

Rakegate Primary School

Rakegate Close, Wolverhampton, WV10 6US

Inspection dates		18-19 June 2014	
Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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 achieve well. They make good progress from starting points that are below those seen nationally.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average in mathematics and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Their needs are quickly identified and skilled support is put in place.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Leaders regularly check teaching and take swift action to coach and train staff where this is needed.
- The headteacher is strongly supported by the deputy head and other senior leaders. They are driving improvements in teaching and achievement at a good pace. Staff are fully supportive of the direction and vision set for the school.
- Governors play an important part in the life of the school. They provide a strong level of support and challenge to help to secure improvements.
- Pupils say they feel safe and valued in school. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are good. There is a caring and supportive atmosphere in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in reading is not as strong as in other subjects. Reading books are not always set at the right level of difficulty in some classes.
- Too few pupils are reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' marking does not always identify the specific steps pupils need to take to improve their work.
- Although improving, overall rates of attendance are below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons of which eight were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. They also saw a number of small-group sessions.
- In addition to lesson observations, inspectors reviewed work in pupils' mathematics, topic and writing books. Inspectors heard individual pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and six other governors, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers as they arrived at school with their children and they met with a group of parents in school. The views of parents, as expressed in the school's own survey, were considered. Fourteen responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' achievement, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance information, and documents relating to behaviour and 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 those services.

Inspection team

Marilyn Mottram, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Keith Brown	Additional Inspector
Karen Davies	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Rakegate Primary School is larger than the average sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is above average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school club on site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to the level of the very best by ensuring that all teachers:
 - identify the specific steps pupils need to take in order to improve their work
 - identify why pupils do not make as much progress in reading as they do in other subjects and take steps to rectify this, and review the level of difficulty in the reading books being used across the school
 - provide sufficient challenge to pupils who are capable of achieving the higher levels of attainment in all subjects.
- Continue to work with pupils and families to improve the attendance of those who do not attend as regularly as they should and close the gap with the national average for primary schools.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those typically seen at this age, particularly in communication and literacy skills. Teachers make accurate judgements about children's individual needs. Opportunities for learning are planned well and children make good progress. They leave Reception year with knowledge and skill levels in line with those found nationally in most aspects.
- In 2013, attainment at the end of Year 6 was above the national average in mathematics and writing. Attainment in reading was in line with national average. Pupils' attainment in the new spelling, punctuation and grammar test was above the national average. The school's records and the quality of work seen indicate that pupils' attainment continues to rise. However, too few pupils, in both key stages, are reaching the higher levels, particularly in writing and reading.
- The work seen in pupils' books and the school's own records of pupils' progress show that more pupils in Key Stage 1 are now working at the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The school expects that the proportion of pupils who reach the expected levels in the national tests in Year 2 will be close to the national average in 2014.
- Improved teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is resulting in more pupils reaching the standard expected for their age. The school's records show that pupils are making good progress in this key skill. This year, the school expects approximately three quarters of pupils to be successful in the Year 1 screening check.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because there are robust systems in place for identifying pupils' particular needs quickly. Teachers and teaching assistants provide pupils with effective support and make sure that pupils have the resources that they need to complete their work in all lessons.
- Pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress and some make outstanding progress. The school has used its funding to provide additional teaching staff and new resources for a wide range of support activities. In 2013, the attainment of Year 6 pupils supported by pupil premium was the equivalent of one term behind their classmates in mathematics and two terms behind in writing. There was very little difference between the groups in reading
- The school is using the primary school sport funding effectively to organise training for staff and to improve the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement in this subject. New equipment has been purchased and additional sporting opportunities are on offer. Pupils speak clearly about the skills that they have started to develop in sport. During the inspection pupils were engaged in many different athletic activities, including the javelin and shot-put.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. The school's monitoring records show that teaching has improved since the previous section 5 inspection. This is confirmed by the evidence of the improvements that have been made and sustained in pupils' progress over this period.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage well-planned activities ensure children learn how to express their ideas clearly and develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills quickly. For example, children were using counting skills well whilst in the outdoor Ice-cream Café and the

Garden Shop. Adults stepped in at appropriate points to help with and extend children's learning and to regularly assess and record their progress. Children make good progress as a result of these activities.

- Pupils' learning is most effective when teachers provide significant challenge and support for pupils of all abilities. This was particularly evident in Year 5 mathematics lessons, where pupils were working on a range of time-limited challenges involving simple formulae. The teacher prompted pupils to use appropriate mathematical language and present the 'perfect explanation' for their results. Pupils who found the challenges posed by this task difficult were able to make use of additional resources to help them. Pupils who had mastered the concepts were working on tasks targeted at the higher level 5. All pupils were making rapid progress and pupils' commitment to their work was outstanding.
- Where learning is slower, it is usually because the work set does not provide sufficient challenge. Work in pupils' books shows that, in some lessons, all pupils are given the same work. This means that the more-able are not provided with sufficient challenge for them to reach their potential. In some classes, the reading books provided are not well-matched to pupils' ability. This hinders pupils' progress in reading and does not foster a love of wider reading.
- Classrooms are bright and well resourced. Charts and displays provide pupils with useful information and vocabulary to support their learning. For example, mathematics 'facts of the day' and alphabetic spelling charts are used by pupils to help them with their work. This means that pupils are often able to move on with their learning and not wait for help from the teacher if they are stuck.
- The majority of pupils' work is marked in line with the school's agreed policy. Pupils understand the helpful comments and advice that teachers use to guide their work. Pupils use these to make corrections and revise pieces of work when required. However, there are instances when teachers' comments do not indicate clearly enough the specific steps pupils need to take in order to improve their work. This slows pupils' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. In classes, assemblies and around school they are polite and well-mannered and treat each other and adults with respect. They are proud of their school and of the facilities they have indoors and in the schools grounds, such as the running track and the football area. Pupils take responsibility, within the class and in the playground, to help with the smooth running of the school.
- Pupils demonstrate good learning behaviour in lessons, particularly when they are fully challenged in their learning. These positive attitudes help them to make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- Pupils are well prepared for lessons. They take pride in their work, use their learning target books effectively and are proud of their achievements. One Year 6 pupil said, 'We are grateful to the teachers, they've been brilliant. They want us to have the best start we can in our secondary schools and they do everything they can to help us. They really care.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel completely safe everywhere in the school. Parents agree and say that 'the school has excellent systems in place to keep children safe and happy in their learning.'
- Pupils value the reward systems in place for good behaviour such as Planet points and 'Good

News' cards. They feel that the 'five-stage warning system' deals with any incidents of less good behaviour effectively and that the system is fair. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and say that lessons and assemblies about anti-bullying are an important part of school life. One pupil said, 'Everyone is valued here.'

- Leaders are working with parents and a range of external providers to improve attendance. Pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly and can quote attendance figures for their class and others. Although the current attendance figure is above the figure for the equivalent period in 2013, it is not yet in line with the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher share a determination to provide the best for each individual pupil so that all pupils leave the school well prepared for the next steps in their education. This shows clearly in the improvements that have been made since the previous section 5 inspection.
- Teachers have performance targets linked to the progress of pupils they teach. Leaders frequently check how well pupils are learning, taking account of all aspects of a teacher's work. There is a close link between teachers' performance and their pay progression.
- Senior and subject leaders work together effectively to organise appropriate training and professional development opportunities to further improve the quality of teaching. These actions have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and, consequently, on pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics and phonics.
- Leaders are aware that there is more work to do, in particular regarding improving attendance and in moving the quality of teaching closer to outstanding. The school improvement plan focuses on the most important areas and contains appropriately challenging targets.
- The school has good relationships with parents and carers. During the inspection, parents were taking part in science lessons with their children in Year 3. Pupils were proud to share their work with parents. Parents value the opportunities to visit lessons and the regular communications they receive regarding their children's progress.
- The school's ethos, values and curriculum make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in drama, music and visits to local areas of interest. Displays around the school, and work in pupils' books, show that pupils study a range of different cultures and beliefs.
- Additional funding for primary sport has been used well to improve teachers' subject knowledge and to increase the range of sporting opportunities available for pupils. The impact of this on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching is checked carefully.
- The local authority has identified this school as an improving school and placed it in a 'light touch' category. Some elements of local authority support have been stronger than others. The support provided for improving the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Local authority consultants have provided effective advice for the school in its work to secure improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In contrast, training for governors has not always been available or effective.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas that need further improvement, particularly regarding attendance, and are aware of the strengths of teaching and the efforts made to improve it. They are fully involved in the setting of the school's targets for improvement.
- School documentation shows that governors work closely with the headteacher to ensure that the pupil premium funding and primary sports funding are used well and are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and well-being.
- Governors have high expectations of the school's leaders. Leaders are held closely to account and, as with the teaching staff, pay awards are linked closely to performance.
- The governing body ensures that all safeguarding requirements 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

Unique reference number	104304
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	442533

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Claymore
Headteacher	Steve Harris
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2012
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