

Rakegate Primary School

Rakegate Close, Wolverhampton, WV10 6US

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Pupils' achievement is not consistent from year to year: it has varied from inadequate to good in the last three years.
- Those pupils capable of doing harder work are not given enough challenge to make sure they reach their full potential.
- Standards at Key Stage 2 fell significantly in 2011 but rose again in 2012 and are beginning to show improvement throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching varies too much. Some of it is outstanding, some is good and some requires improvement.
- Subject leaders have not intervened to make sure teachers adapt the school's programmes of study, particularly in mathematics, to enable all pupils to make equally good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Children get a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage, making good progress from the time they join the Nursery.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, showing positive attitudes to learning.
- Lower attaining pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well and the gap between their attainment and the national average is closing.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked effectively to improve teaching and pupils' achievement and the actions they have taken are beginning to make an impact.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons taught by 17 teachers and they saw small-group sessions aimed to boost the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Two joint observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and scrutinised their work in books and on display.
- Meetings were held with a member of the governing body, senior leaders, staff and pupils. Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation including improvement plans and self-evaluation, as well as assessment data from the monitoring of pupils' progress. Documents detailing the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils were scrutinised.
- The responses of five parents and carers to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were considered as well as outcomes of the school's own questionnaires.
- Questionnaire responses from seven staff were taken into account.

Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead Inspector	Additional Inspector
Christopher Webb	Additional Inspector
Jane Woodall	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British, and a broadly average proportion comes from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average. A few are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is high.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is greater than in most schools. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to other schools.
- In 2011, the school failed to meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club that are not managed by the governing body.
- There is a children's centre on site. The centre is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is at least good by:
 - making sure that the tasks set in lessons match the needs of pupils at all levels of capability in order to accelerate learning for all
 - providing teachers with opportunities to observe good and outstanding practice, including that already present in the school.
- Raise attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 by:
 - increasing the number of pupils who achieve the higher levels in the national tests and assessments at the end of both key stages
 - providing greater challenge to pupils capable of completing harder work so they make similar progress to other pupils and achieve their full potential.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
 - monitoring teachers' planning to ensure that programmes of study are adapted to support good progress for all groups of pupils
 - more closely monitoring the progress of pupils capable of higher attainment
 - involving governors in setting school targets.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children make a good start to their school life in the Nursery and Reception classes. They join with skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below those typical for their age. They achieve well and by the end of the Reception Year, attainment is closer to the national average. Attainment in children's communication skills and their mathematics is not yet reaching the expected levels.
- Although improved this year, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is below the national average. The proportions of pupils reaching the level nationally expected for this age is similar to the national average, but the proportion achieving the higher levels is well below. This means that achievement at Key Stage 1 requires improvement, particularly for those pupils who are more able.
- Standards at Key Stage 2 dipped sharply in 2011, following a previous trend of improvement. High pupil mobility and persistent absence in this cohort accounted for some of the fall in standards. In 2012, national test results improved and attainment at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average. The proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level compared favourably with the national average, but the proportion reaching the higher level was below.
- Achievement at Key Stage 2 has varied significantly over the last three years. In 2010, it was similar to that expected nationally. In 2011, it was inadequate and in 2012, pupils made progress that was better than expected nationally. Pupils currently in school are progressing well, particularly towards the end of Key Stage 2, and are on track to achieve standards that are at least in line with the national average. Due to the variation year on year, achievement requires improvement so that it is consistently good.
- In response to the poor test results in 2011, targeted support was put in place. As a result lower attaining pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language achieved well, most reaching their potential. Pupils for who the school attracts the pupil premium achieve well through effective and well-focused support. However, pupils capable of higher attainment did not make the same level of progress due to a lack of challenge.
- Pupils engage in discussions confidently and explain their ideas clearly. Regular and well-managed guided reading sessions promote pupils' enjoyment in reading. They are mostly confident and fluent readers. A few less-able pupils make slower progress because they do not have adequate skills to work independently and rely on guidance.
- Work samples show clear progress in developing writing skills. However, good progress is more consistent in Year 6. There is evidence of extended writing in pupils' topic work, but it is not always of the same quality as that in their English books.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- During the inspection, although the large majority of teaching seen was good or outstanding there is still too much that requires improvement. This profile is typical of the teaching in school

generally as indicated by the senior leadership team's monitoring records.

- Less effective teaching fails to move different groups of pupils on to the next steps in learning with confidence, particularly in mathematics. For example, Year 2 pupils found great difficulty with work on analogue and digital time because the concepts were too difficult, whereas in another mathematics lesson, some more-able pupils completed their work but there was no extension work to move them on further.
- In more effective teaching the pace of learning is brisk. Activities are interesting and effective in stimulating pupils' engagement. A good example involved Year 5 pupils in discussion based on a school visit to Llandudno. The teacher had excellent subject knowledge and used this very well to target questions to the full range of ability. Resources were interesting and tasks challenging, such as an analysis of tourist brochures. Lessons such as this stimulate pupils to think things out for themselves.
- Small group teaching for pupils is effective, including for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, those who are in danger of not achieving their predicted levels and pupils for whom the school attracts the pupil premium. Well-planned programmes of study are matched to pupils' needs and support is intensive and clearly focused.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good. Adults have a good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. They focus on developing children's basic literacy and numeracy skills, as well as their personal development. They plan a wide range of well-resourced activities to stimulate children's curiosity. Teachers assess children's progress well to move learning on at a good pace.
- Teachers mark pupils' work well in English and mathematics but this is not reflected across other subjects such as topic work. The best marking promotes pupils' self-esteem, indicating what is done well and where work can be improved. There is evidence to show that effective use of pupils' targets has a positive impact on learning and progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons, in assemblies and around school is good. For the very large majority of pupils, positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour contribute well to their current good progress. Behaviour in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good.
 - Pupils demonstrate good learning behaviour in lessons, especially when challenged and motivated by the tasks. Pupils respect others, whatever their background, ability or disability. They work well collaboratively, respectfully taking others' ideas into account. They are knowledgeable about their own progress and learning. They are very clear about their targets and the next steps for learning. They feel they work well and make good progress but do feel that they could do more given the chance.
 - Pupils feel safe at school. They say bullying happens very infrequently but it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Their awareness of safe situations, including internet safety, is good and they are clear about who to go to for help. Good levels of pastoral support ensure that there is sensitive intervention for pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
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- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well through the curriculum and through the ethos of care, equality and inclusion. It has a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. They know the difference between right and wrong. In lessons and assemblies, a number of opportunities are provided for reflection and pupils join in these opportunities cooperatively. Pupils work well together, respecting others' views and ideas, showing courtesy towards others.
- Attendance has improved over the last three years. Overall figures show attendance to be below average, but a number of pupils have significant health conditions and as a result, low attendance. Data for other pupils show attendance during the most recent academic year was average.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work in effective partnership to overcome weaknesses identified in the school's provision and outcomes. Following poor national test results in 2011, strategic planning to raise standards by improving the quality of teaching and learning has been mainly effective. This success demonstrates the school's capacity to improve. However, school improvement planning has not been completely successful, as the needs of pupils capable of higher attainment are not met.
- Thorough monitoring and evaluation of the progress of all groups of pupils gives senior leaders an accurate picture of where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie. Senior leaders hold class teachers accountable for the progress of their pupils at regular pupil progress reviews. Teachers use year group data to review the progress of each individual pupil and to identify how they are going to address underachievement. This process has not been fully effective for the pupils capable of higher attainment.
- The curriculum is broad, well balanced and has a richness and variety of learning experiences. There are opportunities for writing in a range of different subjects and styles. However, programmes of study have not been sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly in mathematics. Secure foundations for future learning are not properly laid in Key Stage 1, and more-able pupils are not achieving as highly as they could. Planned actions to support those pupils who, for whatever reasons need extra support, are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas that need improving
 - challenges senior leadership to account for the school's effectiveness
 - ensures funds, such as the pupil premium, are properly allocated
 - has made sure that statutory duties are met and, at the time of the inspection, safeguarding of pupils met current government requirements
 - is not involved enough in the setting of the school's targets.
- The local authority has been effective in its support of the school in recent years. This has included the secondment of a teacher to support the school in improving the quality of teaching and learning and fostering partnership with a local leader of education. The local authority now judges the school as being able to improve without external support.

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	104304
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	404937
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Claymore
Headteacher	Steve Harris
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2011
Telephone number	01902 558608
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