

# Inspection of Fulwell Infant School Academy

Ebdon Lane, Fulwell, Fulwell Infant School Academy, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR6 8ED

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 May 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since July 2014.

The headteacher of this school is Wendy Angus. This school is part of Jigsaw Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Wendy Angus, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Hilary Akien.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils and their families value the warm and positive relationships that they enjoy with staff and leaders at Fullwell Infant School Academy. Parents and carers speak highly of the strong communication they have with the school. This helps parents to understand how well their children are doing and how they can support their learning at home.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. This is reflected in, for example, the high-quality provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy a wide range of subjects. They achieve well and are well prepared for the transition to the next stage of their education.

Pupils attend school regularly and become curious and enthusiastic learners. Children get an excellent start to their education in the Nursery. From the earliest age, staff help children to understand how to behave appropriately in school and to take responsibility for looking after the school environment. Pupils proudly take on leadership roles, including as behaviour champions and line monitors.

Pupils feel safe in school and are respectful of each other. They are confident that help is on hand from adults if they ever have a worry. Parents speak highly of the care and nurture their children receive from the school.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Provision for pupils with SEND is a significant strength in the school. These pupils are given the highest priority. Staff are attuned to identifying pupils' individual needs. Adults ensure pupils receive high-quality support, which helps them to overcome barriers to learning and achieve well. Leaders have recently introduced well-planned additional provision, which supports the youngest children with SEND to settle well into school life.

Pupils enjoy their learning across a range of subjects. Over recent years, the school has reviewed the curriculum and made improvements, including to subjects such as mathematics. Staff have benefited from training and support and have strong subject knowledge. The school's highly effective work to strengthen mathematics teaching has helped pupils to develop their confidence with numbers and problem-solving.

In a number of subjects across the wider curriculum, such as history, the school has made effective improvements to the curriculum. Teachers are clear about the important knowledge that pupils should learn and remember. In some other curriculums, such as art and design, the precise knowledge that the school wants pupils to learn is less clear. Occasionally, this means that adults' expectations of what pupils will learn are inconsistent. Staff check on pupils' understanding during lessons and provide effective help for those who need it. However, in some subjects, adults do not check consistently well whether pupils remember their learning over time. Some pupils find it difficult to recall key knowledge that they have learned in previous topics.

Pupils experience a wide range of stories during their time in school and enjoy reading. Recent changes to the school's curriculum have ensured that children in the Reception Year learn to read extremely well. Well-trained adults support those pupils who need a little more help. This ensures that most pupils know their letters and the sounds that they make. However, some pupils have not had the practise they need to help them to recall these speedily enough. This means that those pupils find it more difficult to blend sounds together to read fluently.

Children benefit from highly effective teaching and support in Nursery. Children's communication and language skills are well developed through stories, rhymes, songs and extended conversations with adults. The learning environment indoors and outdoors enables children to access carefully chosen resources in all areas of learning. In the Reception year, teaching is enabling children to build their skills and knowledge to form letters correctly and understand numbers.

Pupils typically behave well across school. They understand the school rules and know why rules are important. In lessons, pupils are curious, enthusiastic and keen to share their learning. Leaders monitor attendance closely and support families effectively, where there are barriers to pupils attending well. As a result, most pupils attend school regularly.

Recent improvements to the school's personal development provision are having a positive impact on pupils' understanding of respect and relationships. The school supports pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe, particularly online. Pupils benefit from a range of visits and visitors that complement the academic curriculum. From an early age, there is a strong focus on the importance of mental and physical health. Pupils are well supported to develop emotional resilience.

Trustees, local governors, school leaders and staff share a clear and ambitious vision for the pupils in their care. Trustees and governors check on the work of the school and provide valued support to leaders. Staff are proud to work at the school and appreciate the help that they receive to develop their skills.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some pupils have not had sufficiently well-focused support to enable them to recall their letters and corresponding sounds speedily enough. This means that they struggle to blend sounds quickly and hampers their comprehension of what they read. The school should ensure that additional support for these pupils focuses on helping them to recall letter sounds rapidly so that they can become fluent and confident readers.

- In some subjects, the knowledge that pupils should be taught is not defined precisely enough and assessment is not focused sufficiently well on checking whether pupils retain key knowledge over time. This limits how highly pupils achieve in these areas. School should continue their planned work to refine their curriculums, so that teaching and assessment is sharply focused on ensuring that pupils learn and retain the most important knowledge and skills over time.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139026
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346475
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	360
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Hilary Akien
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Wendy Angus
<b>Headteacher</b>	Wendy Angus
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.fulwellinfant.org.uk">www.fulwellinfant.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 and 2 July 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Jigsaw Learning Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other leaders and staff, the chair of the trust board and other trustees. An inspector held a telephone discussion with the chair of the local governing body and met with two other governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. This included discussions with subject leaders, visiting lessons, listening to pupils read to familiar adults, looking at samples of pupils' work with leaders and talking to pupils about their learning. Inspectors also discussed the provision for pupils' personal development and reviewed the wider curriculum in the early years with leaders.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

## Inspection team

Claire Brown, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Deb Ward	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Stephenson	Ofsted Inspector

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