

# Fountain Primary School

Fountain Street, Morley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS27 0AW

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- In the past, the school's curriculum has been too narrow. Consequently, pupils' subject-specific skills are limited. Leaders have taken action to improve the curriculum, which is now broad and balanced.
- Subject leaders, beyond English and mathematics, are very new to their role. It is too early for them to have brought about sufficient improvements in their subjects.
- The lack of focused leadership in phonics has led to variability in the quality of teaching and to a decline in pupils' outcomes in the Year 1 phonic screening check in 2017.
- Leaders' action plans are detailed, but they do not focus sharply enough on the gains required in pupils' achievement at both the expected and higher standard.
- Over time, pupils' outcomes have not been good enough. In 2017, pupils' progress from their entry into Year 3 to the end of Year 6 was below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current pupils' outcomes are improving, but there remain pockets of underachievement that need ironing out.
- Differences between disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and those of others are diminishing, but remain wider than those found nationally.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teaching in the early years is also too variable. A lack of strong leadership has resulted in inconsistencies in practice between Nursery and Reception classes.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of what needs to improve and are already taking effective action. They provide the necessary capacity to secure further improvement.
- Current pupils' outcomes are showing a marked improvement on previous years.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are proud members of Fountain Primary School and embrace the wider opportunities they receive.
- Pupils say they feel safe and feel there is a trusted adult in whom they can confide.
- Children in the Nursery get off to a good start in their learning.

## Full report

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

- Secure consistently good teaching and learning, so that more pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, can achieve successfully at the expected and higher standard by ensuring that:
  - all staff have equally high expectations of what pupils can and will achieve
  - all teachers use pupils' prior attainment information to plan work that is appropriately matched to pupils' abilities
  - the differences between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and others diminish further
  - pupils receive more opportunities to consolidate and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics
  - phonics teaching matches that of the best in all year groups
  - opportunities to deepen pupils' subject-specific skills, beyond English and mathematics, are maximised.
- Improve early years provision by ensuring that:
  - the quality of teaching and learning is consistent between Nursery and Reception classes
  - greater consistency in the quality of adult interventions that extend children's thinking and deepen their understanding, particularly during children's play
  - activities planned for outdoor learning are well considered and used to build upon children's skills effectively.
  - interim arrangements for the leadership of the early years are secured without delay.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management further by:
  - providing training and support for the recently appointed subject leaders, beyond English and mathematics, to enable them to extend their responsibilities into monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school
  - improving the leadership of phonics to ensure that all teachers follow a consistent approach so that pupils, particularly the most able pupils, can move on quickly in their learning
  - ensuring that the ambitious plans for the school curriculum are embedded
  - ensuring that action plans are linked more sharply to the improvements in pupils' outcomes that leaders desire, particularly for the most able and disadvantaged most able pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the school's leadership has been subject to considerable and continued disruption. A period of weak interim leadership left the school ill-prepared to manage the implementation of changes to the national curriculum and assessment. As a result, pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching declined.
- Upon appointment, the current headteacher set about tackling these issues and securing accurate assessment. While the school is now in a secure place to move forward quickly, because of considerable staffing turbulence it has taken longer than anticipated to get to this position. Nevertheless, the headteacher has a very clear vision for the future of the school and is determined to be successful.
- The assistant headteacher shares the same ambition as the headteacher and together they are driving improvements in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. At the time of the inspection the deputy headteacher had only just returned from an extended period of absence.
- Recently appointed phase leaders, in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2, are highly effective practitioners who have strong subject knowledge. They set high expectations for what pupils can and will achieve and are supporting their teams to meet their exacting standards. Although only appointed this school year, they are already having considerable impact upon improving pupils' outcomes in their phases.
- Recently appointed subject leaders for mathematics and English have clear priorities for improvement. They are honest about the hurdles they have to overcome and have wasted no time in establishing a consistent approach to the teaching of their subjects. They give clear guidance to teachers to help them plan activities to support pupils' progression in skills. Already, there is a marked improvement in pupils' outcomes across the school, compared with previous years.
- Subject leaders beyond English and mathematics are very new to their roles. They are in the earliest stages of establishing their leadership skills and have not had an opportunity to drive through the required improvements in their subjects.
- The curriculum provides rich opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders acknowledge that previously, many activities provided coverage of subjects, rather than deepening pupils' learning and their subject-specific skills. Leaders have adjusted the school's timetable to enable more time for pupils to study subjects beyond English and mathematics at greater depth. Ambitious plans for the wider curriculum and are in the earliest stages of implementation. It is consequently too early to judge the full effect of their actions on pupils' outcomes.
- Additional funding to support pupils who have special education needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used effectively. It is used primarily to provide additional support where it is most needed. Additional adults adjust activities successfully to meet pupils' needs and abilities. Leaders track and review the outcomes of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities regularly to ensure that support remains appropriate.
- The school's strategy for pupil premium spending is detailed. Leaders know the barriers to learning experienced by disadvantaged pupils. They target spending to minimise the

impact of these barriers on disadvantaged pupils' achievement. As a result, there are notable improvements in the reduction of gaps in progress and attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others for those currently in the school.

- The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children are happy and safe in school. However, a significant minority of parents raised concerns over the levels of staff turnover and the effectiveness of communication between home and school. The headteacher acknowledges that despite her efforts there is still more work to do to strengthen parents' relationship with the school.
- The physical education (PE) and sports grant is used effectively across the alliance of schools. It ensures that pupils have access to a range of after-school clubs and competitions. A number of sports coaches support the teaching of PE in school. The subject leader has yet to fully evaluate the sustainability of this model.
- School leaders have a clear understanding of the challenges they face and have prepared detailed action plans to guide their work. These are based upon accurate and detailed analysis of pupils' outcomes. While priorities are correctly identified, the targets established to measure success are not sharply focused upon the improvement desired in pupils' outcomes.
- School leaders are outward facing and value the support of neighbouring schools. The local alliance of schools works collectively to secure accurate assessment and share staff training events.
- Leaders' use of external consultants has been less helpful in securing improvements. While their reports are detailed, some of the recommendations within them lack the precision needed to secure rapid improvement. More recently, the headteacher has looked to the local authority for support. This is contributing effectively to the recent improvements evident in the school's approaches for teaching English and mathematics.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governing body membership has been equally turbulent with several changes of chair since the last inspection. Although historically this has proven difficult, it has led to the formation of an almost completely new governing body.
- New governors are appointed according to their skills. This is improving the sharpness of challenge and support given to school leaders.
- Extensive training and a very clear vision for the future success of the school is enabling governors to hold school leaders to account effectively. They use their considerable skills to fulfil their strategic duties successfully.
- Regular visits to the school ensure that they have a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their concern over pupils' outcomes led to the establishment of a strategic school improvement committee, who meet each term to evaluate the successes of improvement plans.
- Governors have ensured that performance management procedures are in place and use their powers to hold staff to account effectively. Inspectors' checks of governors' records of visits to the school and their minutes of meetings demonstrate the skills with

which they now hold school leaders to account.

- Governors have a clear understanding of the challenges they face and are equally determined to be successful. Their combined effectiveness increases the school's capacity to make the required improvements to be a good school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff understand the role they play in keeping pupils safe and take their responsibilities seriously. All staff are subject to rigorous checks to ensure that they are fit to work with children. Training is accessed at regular intervals to ensure that they maintain relevant and up-to-date knowledge and skills.
- Leaders have moved to an electronic system to record all incidents relating to racism, child protection and bullying. This is ensuring that records are centralised and more easily maintained and analysed. Scrutiny of the school's records show that incidents are logged immediately and leaders' follow-up actions are timely and appropriate. Records also reflect the degree to which school leaders access the advice and support of external agencies in their efforts to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils say they are happy and that they feel safe in school. The vast majority of parents endorse this view.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Although recent appointments have strengthened the quality of teaching and learning across the school, there remains variability. This is because not all teachers expect the very best from pupils. As a result, although improvements in pupils' outcomes are evident, teachers' expectations are not yet consistent between subjects and year groups.
- Leaders have worked hard to establish a system to track pupils' outcomes effectively and to secure accurate assessment. However, teachers are not consistent in their use of pupils' prior learning to ensure that the activities they plan are well matched to pupils' skills and abilities. As a result, some pupils find their work too easy or too hard and this slows their progress.
- There is now a defined approach to the teaching of writing. Quality texts are used to provide a stimulus for pupils to write and to exemplify grammar and punctuation forms. This is leading to pupils who are increasingly confident to write in a range of styles. For example, pupils in Year 5 were highly engaged and eager to write their arguments to the question 'Should pupils be allowed access to the internet?' While leaders are heartened by the recent improvements, they recognise there is still more to do to secure consistently strong outcomes over time.
- Although pupils' outcomes in writing are improving, there is a marked difference between the quality of pupils' writing in English compared with that seen in other subjects. This is because teachers' expectations of pupils in applying their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills in subjects other than English are not consistently high

enough. Leaders acknowledge this.

- Leaders have very recently changed their approach to the teaching of reading. All pupils receive a daily whole-class reading lesson. Teachers use a range of resources, including film clips, to improve pupils' comprehension skills. This is supporting pupils' improving outcomes in reading. Occasionally, pupils complete easier questions before moving onto more challenging ones. This is slowing the progress of the most able pupils and the disadvantaged most able pupils, who are capable of more.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often to research the topics they are studying. This is nurturing a genuine love of reading in pupils and enabling them to talk clearly about the reading skills they are developing. In discussion with inspectors, all pupils expressed how much better their reading had become since the changes to their reading session. As one pupil stated, 'It used to be really noisy in guided reading, but now it is much quieter to help me think.'
- Since the appointment of the mathematics subject leader in January 2018, there is now greater clarity and support for teachers to plan sequences of lessons effectively. This is leading to improvements in pupils' outcomes, which is evident in recent assessment information and which correlates with the work seen in pupils' books. While this is heartening, leaders know there is still work to do to eliminate the pockets of pupils' historical underachievement that remain.
- In subjects beyond English and mathematics, there is limited evidence of pupils' developing their subject-specific knowledge and skills in sufficient depth. Although pupils access appropriate coverage of a wide range of subjects, very few pupils are able to study at greater depth consistently. Leaders are already taking action to tackle this weakness.
- Pupils' outcomes in the Year 1 phonic screening check declined in 2017. Teachers are enthusiastic in their approach and encourage pupils to apply their phonic skills effectively. However, there is too much variation in the approaches used by teachers. This means the demands and expectations placed upon pupils differ and the speed with which pupils, particularly the most able and the disadvantaged most able, acquire new skills is inconsistent, including in the early years.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe and know there is a trusted adult they can talk to if they have any concerns.
- Pupils say that bullying can happen but that it is resolved quickly. They talked fondly to inspectors about the school's inclusion team, who offer much support, particularly to the most vulnerable pupils. Pupils who talked to inspectors confidently explained the dangers of chatrooms, cyber bullying and online gaming.
- Teachers maximise opportunities to improve pupils' personal development. 'Picture news' links to current affairs and tackles pertinent issues. Texts in English lessons are

also chosen to reinforce important messages. For example, pupils in Year 5 were writing arguments for pupils to access the internet and discussed their concerns over online exploitation and grooming.

- Pupils' awareness of British values is promoted effectively. Pupils talked excitedly about their involvement in the 'Pupils' Parliament', which enables them to have a greater understanding of the rule of law and democracy in action. 'Themed weeks' focusing upon 'respect' and 'anti-bullying', increase pupils' wider awareness and preparedness for life in modern Britain. A further planned event, to raise aspirations, is in direct response to pupils' requests for careers advice.
- Leaders use a raft of procedures to improve pupils' attendance. Overall attendance is broadly in line with the national average for primary schools. However, holidays taken during term time are having a negative impact on the school's attendance figures. Leaders use all powers available to them to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- One of the first tasks the headteacher completed was to establish a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour. This is now embedded practice. Pupils like the clarity it brings and, in the main, respect the school rules and adhere to the expectations. As a result, there have been no exclusions at the school and disruption to learning is rare.
- Pupils' good behaviour forms the bedrock of the school's values and ethos. The school is calm and purposeful and pupils behave well. They demonstrate highly positive attitudes to their learning and show good manners and readily hold doors open for each other and for visitors without prompting.
- Playtimes are energetic, but enjoyable. 'Friendship zones' and 'active zones' allow pupils to make choices. Football games are highly inclusive, which enables all pupils, regardless of skill, to play harmoniously with one another.
- Pupils' movement around the school is orderly and well supervised. There is very little low-level disruption to learning. On the rare occasions that it does occur, it is directly attributable to a lack of challenge from the teacher.
- Pupils are proud members of Fountain Primary School. They wear their uniform with great pride and value the very many experiences they receive.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Historical outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics have not been good enough. Following the last inspection in 2013 pupils' outcomes started to decline and in 2017 pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was below average and in the bottom 40% of schools nationally.

- In the same year, the differences between disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and those of other pupils were wider than those seen nationally, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Internal assessment information for pupils currently in the school, corroborated by work seen in pupils' books, shows that leaders actions have halted the decline. Increasing proportions of pupils are now on track to achieve more highly in reading, writing, and mathematics at both the expected and higher standard. While this is heartening, leaders acknowledge that weaker teaching in the past has left gaps in pupils' knowledge that need to be filled.
- Outcomes for middle-ability pupils vary, particularly in mathematics. Occasionally, teachers move too quickly through units of work before pupils have fully grasped mathematical concepts. Sometimes the work set for them is beyond their level of arithmetic fluency. Pupils make better progress in English. Teachers model effectively what is expected, which supports pupils' understanding and enables them to be successful, independent learners.
- The most able pupils are now receiving increasing opportunities to deepen their learning and extend their thinking. This is especially the case in mathematics, where more pupils are now on track to achieve at the higher standard. It is less so in reading. Too often they are asked to complete easier questions before moving onto more demanding questions that make them explain and reason about their answers.
- Lower-ability pupils are making steady progress in mathematics and English. The introduction of visual prompts and manipulative resources are enabling pupils to consolidate their skills and knowledge successfully.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make steady progress from their often low starting points. Leaders pinpoint the next steps for learning accurately and ensure that pupils receive effective support and access a range of resources to facilitate their progress.
- Leaders have worked hard to minimise the differences between disadvantaged pupils' achievements and that of others. In most year groups, more disadvantaged pupils are now on track to reach the expected and higher standard than was previously the case. Gaps in attainment are now reducing. However, leaders are not complacent and know that there is still more to do to ensure that such improvements are sustained.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- The majority of children enter Nursery with skills typical for their age and level of development.
- In 2017, the number of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception dipped below the national average.
- Assessment information for children currently in the school indicates that children in Nursery are getting off to a good start in their acquisition of skills and knowledge. However, this stalls in Reception class. Senior leaders are already taking action to tackle this.



- In Nursery, children sustain their interests in activities because adults know when and how to intervene. They ask questions and pose problems that extend children's thinking and build successfully on children's interests. For example, a member of the Nursery support staff deftly extended boys' play by making a fire engine from crates and tubular shapes into fire hoses. The boys eagerly became firefighters, putting out imaginary fires. This facilitated the boys' play and enabled the extension of problem-solving skills and language development effectively. However, this level of intervention is not yet consistent, especially in Reception. Here children access only limited intervention during their play. This impedes the speed with which children can acquire new skills.
- Outdoor learning in Nursery builds upon children's prior learning because planned activities meet children's needs and interests effectively. This is not consistently the case in Reception. Planned outdoor activities have limited appeal and the focus for learning is often unclear.
- For the most part, children behave well and follow simple rules. They take turns and share resources. Children are respectful of adults and are encouraged to use good manners remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Occasionally, children forget to look after the resources. In Nursery, adults sensitively remind children of their expectations. However, these high expectations are again not consistent in Reception.
- Children's assessments are accurate and completed regularly. An electronic system to track children's achievement enables parents to contribute to it easily. For the most part, teachers use this information to plan adult-led activities that build children's skills progressively. However, while leaders track the progress of individual children carefully, they do not use this information to analyse the progress of groups of children, particularly disadvantaged children. As a result, the developmental gaps between disadvantaged children and others on entry to Nursery are still evident by the time children leave the early years.
- The variability in practice in the early years is directly attributable to a lack of stable and effective leadership in the past. Advice from external consultants has compounded the problem. Their reports are overly generous and recommendations lack precision. Senior leaders have already identified improvement priorities and are taking action to tackle the variability. Local authority advisory teachers are providing effective additional support.
- Children acquire early phonics skills effectively and are able to apply them to their reading and writing successfully. However, the pace of learning is such that not all children acquire the skills they are capable of, particularly the most able children.

## School details

Unique reference number	134973
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10049206

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	463
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Carter
Headteacher	Emma Walker
Telephone number	01138 878 235
Website	<a href="http://www.fountainprimary.leeds.sch.uk/">www.fountainprimary.leeds.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@fountainprimary.org">headteacher@fountainprimary.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There has been a high turnover of staff since the previous inspection. A new headteacher and phase leaders have recently been appointed.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average. However, fewer pupils than that found nationally have an education health and care plan or statement of SEN.
- In 2017, the school exceeded the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum performance expectations for primary schools.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in lessons across the school. All observations were undertaken jointly with the school's senior leaders. Inspectors correlated this evidence with work seen in pupils' books.
- Inspectors held meetings with subject and phase leaders, several members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority. They met with parents at the start of the school day.
- A range of the school's documentation was scrutinised including the school's action plans, self-evaluation, records of monitoring and teacher's performance management arrangements. Safeguarding records, including behaviour logs, were reviewed, as well as records of minutes from governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of the 86 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 34 free-text commentaries as well as the 32 responses to Ofsted's staff consultations and the 24 responses from Ofsted's pupils' consultation.
- Some pupils from key stage 1 and 2 were listened to reading. Several pupils talked to inspectors formally as well as informally at playtime and lunchtime.

## Inspection team

Diane Buckle, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Darren Marks	Ofsted Inspector
Marianne Young	Ofsted Inspector

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