

Fosse Primary School

Balfour Street, Leicester, LE3 5EA

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching in Key Stage 2 is not consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make the more sustained progress needed to raise achievement.
- The work teachers set is sometimes too easy for more able pupils.
- Teachers do not check often enough how well pupils are getting on with their work, and this means their progress slows.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop their skills in writing across a wide range of subjects.
- Weaknesses in basic calculation skills slow pupils' progress in mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Good school leadership has improved the quality of teaching. As a result pupils' progress and achievement are improving.
- As a result of good provision, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly and make good progress from their different starting points.
- The governing body is effectively supporting the drive for continued improvement.
- Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning contribute to the strong sense of community in the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are respectful of cultural and religious diversity.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons. Several lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Senior leaders also joined the inspectors in reviewing pupils' written work.
- The inspectors observed the breakfast club and one assembly, and made a number of short visits to classrooms.
- Pupils were observed at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Groups of pupils of different ages were heard reading.
- The inspectors took account of the 35 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) for these to be made available to inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of 90 responses to the school's own survey of the views of parents and carers. Inspectors also met with some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, samples of pupils' work, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety. Inspectors also looked at information on individual pupils' progress and teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Khalid Din	Additional Inspector
Kate Robertson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average size primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Thirty languages are spoken by pupils, with an increasing number of pupils entering the school from Eastern European countries.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional government funding for particular groups such as pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average, while the proportion supported through school action plus is above average. One pupil has an education, health and care plan; as a proportion, this is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- No pupils attend any alternative form of education away from the school site.
- The school provides a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - pupils capable of reaching higher levels are given tasks that make them think and work hard
 - through ongoing checks of pupils' progress in lessons, teachers move pupils on to more demanding work as soon as they are ready to tackle it
 - questioning is used more effectively to extend pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in English and mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write for different audiences and purposes in subjects other than English
 - increasing pupils' ability to tackle mathematical problems by ensuring they have a secure grounding in basic calculation skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and an effective senior leadership team are the driving forces behind the school's increasing effectiveness. With the full support of staff and governors they are bringing about rapid and secure improvement. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now good; results in the 2014 Year 1 phonics check are much improved on those of the previous year, and standards by Year 2 are now close to the national average. The weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report are being tackled successfully. All are committed to making sure that pupils have equal opportunities to achieve as well as they can. This is supported by a clear agenda for continued improvement.
- The school improvement plan is based on careful checks of the school's work and identifies the correct areas for improvement. Senior leaders make good use of information from checks on teaching to develop teachers' skills. As a result, although the full impact of this improvement is yet to be seen in pupils' achievement at the end of Key Stage 2, there is much more good teaching.
- The school has recently modified the teaching groups for mathematics to support the drive to raise standards and ensure pupils reach their full potential. Pupils are now taught in sets based on ability for the teaching of the subject in Key Stage 2. Assessment is being used to check the impact of this change, although it is too recent to evaluate the impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment is also used well to identify weaknesses and to check the effectiveness of any support provided for pupils who need extra help. Following the removal of National Curriculum levels, the school plans to implement its own approach to assessment in collaboration with the local authority.
- Subject and other leaders' roles are developed well. They are provided with appropriate training and support. This enables them to check the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility and so make a significant contribution to the drive for continued improvement. Effective leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children make good progress in both their academic and their personal and social development.
- There is an appropriate emphasis on numeracy in the range of subjects taught. Pupils have numerous opportunities to develop their creative potential but do not have enough chances to write for different audiences and purposes in subject besides English. Their ideas and imagination are seen in impressive displays of work throughout the school. Learning is enhanced through visitors and visits to places of interest.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well through, for example, art, music and the belief in mutual respect and tolerance the school so strongly upholds. The impact is seen in pupils' acceptance of ethnic diversity and of clearly defined boundaries of what is right or wrong as they move through the school. These values contribute strongly to pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- The school receives substantial additional funding through the pupil premium. This money is used to provide additional staffing and resources to meet the needs of pupils for whom this funding is intended, primarily in literacy and numeracy. The most recent test and assessment information shows that the use of this funding has led to a narrowing of the attainment gap between these and other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school makes very good use of the primary school sport funding to provide specialist sports teaching, in an excellent sports hall, and to extend the range of competitive sports. As a result, pupils' participation in sporting activities and understanding of the importance of physical activity to health and well-being have increased.
- The local authority has provided the school with good support in tackling the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. This support has been particularly helpful in improving the quality of teaching.

■ The governance of the school:

- The school benefits from the support of an effective governing body and the high level of educational expertise of the chair. Governors are rigorous in evaluating the quality of their own work and their impact on the school's performance. They fully understand how pupils' attainment and progress compare with performance in other schools. They set, and review conscientiously, the headteacher's targets for improving the school. They know the targets that are set for teachers to improve their work and apply the link between teachers' pay and pupils' progress. Governors ensure that all requirements, including those relating to child protection and safeguarding, are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils display positive attitudes to school and to learning. They show respect for adults and treat the school facilities and resources with care.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, children quickly learn and accept adults' expectations of behaviour in lessons and around the school. This forms the basis of the good behaviour of pupils that contributes well to the school's positive learning atmosphere and pupils' improving progress and attainment.
- Parents, carers, staff and pupils confirm that behaviour is typically good. Pupils are friendly and care for each other well and pupils from all backgrounds get on well with each other. They respond well to opportunities to take on jobs and responsibilities within the school, for example, as school councillors.
- Effective action has led to a sharp increase in attendance, which reached the national average in the last school year. Pupils are generally punctual at the start of the school day.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders make sure that access to the school is secure and that all visitors are appropriately checked. All staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment. The well-organised breakfast club makes a good contribution to pupils' care and support.
- Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will look after them well if they have any concerns. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet, at school and in the community. Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection echoed the view that this is a harmonious and welcoming school in which their children are kept safe.
- Effective support is provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This ensures that they are maintained in full-time education and have full access to all the school provides. The school offers particularly good support to pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Effective help enables such pupils to play a full part in the life of the school and make progress that is comparable to that of their peers.
- Pupils understand about different kinds of bullying, including physical bullying and persistent name-calling. They say, and school records show, that although there have been instances of bullying in the past, there are no current concerns. All incidents are treated very seriously and the school makes clear that bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Pupils are confident that adults will help them if they have any concerns.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Previous weaknesses in teaching meant that while most pupils made the progress expected of them, too few made the accelerated progress that is necessary to raise standards. While teaching has improved, and there is much good and better practice, its quality across Key Stage 2 is still too variable.
- Where teaching over time requires improvement, the same work tends to be given to all pupils without regard for different ability levels. As a result, pupils do not always work at the right level to secure faster rates of progress, particularly pupils capable of reaching higher levels.

- In a few lessons, checks on the progress pupils are making are not frequent enough to ensure that misunderstandings are identified and corrected, while at other times pupils who are ready to move on have to wait while others catch up.
- While there are examples of the effective use of questioning to stimulate pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding, questions are at times too closely directed towards drawing out an expected answer and do not encourage pupils to think for themselves.
- Where teachers plan work that is suitably challenging for all ability levels, good progress is made. This was seen, for example, in an English lesson for Year 4 pupils. Pupils made rapid progress in developing their understanding of how the use of adjectives can enliven sentences. The work captured their enthusiasm and the teacher and teaching assistant constantly challenged pupils to improve their writing through the use of more imaginative descriptive words.
- Teaching assistants work well in partnership with teachers. They provide good individual and small group support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, because they are well informed about pupils' needs and what pupils will be expected to do. They also contribute well to the teaching of phonics.
- Consistently good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children are provided with a variety of activities that capture their interests, help them to develop a range of skills and enable them to make good gains in their learning.
- Effective support is provided for pupils who are at the early stages of learning to speak English. This means that these pupils make rapid progress in spoken English from the time they join the school.
- Pupil premium funding is used appropriately to supplement teaching support and resources for pupils for whom the funding is intended. This helps to make sure that these pupils' progress is comparable to others in English and mathematics.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils are usually effective, particularly in their writing books. Most teachers provide clear advice to pupils about how to improve their work and make sure that pupils respond to this advice.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across Years 3 to 6. As a result, standards in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are not high enough, and too few pupils achieve well.
- Variability in pupils' progress has contributed to standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 being well below average over recent years. While pupils have made the progress expected of them, too few have made the more rapid progress needed to raise standards. The 2014 test and assessment results show that although pupils made good progress in Year 6, it was not enough to make up for the slower progress made in earlier years. As a result, standards remained well below average.
- More-able pupils generally make the progress expected of them. However, the work set for these pupils is sometimes too easy to enable them to make rapid progress. In 2014, for example, all of the pupils who were at Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 reached the expected Level 5 in these subjects at the end of Year 6, but none reached the higher Level 6.
- Inspection evidence, including reviews of pupils' work, shows that pupils' rates of progress, particularly that of the more-able, are slowed because they are not always challenged enough. Pupils are not given enough opportunity to extend their writing skills in subjects other than English, and weaknesses in basic calculation skills limit pupils' ability to solve problems in mathematics.
- Children enter Nursery and Reception classes with levels of skill and knowledge that are well below those

expected for their age. Some pupils have skills which are low in relation to those expected and many are at early stages in learning to speak English. From these starting points, pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although few achieve the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1.

- Improvements in teaching are contributing to better progress and an improvement in standards at the end of Year 2. In 2014, standards in reading, writing and mathematics, which have been well below average in recent years, rose to be much closer to 2013 national average.
- Successful action to improve the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has raised pupils' performance in the Year 1 phonics screening check. In 2013, pupils did not perform as well as other pupils nationally in the check; however, in 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard increased to match the national figure.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve at broadly similar rates to one another. Pupils who are at early stages of learning to speak English, particularly those who are new arrivals, generally make good progress in acquiring English. The methods and resources used, including the employment of staff with relevant language skills, help pupils to develop their vocabulary and understanding quickly.
- Additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is being used effectively to narrow the attainment gap between these pupils and their peers. At the end of Year 6 in 2013, these pupils were over three terms behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. Gaps between these pupils and pupils nationally who are not eligible for funding were wider, because overall attainment was below average. In 2014, there was no in-school gap in attainment in reading, and the gap in writing narrowed to a term and that in mathematics to just under two terms.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive appropriately targeted support from teachers and teaching assistants both in lessons and in individual and small group sessions. They make at least expected progress from their various starting points.

The early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because good leadership and management ensure that teaching is consistently good and meets the needs of children from diverse backgrounds.
- Pre-entry home visits help to establish links with parents and carers, which in turn help children to settle quickly. High expectations and the consistent reinforcement of daily routines help to establish a firm base for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Assessment information is used effectively to plan activities that extend the more able and meet children's diverse needs. In stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments, children are provided with an engaging range of learning activities and an interesting variety of resources. These capture their imaginations and help them to develop and build on their starting points.
- Skilled teaching, especially in communication, language and literacy, helps to ensure that the wide range of children's needs are met, particularly those at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs.
- The setting provides good quality care. Adults ensure children are kept safe and healthy so that they are able to enjoy their learning. Positive relationships and a strong emphasis on developing the children's personal skills ensure that they become more confident as they move to Year 1.
- The school is in the process of exploring ways of engaging more parents and carers in the active support of their children's education.

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	120089
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	441933

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Select
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Sutcliffe
Headteacher	Richard Stone
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2013
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