



# Fallings Park Primary School

Inspection report

**Better  
education  
and care**

Unique Reference Number 104294  
LEA Wolverhampton  
Inspection number 274794  
Inspection dates 21-22 June 2005  
Reporting inspector Mrs Doris Bell

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

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Type of School	Primary	School address	Old Fallings Lane
School category	Community		Low Hill
Age range of pupils	3 - 11		Wolverhampton
			West Midlands
			WV10 8BN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	(01902) 558 375
Number on roll	445	Fax number	(01902) 558 376
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr G Robson
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs K Rattenbury

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Age group	Published	Reference no.
3 - 11	July 2005	274794

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## Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the Fallings Park Primary School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Fallings Park is a large primary school formed by the amalgamation in 2001 of a successful infant school and a junior school that had been in special measures. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that expected for the children's ages and standards were very low in the junior part of the school at the time of the merger. Pupils come from the area close to the school which is very high on the social deprivation index. Almost one fifth are from minority ethnic or mixed ethnic backgrounds but only a very small number are at the early stages of learning English. The school is in an Education Action Zone, receives Excellence in Cities funding and is part of a Sure Start project involving parents and pupils.

The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average, but this may be an underestimate as the school knows, from a survey carried out with parents, that not all parents claim their entitlement. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about the national average, although the school also supports a larger number of lower attaining pupils. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below the national average. The school is heavily involved in two behaviour initiatives and it is working towards the Healthy Schools Award.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

Fallings Park is a good school and this evaluation matches the school's view of its effectiveness. It cares exceptionally well for all of its pupils and they and their parents hold it in high regard. The good provision in the Foundation Stage helps the children to make good progress, although standards at the end of reception are still below average. Progress is satisfactory in the rest of the school, although standards overall are still well below average in Year 6. Nevertheless, the school is improving and it has come a long way since the merger. It first resolved behaviour and ethos so that learning could take place and it has successfully raised achievement in English. It is now working very hard to raise achievement in mathematics, recognising that progress in mathematics is somewhat uneven in Years 3 to 6. It has succeeded in doing this in Years 1 and 2 where pupils' achievement is better, and in engendering enjoyment of mathematical learning in the rest of the school. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are exemplary and the climate for learning is right. Attendance remains below the national average despite the school's best efforts. The school is well led and managed. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although all of the teaching observed during the inspection was good. This is because monitoring has clearly identified key weaknesses in, for example, planning that have been tackled well. What the school has done so far shows that it has strong capacity to improve further. It provides good value for money.

### Grade: 2

#### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics and iron out the inconsistencies in progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve attendance.

## Achievement and standards

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, improving from well below the standards expected when they start to below them at the end of reception. The standards that pupils reach in Year 2 and Year 6 are not high enough because of the low attainment on entry and because of the legacy of under-achievement in Years 3 to 6. The school knows that they have to improve and has many good strategies in place that have already raised them from the very low starting point recorded at the time of the merger. In the past, pupils have not performed well in the national tests because they have not been able to solve problems or get their thoughts down on paper quickly enough in a test situation. Improvements in teachers' planning, the school's

focus on writing and the effective use of the skills of the leading mathematics teacher are improving their ability in these areas. The school's data, used to track pupils' progress, the work in their books and their mature speaking and listening skills all show that the pupils currently in Year 6 have made good progress in English and satisfactory progress in mathematics since the merger. Mathematics is steadily improving although this is happening more quickly in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. This is because teaching has been less consistent in Years 3 to 6 due largely to staff changes. The school sets challenging targets and usually comes very close to meeting them. Pupils have individual targets and they are very clear about what they need to do to reach them. This too is helping to improve their progress.

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Personal development and well-being**

The school is exceptionally good at helping pupils to become thoughtful, responsible young people with a very good awareness of other people's needs and concerns. Behaviour is almost always exemplary and pupils' enjoyment of school is infectious. They respond to everyone with friendly courtesy, act with good concern for safety and have a very clear understanding of healthy lifestyles. Across the age groups, they engage in purposeful physical activities at breaks and lunchtime, with a particularly stimulating programme for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school council makes an impressive contribution to school life and, overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally good. However, despite the school's best efforts, attendance is unsatisfactory. Too many parents still do not co-operate by ensuring their children attend regularly.

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Quality of provision**

##### **Teaching and learning**

From its own evaluation, the school grades teaching and learning as good. Although all of the teaching observed during the inspection was good, inspectors judged it to be satisfactory overall because of the inconsistencies in pupils' progress in some year groups. This is something that the school is working hard to remove through, for example, focusing on how different methods of teaching affect learning. Strengths in planning and assessment, areas in which considerable improvement have taken place, ensure that pupils' work is at the right level for them. The more challenging work for more able pupils is relatively recent, however, and the impact of it is not evident in their

overall achievement. Relationships are very good and teachers often transmit their own enthusiasm to the pupils as, for example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, where pupils were already conveying a 'young mathematicians' delight in their work. The quality of marking and feedback in lessons is good and pupils are very clear about what they have to do to improve. Pupils acknowledge that they sometimes have difficulty retaining what they have learned and appreciate the way their teachers re-visit aspects of their learning to help them.

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Curriculum and other activities**

The curriculum is good and has been well planned to meet the needs of the school. Strong emphasis is rightly placed on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. This is beginning to pay off in terms of improved progress in English and mathematics. The school has successfully linked learning in different subjects, producing in the pupils an enthusiasm for and enjoyment of learning. They talked of how this linking up helped them to remember things better. The school is confidently looking forward to introducing an even more creative curriculum in the near future. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good, bringing the children on quickly from a low starting point. Information and communication technology is embedded in the school's work. The curriculum is very greatly enhanced by an outstanding range of very well-attended clubs and activities in and beyond the normal school day. These involve the pupils with sports, arts and cultural experiences that greatly extend their learning and personal development and contribute in very great measure to the pupils' enjoyment of school.

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Care, guidance and support**

This area of the school's work is outstanding, but the school, modestly, describes its effectiveness as good. The excellent ethos throughout the school has established a very effective learning environment in which every single child matters. This has been achieved by very hard work on the part of the staff, and by the school's very effective use of external support agencies and initiatives. A major contribution to this is the exceptional programme of activities at lunchtimes for pupils in Years 3 to 6, and the 'Huff and Puff' activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Very good procedures effectively ensure the pupils' health, safety and well-being, and activities such as the 'nurture group' give vulnerable children a sense of security and a good start in their school life. With few

exceptions, the school accurately assesses pupils' learning and personal development and uses the information well to help them move on.

**Grade: 1**

## **Leadership and management**

The school is well led and managed. Members of the senior leadership team have high expectations of staff, governors, parents and pupils, successfully involving them all in helping the school to improve. As a result, morale is high. The team has worked hard with teachers, successfully bringing the quality of teaching to the point where, though overall satisfactory, it has many good features that are improving pupils' progress. Governors have been effectively involved in this, often accompanying the school managers in lesson observations. Parents too know what is expected of them. Few readily become involved in their children's learning but the school provides them with good support to help them to do so. The school has improved to the point where a vibrant learning environment has been established and managers at different levels are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. Self-evaluation procedures are good and impressive strategies such as the recently formed 'improvement teams' have ensured that every member of staff is properly focused on school improvement. The school's leaders have been successful in tackling a legacy of under-achievement, very low standards, unsatisfactory teaching and poor behaviour carried over from special measures. All of this has been achieved within a very tight, very well-managed budget. Although there is still much to do, evidence from their commitment and actions shows that the school is well placed to improve further.

**Grade: 2**

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## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</b>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	<b>2</b>	
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	<b>2</b>	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	<b>2</b>	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	<b>2</b>	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	<b>Yes</b>	
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	<b>NA</b>	

**ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	<b>3</b>	
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	<b>4</b>	
How well learners make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	<b>3</b>	
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	<b>3</b>	

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING**

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	<b>1</b>	
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<b>1</b>	
The behaviour of learners	<b>1</b>	
How well learners enjoy their education	<b>1</b>	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	<b>2</b>	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	<b>2</b>	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	<b>2</b>	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	<b>3</b>	

**THE QUALITY OF PROVISION**

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	<b>1</b>	

**LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	<b>2</b>	
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	<b>2</b>	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	<b>2</b>	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	<b>2</b>	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	<b>2</b>	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	<b>2</b>	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	<b>Yes</b>	

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	<b>Yes</b>
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	<b>Yes</b>
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	<b>Yes</b>
Learners are educated about sexual health.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.	<b>Yes</b>
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	<b>Yes</b>
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	<b>Yes</b>
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	<b>Yes</b>
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	<b>Yes</b>
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	<b>Yes</b>
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills.	<b>Yes</b>
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	<b>Yes</b>
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	<b>Yes</b>
Education for all learners aged 14-19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	<b>Yes</b>

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800  
F 0207 421 6707  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



Fallings Park Primary School  
Old Fallings Lane  
Low Hill  
Wolverhampton  
West Midlands  
WV10 8BN

23 June 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school and talking to us about you and your work. We really enjoyed visiting your school and finding out about how you learn.

**We liked these things most of all:**

- You work very hard in lessons and, as you said, you are doing your best to improve in all of your work.
- Your behaviour is excellent; you are very polite and caring towards others.
- You really enjoy being at school; you are rightly very proud of all the different things you do, and you are a pleasure to talk to.
- You take very good care of the school and have a very good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe and of how to care for the environment.
- You take on responsibility very well and are helping the school to get even better.
- Your teachers and the support staff help you to improve your work and you listen carefully to them so that you know what to do.
- The headteacher and the deputy heads lead the school well and they make sure the teachers give you lots of exciting things to do.

**We have asked your school to work on these things now:**

- Help you to do even better at English and mathematics.
- Keep working very hard with your parents to improve your attendance at school.

We hope you will all continue to enjoy learning throughout your lives as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Bell, Ms Glynne-Jones and Mr Fiddian-Green