

Foxyards Primary School

Foxyards Road, Tipton, DY4 8BH

Inspection dates 7–8 October 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The standards that pupils achieved in 2014 improved on the previous year and were above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in all year groups are now making good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs learn quickly as a result of effective small-group and individual support.
- Teaching is good, with all staff keen to continually improve their teaching. Written comments when teachers mark pupils' work show pupils how to improve.
- Pupils are polite and well behaved in and out of lessons. They are keen to learn.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They show respect for people's similarities and differences, including faith.
- Leaders and governors have successfully improved pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. This is due to their close tracking of the effectiveness of teaching and their good management of teachers' performance.
- The new curriculum is being implemented successfully.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More-able pupils do not yet make consistently good progress throughout the school because the homework set for them can be too easy.
- Boys do not achieve the same standards in their writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- The quality of the outdoor areas for Nursery and Reception children does not equal the good provision that the indoor environment offers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups and classes. They also looked in detail at pupils’ work. Joint observations were carried out with the headteacher and an assistant headteacher.
- Discussions took place, both formal and informal, with pupils about their life at the school.
- Inspectors met with senior staff, subject leaders, governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- A wide range of documentation was looked at, including data about pupils’ achievement in 2014 and for those currently in the school. Documents relating to safeguarding, school improvement plans and evaluations of the quality of teaching were looked at as well.
- There were 41 responses to Parent View, and the views of parents gathered by the school and during discussions with inspectors at the school gate were also taken into account.
- The 18 responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Clare Saunders, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sajid Gulzar	Additional Inspector
Sarah Davey	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Foxyards is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported with a statement of special educational needs and those supported by school action plus or school action is average.
- There is a breakfast club which is run by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher, who is new to the school, took up post in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of more-able pupils to be consistently good throughout the school by:
 - increasing the variety and challenge in the homework tasks for more-able pupils so that they are encouraged to apply their knowledge and understanding regularly outside of the classroom
 - teachers providing clear information for more-able pupils on how to improve on work they complete at home, to match the quality of marking seen for classroom work.
- Improve boys' writing so that their achievement in writing matches that in reading and mathematics by:
 - increasing the opportunities for boys to study texts that appeal to them
 - giving pupils, and especially boys, more opportunities to write at length in a range of different subjects.
- Develop the outdoor activities and facilities readily available for Nursery and Reception children to match the quality of those available inside the classroom.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have quickly and successfully addressed the weaknesses identified and have improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement so both are now good. In her short time at the school, the headteacher has implemented many initiatives to continue to strengthen aspects of leadership. This has created a strong sense of teamwork in all leaders and managers to continually have high aspirations for pupils and staff.
- The school is in the process of implementing the new National Curriculum, through well-thought-out topics and experiences for the pupils. Subject leaders have been fully involved in designing the new curriculum and are putting into place a preferred approach to assessment following the removal of levels.
- Pupils demonstrate good spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness from the breadth of experiences offered by the curriculum, preparing them well for life in modern Britain. For example, they visits places of worship from many religions and pupils are encouraged through the curriculum to be tolerant and respectful of others.
- Leaders have good awareness of the strengths of teaching across the school and foster a culture of working as a team to address any areas for development. This is through carefully considered training and through sharing the good practice in the school, as well as by visiting other schools. Subject and year group leaders are fully involved in this process, which creates a climate of high expectations of teachers within a supportive environment which governors are kept informed about.
- The local authority has provided effective support for the leadership of the school since the previous inspection, including for the acting headteacher last year and with the appointment of a new headteacher.
- Leaders have ensured that performance management systems are effective in supporting and rewarding good teaching, and also to support the development of aspects of teaching where improvements are needed. Underperformance in teaching is tackled immediately.
- The school uses its additional funding for sport for a sports coach who works with pupils and teachers to develop expertise in a variety of sports. As a result, there has been an increase in the participation of pupils in sports clubs such as basketball.

■ The governance of the school:

Governors carry out their statutory duties for safeguarding. There are clear roles and lines of accountability within the Governing Body and they ensure that all policies are up to date and reviewed regularly. They monitor the effectiveness of policies, including those relating to the curriculum and the preparation of pupils for life in modern Britain. They stringently hold the leaders, including year group and subject leaders, to account and are quick to ask questions of each other and the school in order to fully understand the information being presented to them. They have a good understanding of pupils' performance, using regular presentations from leaders about how well pupils are achieving. They know about the quality of teaching and have been insistent that pay rises for teachers have been dependent on the progress that pupils make so that good teachers are rewarded accordingly. They have recently put into place ways to more fully engage parents with school life; for example, a text messaging service, regular newsletters, publication of key dates, and a new website that is shortly to be available. However, the impact of these changes has yet to be evaluated.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are considerate whilst moving around the school and are polite and respectful of each other and of adults. At lunchtimes, they are mindful of others and share any playtime equipment readily. They like how the lunchtime supervisors help them get along and ensure that all pupils

have someone to play with.

- In lessons, pupils are keen to learn. They enjoy the many opportunities they have to talk about their work with each other and readily offer their views on aspect of their work. Pupils listen well to the opinions of others. They take a pride in the quality of work they produce both in lessons and for homework. Their positive attitudes contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is consistently above the national average, and pupils are keen to have high attendance rewarded. Parents and pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly. There is no difference between the attendance rates of boys and girls or for those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding.
- Pupils show respect for their school and environment. There is no litter, and corridors and classrooms are tidy. Pupils dress tidily in their uniform, showing a pride in their school.
- The school council is active and has been instrumental in encouraging the use of equipment at playtimes and encouraging school leaders to provide even more. School council members regularly gather and act upon the views of the school community for future ideas.
- There are a very few pupils, mainly boys, who are not as keen as other pupils to start learning activities in some lessons because the activities they are set do not immediately interest them.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a wide awareness of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including using the internet.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying. They are adamant that bullying is very rare in the school and is dealt with quickly by teachers if it does happen. Pupils are confident in approaching adults if they are concerned about anything and feel that adults and their peers take any concerns seriously. Most parents agree that pupils are safe in school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different faiths and show tolerance and respect for people's different beliefs. They welcome the opportunity to discuss different faiths in a variety of lessons.
- School leaders ensure that there is no discrimination, and that any information arising from behaviour and incident logs is used to deal with any issues quickly and effectively.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now consistently good. As a result, pupils' achievement is now good. Teachers value how their performance is managed and engage in discussions with other staff to constantly improve the quality of their teaching.
- Teachers are skilled in providing a range of activities that are carefully planned to enable most pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding quickly. For example, Year 3 were studying food chains, and the teacher allocated different groups of pupils the task of creating food chains of differing levels of difficulty, using their knowledge of producers, carnivores, omnivores and herbivores. The teacher made it clear what was expected of each of the different groups of pupils, so all pupils enjoyed the challenges set for them.
- Teachers and teaching assistants question skilfully to encourage pupils to think carefully about their answers and give full explanations. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to discuss their work with their peers and to explore what could be the correct answers.
- Pupils' classwork is marked in detail, with written comments telling pupils exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils readily respond to these comments and this adds to their understanding.

However, homework particularly for the most able, does not always have the same level of written feedback as classwork.

- Pupils' achievement is tested regularly and the school is implementing a system for pupils to assess themselves against the new National Curriculum. Pupils are benefiting from this as they know exactly what they need to do in order to improve their work and achieve more highly.
- Homework is set regularly, and pupils enjoy completing it. However, homework tasks, especially for the most able, do not match the variety and quality of that seen in lessons. Consequently homework tasks can be too easy, especially for the most able.
- Lessons run smoothly, and the classroom environments are well organised. Staff spend time planning lessons together, which means they have a good understanding of the standards of work expected in year groups other than their own.
- The development of reading has been a key area of focus for teachers, with pupils encouraged and rewarded to read for pleasure outside of lessons. However there are not enough texts that are selected to appeal to boys and to encourage their reading development.
- Pupils' literacy skills have improved since the previous inspection, and these are seen especially in English lessons. However there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces in a wide range of subjects and topics.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The standards that pupils attain at the end of Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have risen since the previous inspection, and pupils left the school in 2014 with skills in writing, reading and mathematics that are above the national average from the previous year. This represents an improvement from the standards reached in 2013.
- The information school leaders use to track the learning of pupils in each year group for reading, writing and mathematics shows that most pupils in the school are learning quickly and are consistently able to apply their knowledge in a range of subjects. This information also shows that boys' skills in writing are not as well developed as girls' skills.
- The most-able pupils generally learn well, but this is not yet consistent throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics. There was an increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in these subjects in Year 6 in 2014, but this is not yet reflected in year groups across the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress as a result of additional support in small groups and individually, both within and outside of lessons. Teachers quickly identify where further help is needed and this is provided swiftly so that these pupils learn quickly. Clear plans are provided for staff to follow and the work that these pupils produce shows the pride that they take in their work and in their achievements.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium attained standards in 2013 that were a term behind other pupils in the school in mathematics and writing and two terms behind other pupils nationally. In reading, disadvantaged pupils attained standards that were a term ahead of other pupils in the school and a term behind other pupils nationally. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium sometimes make better progress than other pupils, and provisional results from 2014 show that the attainment and progress of these pupils continue to improve.

The early years provision is good

- Children start in the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding below that expected for their age. They achieve well in Nursery and Reception so that most are ready for the next stage in their learning. This includes those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- Children learn new skills quickly. Work in their learning journals shows that they regularly practise and apply their new knowledge. The standards that children reach by the end of Reception have improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- The experiences the children have in Nursery and Reception contribute well to their physical and emotional development and well-being. They are keen to learn, and readily get involved in a range of activities, demonstrating genuine interest and curiosity. For example, children were eager to complete sewing activities, number jigsaws and painting numbers, and they enjoyed discussing which number was the greater or lower.
- The relationships between the children and adults are very positive, with the children demonstrating high levels of co-operation, both working in small groups and as individuals.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, demonstrating an accurate awareness of the strengths and areas to develop. Assessment of childrens' progress is rigorous and routinely used to adapt the lessons and activities to enable children to learn quickly.
- The outdoor areas are as yet underused and are not developed sufficiently to match the range, quality and effectiveness of the indoor activities. Some of the equipment is old and poor quality.

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	103788
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	442527

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	325
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Betjemann
Headteacher	Helen Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2012
Telephone number	01384 818740
Fax number	01384 818741
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