

# Halesowen CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	103847
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	376979
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Speakman

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	181
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Hannaford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Hannaway
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	High Street Halesowen B63 3BB
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Speakman

Additional inspector

Roisin Chambers

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 15 lessons taught by eight teachers, spending 10 hours directly observing pupils' learning in class. They heard pupils read and scrutinised their writing in workbooks and on display. Support groups for pupils with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language were observed. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. Inspectors scrutinised the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils. They took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including improvement plans and self-evaluation, as well as assessment data to monitor pupils' progress. Questionnaire responses from 54 parents and carers, 70 pupils and 16 members of staff were analysed.

## Information about the school

Halesowen Church of England Primary School is similar in size to the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The majority of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with a significant proportion joining or leaving the school during a key stage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average and about a third of all pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, including those with a statement of educational needs, is above the national average. The school meets the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school, which is improving constantly. Pupils’ achievement is good and attainment rising steadily.
- Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress in acquiring the skills and knowledge to build a secure foundation for further learning.
- At the end of Year 2, attainment is broadly average. However the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in reading and writing is below the national average. By Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. From low starting points, pupils’ achieve well.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good. The large majority seen was good or outstanding, with a small minority satisfactory. Teachers make learning interesting and engage pupils’ interest and enthusiasm, but they do not always provide enough challenge for pupils capable of working at higher levels.
- Behaviour is managed very well and as a result, pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Some outstanding behaviour was observed in lessons and in whole-school events such as the school assembly.
- The curriculum matches pupils’ needs well. It interests them and motivates them to behave and make good progress. It makes a significant contribution to pupils’ excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Although leadership and management are good overall, the work of the very committed senior leadership team is outstanding. They have exceptionally clear ideas of what the school does well and the areas that need to improve. On-

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going improvement and strong teamwork are key factors in the school's success and its excellent capacity to improve further.

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

- Raise the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in reading and writing assessments at the end of Year 2 by making work for the pupils capable of higher attainment more challenging
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better by:
  - ensuring that assessment is used fully to closely match tasks to each pupil's learning needs
  - increasing the pace of lessons where it is too slow, so that pupils learn more quickly.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children join the Nursery with skills, knowledge and abilities that are very low in comparison to those typical for their age. They make good progress and by the time they move into Year 1 their attainment has risen to just below average. Children become independent in making choices and confident in communicating with others. A significant number join speaking little or no English. The Early Years Foundation Stage is effective in helping these pupils gain sufficient English to gain access to the full curriculum.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Attainment is improving and is now broadly average. However, too few pupils capable of higher attainment reach their full potential because they are not always given work that is demanding enough. Pupils continue to achieve well through Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who join the school with very limited English make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress. These pupils are identified early: intervention and support through a wide range of highly effective support programmes is prompt and effective in closing the gap between the lowest attainers and the national average. These are skilfully led by well-trained and experienced teachers and teaching assistants. Support is well targeted and highly focused on individual needs. Because of this, many pupils rapidly develop the skills and knowledge to work independently.

The school has developed a strong culture for promoting reading, not only as an essential tool for learning but also as a pleasurable pastime. Attainment in reading at the end of Years 2 and 6 is average. Pupils enjoy reading a great deal and they talk about the stories they have read with enthusiasm. Pupils talked about their books in detail. Even younger pupils, and those who find reading more challenging, read with expression and were interesting to listen to. Younger pupils have the skills to read

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words by using their knowledge of letters and sounds. Pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and reading records confirm many receive support at home from parents and carers.

Pupils enjoy learning and they apply themselves well to tasks. They work well in small groups, discussing and collaborating. Pupils in Year 4 were fired with enthusiasm after reading 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. They enjoyed talking about the sweet with magical properties they had invented, which regenerated so it never ran out. Through this engaging activity, pupils were very successful in learning how to order their sentences into a sequence using time-connective words. In mathematics, Year 6 pupils rose to stimulating challenges and developed strategies to solve problems through investigating number sequences.

Most parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire say their children are making good progress. Almost all pupils feel they are doing well. Inspectors found this view to be accurate.

### **Quality of teaching**

The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire feel that teaching is good and that their children are helped to develop communication, literacy and numeracy skills well. Most pupils think that teaching is good. These views agree with inspection outcomes. Pupils are active participants in learning and it is rare that pupils spend too long listening to the teacher. In a Year 4/5 lesson on interrogating computer databases, the teacher's introduction was brief but very clear in outlining the lesson objectives. Once the teacher was satisfied that all pupils understood the task, they worked at the computers to answer questions that were planned well to match different attainment levels. This happened at a brisk pace so learning was good.

Teachers use a range of techniques to interest and involve pupils. They promote pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development very well in lessons, for example by encouraging discussion, reflection, promoting enquiry and a study of art and literature from a range of contrasting cultures. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, investigation and problem-solving are used well. During child-initiated activity, children were fascinated to explore small blocks of ice to discover what had been frozen into them. They experimented with dishes of cold and warm water and observed change. These children built a strong basis for future scientific observation. The range of learning styles reflects the ideals of the school curriculum well, so that learning is active and activities are set into meaningful contexts. The curriculum provides for a good range of meaningful learning experiences to support good learning.

A number of common strengths in teaching across the school have developed under the robust monitoring and evaluation process of the senior leadership team and subsequent professional development. Teachers use assessment data well to plan

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tasks that match work to pupils' prior attainment. They have high expectations of pupils, although sometimes pupils capable of higher attainment are not sufficiently challenged. Good behaviour management and strong relationships between adults and pupils are also typical. Pupils' work is marked in a helpful way, with comments on how they can improve their work. Teaching assistants are skilled in the provision of support for those at risk of falling behind, or who need extra support with their work. In lessons, they support teachers well in making sure that pupils are fully engaged in learning and are on track to meet their individual or group targets.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils behave well. The very large majority of pupils and their parents and carers think behaviour is good in lessons and around school. School records confirm that behaviour is good and that there are few incidents of concern. Incidents of bullying or racial harassment are rare. The school confirms that behaviour has improved through the consistent application of the behaviour management arrangements, which are clearly understood by all. Very occasionally teachers need to remind pupils of the school's expectations.

Pupils are very considerate and cooperate well in lessons. They are respectful of others' views and listen respectfully to each other. Their feelings are summed up in written contributions to the school song by pupils in Years 5 and 6. They wrote 'There's a heart in our school that we all share together. There's a love in our friendships that will never end.' Pupils feel safe in school and the overwhelming majority of questionnaire responses confirm that parents and carers are confident of their children's safety. Pupils with a concern turn confidently to an adult knowing that it will be quickly resolved. Excellent levels of pastoral support ensure that there is sensitive support for pupils and families whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Attendance has improved significantly and is average. The school is rigorous in tracking attendance and punctuality.

### **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are good overall but the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team provide outstanding leadership.

Questionnaires show the staff are unanimous in their support of the headteacher's work. One parent wrote, reflecting the views of many others, 'The school is a very good school, which has improved immensely over the past couple of years. I can see the improvements that are being made one by one, which fills me with hope, faith and the belief that the school will be one of the very best in Halesowen.'

Excellent and highly focused leadership from the senior leadership team has brought about sustained improvement in key areas of the school's work. Standards are rising, pupils' progress is improving, and teaching has improved. Leaders and managers have successfully identified the obstacles to overcome before improvement can be

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achieved. Very effective professional development means that all staff have developed the expertise to provide well-targeted support to ensure pupils make good progress. The senior leadership team monitors very carefully the progress of each pupil and, through regular reviews, hold teachers accountable for the progress of their pupils. Additionally, robust monitoring of teaching and relentless follow up of identified areas for improvement have increased the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and eradicated any that was inadequate.

The governing body provides good levels of challenge and support. Its members are experienced and well qualified. They have close links with the school and know it well. The governing body actively seek the views of parents and carers and act upon their findings. It ensures that regulatory requirements for safeguarding and protecting pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are secure.

The broad and balanced curriculum provides pupils with rich opportunities to develop their communication, language, literacy and numeracy skills by applying them in meaningful contexts. The topic-based approach, combined with the strong personal development programme, is highly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school operates as a highly cohesive community, based on pupils understanding and respecting their ethnically mixed community and their sense of their own uniqueness. Equality is promoted well and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. All pupils, regardless of background or ability, have equality of opportunity to succeed.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



8 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Halesowen CofE Primary School, Halesowen, B63 3BB**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We found you to be friendly, polite and very easy to talk with. We appreciated the way in which you told us about your lives in school. You are very proud of your school and this is shown in the school song you wrote and performed so beautifully in the assembly. We really enjoyed visiting your classrooms to watch you learn. We were particularly impressed by the way in which you showed you were ready and keen to learn and confident enough to share your achievements with us. We enjoyed listening to some of you read, finding out how much you enjoy reading and talking to you about your experiences in school.

Yours is a good school that is improving steadily. You told us that you enjoy school and learning and this was also clear from your questionnaires, which were very positive. Your parents and carers told us that you are happy and feel safe. Your behaviour is good and sometimes excellent and you have very positive attitudes that help you in your learning. Your teachers make lessons interesting for you and we noticed how well you use your basic skills to help you learn in a number of different subjects.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to take some action to make sure that improvements continue. We have asked them to:

- make work more challenging for some of you so that more of you achieve the higher Level 3 in reading and writing at the end of Year 2
- make sure that all lessons are at least good by closely matching work to your capabilities, and by making some lessons move faster so that you learn more quickly.

We wish you all well for your futures – just keep on working as you are to help things improve even more.

Yours sincerely

David Speakman  
Lead inspector

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