

# Fatfield Primary School

Southcroft, Washington, Tyne and Wear, NE38 8RB

**Inspection dates** 19–20 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Rates of pupils' progress and their levels of achievement, including for the most able, are too variable over time and not enough pupils exceed the expected levels in all subjects.
- Not enough teaching is inspiring and exciting and planned tasks are not always closely enough matched to pupils' different abilities.
- Assessment information is not used well enough by leaders, managers and teachers to gain a precise grasp of the speed and pattern of pupils' progress and achievement.
- Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to practise their extended writing skills, to solve problems for themselves and share and explain their ideas and solutions with a partner or to the class.
- Teachers' marking does not always provide well-defined steps for improvement and ensure that corrections and improvements are made.
- Leaders and managers have an imperfect grasp of how to improve performance; they do not check closely enough that their actions are having the required impact on pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders have sometimes not been quick enough to tackle underperformance and to ensure improvement planning contains clear-cut timescales and measurable targets.
- On occasions, governors have not made sure that they have reliable first-hand evidence of school performance to hold leaders and teachers to account for pupils' achievement and the rate of school improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- A hard-working and caring team of staff provides a friendly and happy atmosphere in which pupils feel secure and can be successful.
- Good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes ensure that children make good progress and develop well.
- Positive action to improve pupils' skills blending letters and sounds together is improving reading and writing at a faster rate.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils help to keep pupils safe. All parents agree.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and potentially vulnerable pupils are sensitively managed and supported.
- Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins pupils' good behaviour in lessons.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, including six paired observations and work scrutiny carried out with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, they made a number of short visits to lessons and undertook learning walks around the school in order to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and had discussions with the headteacher, parents, subject leaders, staff, governors and the local authority school improvement officer.
- They also examined a range of documents including those related to safeguarding, the school's view of how well it is doing, the monitoring of staff performance, the school's improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress and behaviour.
- The inspectors took account of 36 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 31 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Graeme Clarke

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- Almost all children are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below that usually found.
- Currently, a below average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2013, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a breakfast and an after-school club each day.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better to make certain pupils make good or better progress by:
  - ensuring that more is expected and demanded of pupils, especially the most able and talented
  - ensuring activities are precisely shaped to take full account of pupils' differing abilities
  - making sure that the thought-provoking methods that exist in the school which add essential spark to pupils' learning are shared more widely
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to think critically, solve problems and share and explain their ideas and solutions with a partner or with the class
  - using questions to stretch pupils' thinking and check and test what they know, understand and can do
  - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to write at length, placing even more emphasis upon presenting complex ideas clearly and coherently.
- Improve the impact of all leaders and managers, including the governing body, by:
  - making certain that plans for school improvement set out clear timescales together with measurable targets for pupils' progress and achievement to help speed up the rate of improvement
  - ensuring that there is a relentless focus on accelerating progress and raising achievement in all of pupils' learning
  - using lesson observations and work scrutiny to make certain teachers receive well-defined feedback about the progress and achievement that pupils are making with concise development points that help them improve their teaching at a faster rate
  - maximising the opportunities to engage positively with parents for the benefit of their children
  - making sure that governors extend their skills to hold leaders and managers to account more rigorously, for example making regular checks to ensure pupil premium funding eradicates attainment gaps quickly.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Despite a quickening in the rate of progress, especially in younger pupils' reading and writing, pupils' achievement requires improvement because a consistent pattern of faster progress and good achievement in all subjects and pupil groups has yet to be sustained over time throughout the school.
- Children enter the Nursery class with skills that are typical for their age, although this can vary between year groups. Speech and language skills are sometimes weak. Children settle quickly and happily in the warm and friendly atmosphere and develop an eagerness to learn. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes due to stimulating teaching and effective support they receive, especially in their development of early reading and writing skills. This prepares them well for Year 1.
- Last year, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed that pupils reached above average standards in writing and mathematics, but below average in reading. Even with improvement in the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make), which is speeding up pupils' progress in reading, observations of teaching and learning and evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work shows a variable pattern of progress in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to achieve broadly average standards in all subjects.
- In the 2013 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly average. Although this represented a rise in standards, progress rates remained variable across groups of pupils. Current progress information, confirmed by inspection evidence, reveals pockets of faster progress and an improvement in the number of the most able pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment in all subjects, as a result of better teaching. However, standards remain broadly average and a consistent pattern of good progress for all groups of pupils, in all subjects, has yet to be achieved. Those very few pupils from minority ethnic groups make the same progress as their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress, because carefully targeted support is effective. Those pupils with complex needs and those potentially vulnerable are particularly well supported and develop their social and emotional skills in a nurturing environment.
- The previous wide gaps in attainment between those pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, and their classmates, such as those evident in the 2013 tests in Year 6, are being positively tackled. However, the rate at which the gaps are closing is not fast enough. Currently, the attainment of those known to be eligible for free school meals is one term behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school works diligently to foster an enjoyment of reading. At age six, although skills are below average, pupils' progress in acquiring fluency and accuracy in reading is improving, as a result of the effective teaching of how to blend sounds and letters together to make sense of words. Outcomes from the latest Year 1 and Year 2 phonics checks confirm pupils' quickening progress. Pupils in Year 6 talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and themes and say that they are reading more frequently, including at home.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils achieve well. Although there are examples of teaching that stimulates pupils' learning well, expectations of what pupils can achieve vary too much. Consequently, activities are at times too easy and do not build quickly enough on pupils' prior learning.
- On occasions, despite excellent relationships between staff and pupils, not enough use is made of the information available from assessing pupils' skills and knowledge to match and shape tasks to meet pupils' different abilities and needs. Opportunities are sometimes missed to ensure that pupils think hard and work things out for themselves.

- Pupils' progress is not always good because teachers' expectations and demands are not consistently high enough, especially for the most able pupils. The degree of challenge is sometimes too great or too easy, reflecting imprecise assessment of the required next steps in pupils' learning. Teachers' questions do not always check and stretch pupils' knowledge and understanding and correct any misconceptions and written guidance for improvement in pupils' books does not always provide clearly defined steps for improvement.
- Some teaching is good. It ensures that information about what pupils already know and can do is used accurately to plan tasks at just the right level for pupils of differing abilities and to ensure that teachers' questions reflect this and as a result continually tests their understanding. Extra vitality and enthusiasm for learning is added arising from opportunities to solve challenging problems, either by themselves or with a partner. This results in good progress.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults ensure children have the confidence to explore, investigate and work things out for themselves. For example, when constructing a model of the Tyne Tunnel, children found out that there are separate tunnels for cars, cycles and pedestrians under the River Tyne. A strong emphasis on speaking, listening and joining letters and sounds together encourages good, and sometimes rapid, progress acquiring reading and writing skills. One child was observed to remark, 'I am on fire!' as he successfully spelt out a tricky word on his whiteboard.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and is used to provide praise and illustrate what is right and what is wrong. Yet, corrections are not always expected and the quality of comment on how pupils can improve their work is variable.
- Teaching assistants are used well in lessons to support learning, particularly for younger children and for those who have complex needs and anxieties. This helps pupils to make meaningful contributions in lessons, especially when reading, writing and calculating.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance is above average, which reflects pupils' enjoyment of school and their positive attitudes to learning. There is an encouraging atmosphere in the school throughout the day. This includes the breakfast club and in the after-school club.
- The pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development encourages pupils to treat each other with respect and consideration. At social times, corridors and social areas are friendly and happy places to be. In classrooms, pupils settle down quickly to start work. Occasionally, when tasks do not fully interest them, pupils lose a little concentration and become inattentive.
- In conversations with pupils, they report that relationships between pupils and with staff are very good. They are well informed about the various forms of bullying and report that bullying is infrequent. Pupils observe that any inappropriate behaviour is promptly dealt with by staff. In conversations with parents, they confirm that the school's actions are well timed and normally effective. They observe that staff are approachable and helpful if they have any concerns. School records confirm that any incidents are followed up and resolved.
- The school's work to ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure is good. All parents agree with this in their responses to Parent View. In the playground, pupils' play is active and although games are sometimes lively and occasionally robust, they are kept safe because they are well supervised and respond well to staff direction and guidance. Consequently, pupils are safety conscious.
- The school offers an extensive range of enrichment activities, both during and after the school day. Pupils talk with much enthusiasm about the wide range of sport, music and art clubs they attend. Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities, providing positive role models, for example, as house captains and librarians.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the speed of change has not led to sufficient improvement in accelerating pupils' progress, raising pupils' achievement and strengthening the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, is acutely aware of the areas of the school that need to be improved. The correct improvement priorities have been established, although timescales and yardsticks to measure school improvement are not robust enough. Judgements of current performance are overly optimistic and performance checking and measuring of the intended impact of the actions senior leaders have taken lacks sharpness.
- Regular checks on pupils' learning are undertaken, but the judgements of the quality of teaching over time are not closely enough linked to the progress and achievement of the different groups of pupils. Feedback to staff is not always relentlessly focused upon what needs to be done to speed up pupils' progress and eradicate inconsistencies in their achievement.
- Subject leaders are developing their skills, expertise and confidence with enthusiasm. However, their checks on their own areas are not always sufficiently rigorous or accurate enough to ensure that their actions lead to rapid improvement in pupils' progress and achievement.
- Teaching is efficiently organised. Thoughtfully-planned training targets improvement in performance and, although this is having a positive effect, such as in the Early Years Foundation Stage where progress is good and accelerating, the impact is variable and not always fast enough.
- The curriculum is wide and varied and includes some rich opportunities for pupils to engage in art and music, which helps to develop their spiritual and cultural awareness. Themes, such as the sinking of the Titanic, link subjects together well, although opportunities are occasionally missed to adopt even more imaginative and thought-provoking methods to deepen understanding, using pupils' extended writing skills.
- The primary school sport funding is used well to add to teachers' coaching skills, increasing pupils' participation rates and to widen their sporting experiences. Pupils' skills are improving well, resulting in pupils joining local clubs to extend their experiences, such as in gymnastics, swimming and football.
- Pupil premium funding is managed efficiently and provides first-hand experiences of theatre groups and visits from authors. Nevertheless, because not all teaching is well enough matched to pupils' abilities the elimination of the gaps in pupils' attainment is too slow. Although the school tackles any discrimination promptly, the variations in pupils' achievement mean that the promotion of equality of opportunity that requires improvement.
- Safeguarding and child protection meet requirements. Procedures are firmly established and best practice is adopted in the management and care of pupils.
- The local authority is challenging and displays an accurate view of school performance. This was evident in their conclusions following the recent review of the school's performance.
- Parents' confidence in the effectiveness of the school is variable. In discussions with parents, the positive features of the school's performance were recognised, such as the quality of care for their children, but a number of parents did express frustration that staff underperformance was not tackled quickly and effectively enough.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body are committed and supportive as they work diligently to eliminate school performance shortcomings. Too often, governors have accepted the school's view of its performance without essential challenge. Consequently, they have not fully grasped the significance of maintaining a sharp focus on the achievement of all groups of pupils and promptly tackling any underperformance in teaching.
  - Governors are well informed about performance management arrangements, but do not ensure that the link between the progress of pupils and teachers' increases in pay is robust enough. Governors are aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent, but are imprecise about the impact it is having on pupils' progress and attainment. There is a clear desire to improve and with appropriate training and support, its members display the capacity to move the school forward at a faster pace.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108810
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	442264

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	220
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Tombs
<b>Headteacher</b>	Teresa Quinn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 February 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 219 3710
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 219 3713
<b>Email address</b>	fatfield.primary@schools.sunderland.gov.uk



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