

The William Amory Primary School

Stallington Road, Bythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent, ST11 9PN

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. By the time they leave the school standards are above national averages.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers deliver well-planned lessons that are creative, interesting and make good use of a wide range of resources.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do well because their needs are understood and the right support is put in place to help them succeed.
- Pupils enjoy learning and want to do as well as they can. They behave well in lessons and at playtimes and the school is a safe place. Newcomers are made welcome and older pupils set good examples to younger ones.
- The headteacher, school leaders and governors have had significant success in raising achievement and improving teaching.
- Parents have high regards for the school and staff due to the good care and welfare support offered to them and their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet strong enough to enable all pupils to make consistently outstanding progress across the school.
- Activities in lessons do not always make pupils think hard enough. This sometimes results in work that is too easy for some pupils.
- Teachers do not always use marking to help pupils to see how they can improve further or give pupils enough opportunities to respond to comments in marking.
- Not all leaders play a sufficient part in checking on and improving teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons. Two of these observations were carried out with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, a representative of the local authority, the Chair and Deputy of the Governing Body, and senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors talked to a small number of parents at the start of the school day and took into account their views wherever they could. They took account of the 48 responses to the online (Parent View) questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at many documents, including: the school's own information on pupils' current and recent progress; planning of work in different subjects; evidence of leaders' checking on teaching and learning quality; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Steve Nelson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Allison Dawes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average size primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of pupils who are supported at school action, school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs are below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding available to the school to assist particular pupils) is above average.
- All pupils are educated on site. The school does not use alternative provision to support any of its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement and make more teaching outstanding by:
 - ensuring the work set is always hard enough to make the more able pupils really think
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently and solve problems and find out things for themselves
 - making sure that the marking of pupils' books always includes useful comments to help pupils improve their work and ensure that pupils have opportunities to respond to these comments in lessons
 - ensuring other leaders take more responsibility for checking on the quality of teaching and helping to improve it.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement has improved since the last inspection. The school's careful and detailed tracking of every pupil shows that they make good progress over time in all classes and subjects. In 2012 Year 6 children achieved above-average test results in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and understanding that vary from year to year but, typically, are below those expected for their age. They make good progress to reach standards that are close to those seen nationally by the end of Reception.
- Reading standards are good and pupils make good progress across the school. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) and know how to 'break words down' when they are unsure about new vocabulary. The school's own 'Passport to Reading' programme is successful in encouraging pupils to read at home. The best readers are fluent and read with expression.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. For example, in a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson pupils made rapid progress in independently using rows and columns to count more easily.
- Pupils make good progress in writing. They are given good opportunities to extend their creative writing. During a Year 5 lesson pupils worked well together in creating 'creative word banks' to write 'mood poems' based on their personal emotions and experience.
- The school has successfully narrowed the gaps in achievement of all pupils and for those who are known to be eligible for extra funding (the pupil premium). Leaders track the progress of these pupils relative to other groups carefully and use the funding provided effectively. For example, the daily reading support in Key Stage 1 is extremely effective in rapidly improving their progress in reading skills because the extra adults have been employed to support targeted pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, not only in their academic achievement but also in developing a keenness to learn. Their self-confidence develops as a result of sensitive support from their teachers and other adults in lessons by setting work at the right level for their learning needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school and occasionally outstanding. For example in a Reception literacy lesson, children showed great interest and enthusiasm working independently and in pairs. They made excellent progress using word cards or writing by themselves to accurately write the question for the puppet, 'Has a fox got six legs?'
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain ideas clearly and confidently. They make good use of practical resources like pegboards and counters to help pupils reinforce their understanding of mathematical skills such as multiplication and subtraction.
- In a Year 3 English lesson, the use of 'talking partners' gave pupils opportunities to listen to each other's comments and thoughts about how to improve their sentence structure and language using the current winter weather as a subject. This helped develop their listening and speaking

skills as well as improving their writing.

- Pupils make the best progress in lessons when they are given the opportunity to work things out for themselves or collaboratively with a partner to explore ideas and solve problems. However, at times in mathematics lessons, teachers do not always provide sufficient time for this to happen, which limits what pupils can then achieve.
- Carefully targeted and tailored support is provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This includes extra help within lessons and individual or small group teaching outside the classroom that makes sure these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are increasingly involved in checking their own progress. There is some very good marking to tell pupils how well they have done and help them improve further. However, not all marking shows pupils the next steps they need to take to move the next level, and pupils are not always given the time to respond to teachers comments in their books.
- Reading is taught well and pupils enjoy reading. Pupils who find learning to read difficult are taught in a variety of different ways so that they find the one that helps them most. Older pupils discuss at length their reasons for choosing particular styles of writing or authors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good in classes and around the school. Pupils get on well with together and show respect for each other as well as for adults. School records show that behaviour is good over time.
- Pupils who have difficulty controlling their own behaviour are given good advice and support. They make good progress in learning how to cope with their emotions and their behaviour improves significantly.
- Pupils feel safe. They have a good knowledge of how to keep safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. Pupils say that bullying is rare but that if it does happen adults deal it with quickly. Through subjects taught, pupils have developed a good understanding of what bullying is and how to deal with it. They are aware of the different kinds of bullying, for example, emotional bullying.
- A strength of the school is the way in which all pupils are valued as individuals and there is no discrimination. Pupils from different backgrounds play and get on well together. This is why, for example, pupils who join the school partway through their primary education settle in quickly.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their learning. They are punctual to lessons, attendance has been rising and pupils attend regularly.
- All of the parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) or spoke to inspectors agreed that their children are happy and safe and well looked after by staff.

The leadership and management are good

- The improvement in this school since the last inspection stems directly from the vision and ambition of the headteacher. He has created an effective leadership team that is fully committed school improvement and all staff share this positive commitment. Leaders expect the best from

the teachers and this is reflected in the challenging targets for improvement that teachers are set.

- School leaders including the governing body, check on the school's performance regularly and carefully. They have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development, and this has enabled them to make effective plans for further development. There are good procedures for checking the progress and attainment of all individuals and groups of pupils to make sure they all perform equally well.
- The headteacher makes good use of information from the checks on teaching and learning to develop teacher's skills and improve learning. Targets set for teachers are closely linked to pupils' achievement and their pay levels are determined by how successful they are in helping pupils to achieve well. Other leaders are starting to play a bigger part in checking on the quality of teaching but their role is not yet sufficiently clear for them to do this consistently and have the desired impact on improving it.
- The content of subjects studied has improved. There are more first-hand experiences and themed events such as 'The Planets' and 'The Blitz' that add to pupils' greater enjoyment of learning. Provision for music, along with a wide range of clubs, helps promote pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Responses to the online survey (Parent View) indicate that parents and carers believe the way the school cares for their children is good, if not better, and that the school is well managed.
- The partnership with the local authority is strong. Advice and monitoring visits have helped raise the quality of teaching as well as pupils' progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective because governors are well trained and have good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including how it compares with other schools, and how well different groups of pupils achieve. Governors find out about the school through visits to classes, talking to pupils and looking at their books. Governors are supportive while ensuring the school does all it can to improve pupils' achievement further. They fulfil their statutory duties to ensure that national safeguarding requirements are met. Governors make sure the pupil premium is spent well on additional staff so that eligible pupils achieve as well as other pupils in the school. They manage the school finances soundly, ensure the school takes action in the event any teaching is weak and make sure that any pay increases are linked directly to pupils' performance.

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	131073
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	406409

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Burton
Headteacher	Bruce Wilken
Date of previous school inspection	17 February 2011
Telephone number	01782 394900
Fax number	01782 394900
Email address	headteacher@williamamory.staffs.sch.uk

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