of years. Pupils say teachers make lessons fun and interesting. The engagement by pupils on the learning activities is high and their enjoyment is clear. One pupil from the Early Years Foundation Stage remarked on how much fun they were having in a physical education activity in the outdoor area.
- The value put on pupils always doing their very best in the school is very strong. All viewpoints and responses from pupils are highly appreciated. Teachers make clear at the start of every lesson what the class is expected to learn, and the high level of challenge set helps pupils to achieve as well as they can. This makes a very significant contribution to the rapid rates of pupils' learning.
- Learning is very well organised, with well-thought-out activities that challenge pupils very well, including the most-able, and provide a high degree of motivation. Teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together in planning activities. The quality of planning is particularly strong and takes full account of the range of abilities in classes.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn quickly because there is a good blend of well-structured adult-led tasks supported by interesting activities that pupils can explore for themselves. Older pupils have excellent opportunities to develop their skills through practical activities and apply their understanding. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils working on percentages were challenged to work out differences in price if VAT were increased from 20%.
- Teaching assistants support the work of the class teacher very effectively. For example, in an English lesson, the teaching assistant took responsibility for a number of pupils with special educational needs and gave them all some individual tuition. This allowed the teacher to work with the rest of the class and focus on developing the skills of using a dictionary and a thesaurus to extend pupils' knowledge of synonyms. Both groups, as a result, made very good progress. In both key stages, teaching assistants are used very effectively to support individuals on a one-to-one basis.
- The progress shown in pupils' books is very good and this is supported by pupils having clear long term targets to refer to. These are regularly reviewed and new ones provided when they have been achieved. This process assists planning and ensures that pupils undertake appropriately challenging work. Pupils are strongly motivated by having these targets to work towards. However, targets for what different pupils need to achieve in individual lessons are not always as clear, and so do not consistently ensure that progress is extremely rapid.
- Pupils' work is marked thoroughly and teachers provide pupils with guidance on how they can improve. The constructive feedback to pupils helps them in deciding what to do next and how to influence their own learning. Pupils respond to teachers' feedback regularly.
- The classrooms are bright and inviting. Pupils' work is of high quality and displayed in the classrooms and around the school. In their books, their work is neat and well presented and it is clear pupils take great pride in the presentation.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Consequently, pupils feel very well cared for. Pupils have an excellent understanding of e-safety and know what to share and not to share on social media sites and when playing games online. They are given opportunities to become proficient on their bicycles through a 'Bikeability' course, and have a good understanding of 'stranger danger'.
- The school has very effectively promoted the importance of caring for each other within the school community. Incidents of unkindness are rare and pupils say that, though they may fall out, there is no bullying in the school. Pupils care for and look after each other very well. Playground leaders help out at break and lunchtime and are there to help organise games and encourage others to participate. Pupils support and help each other as a matter of course, and it was noticed that a number of older pupils looked after younger pupils when sharing and collaborating in their activities in the playground.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. This contributes very strongly to their learning. Pupils demonstrate a wide range of skills in class. They are very confident to present their ideas in front of the whole class and work collaboratively on activities very successfully. They know classroom routines and what is expected of them and follow instructions very carefully. Relationships within school are very good and pupils enjoy working with their teachers. They say that their teachers will 'always try to help them' and are 'very kind'. Behaviour outside of lessons is of an equally high standard.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and pupils display a real thirst for knowledge and enthusiasm to participate in the wide range of engaging and challenging activities provided. Most subjects pupils say are 'brilliant' and they enjoy the activities in their classes and the opportunities to go and learn out of school, especially the visit to the Birmingham Hippodrome to see the 'Nutcracker'. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils really enjoyed their visit to a local chocolate factory and the current Year 6 pupils are very excited about their next trip to visit Condover Hall for a residential stay.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to involve themselves in sporting activities and competitions. The school's teams take part in local competitions and do well against much larger schools. The school's football, basketball, cross-country-running and netball teams performed with credit in local tournaments.
- Attendance is above the national average and improving, especially through the school's work with families who do not routinely visit school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school has a sustained track record of high achievement and it has demonstrated strong improvement from the previous inspection. Leadership and management have very effectively created a learning environment where pupils behave very well and are strongly motivated by the high quality teaching they receive.
- The headteacher has an excellent understanding of the strengths of the school and has clear and focused plans to develop certain aspects of the school further. The light support from the local authority has accurately evaluated the improvements that have been made.
- The headteacher has provided subject leaders with considerable responsibility for their areas.

They have made very good use of their expertise to review different aspects of provision and have made clear improvements. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, assessments of the children's development have been made more robust and have been moderated rigorously. Progress has improved as a result.

- The quality of teaching is monitored very closely. Direct lesson observations made by the headteacher and senior leaders are shared with other leaders to allow them to review the effectiveness of teaching in their subjects. Systems are in place to review the performance of teachers against specific targets, which in turn are linked to teachers' pay and opportunities for promotion. The headteacher reviews these targets to ensure they are closely linked to pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' work is tracked carefully and this allows the school to monitor the progress of individuals and, over time, ensures that the progress groups of pupils are making is outstanding. The school moderates pupils' work with other schools in their collaborative partnership to ensure assessments are accurate.
- School's leaders, including governors, manage the budget effectively and check closely how the pupil premium funding is used in the school. It has been spent to provide extra academic help for individual pupils and to ensure that they are fully included in all aspects of school life. Leaders' monitoring of its allocation shows that its impact on pupils' progress is excellent.
- The range of subjects taught provides a broad range of creative and interesting learning opportunities for the pupils. The outstanding curriculum promotes literacy at every opportunity. It connects subjects and areas of learning through imaginative approaches, which support pupils' understanding and love of learning. Through the activities provided, and the values of the school, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding of the pupils has developed extremely well. The school ensures there is no discrimination and all pupils have the opportunity to achieve as well as they can.
- The school has made use of the additional primary school sports funding through the use of coaches to work alongside teachers in lessons and to provide high quality coaching in after-school activities. Sport is very popular within school and the participation rates are very good. These improvements and the school's work during health week contribute well to pupils' health and well-being. The school's leaders, along with governors, are currently discussing how it can check how effectively the sports funding has been used.
- Pupils' welfare and safety are given the highest priority and are ensured with effective child protection and safeguarding procedures that meet statutory requirements.
- The school works extremely well with parents and carers, and in the local community and other schools. The headteacher supports newly appointed headteachers in local schools and the deputy headteacher, similarly, supports newly appointed deputy headteachers. The English and mathematics leaders are lead moderators of standards in the local authority. Also, the local authority uses one teacher's expertise in teaching phonics to help other schools. Governors confirm that this work has benefited the leadership of the school and helped to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement at George Fentham.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has worked very effectively with other leaders and managers to sustain and improve the school's strong record of pupils' high achievement from the previous inspection. It is increasingly effective in holding the school to account for the progress the

pupils make. Governors have a good understanding of performance data. They are regular visitors to the school and have a very good appreciation of the quality of teaching from feedback from the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, they visit lessons and review the progress made by groups of pupils. For example, the link governor responsible for special educational needs meets with the key member of staff to discuss the progress made by the small number of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and those with additional needs. The governors have a very clear understanding of how teachers' salary progression is linked to them achieving specific targets. They are aware also of the procedures for tackling underperformance. The financial position of the school is reviewed extremely carefully, as is any specific funding, for example that linked to develop primary sports within the school. The safeguarding arrangements are closely reviewed to ensure they meet statutory requirements so pupils are safe in school.

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	104094
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	431511

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Busby
Headteacher	Julie Gaughan
Date of previous school inspection	5 May 2009
Telephone number	01675 442800
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