

Astley CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116864
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	379315
Inspection dates	8–9 March 2012
Lead inspector	Michael Farrell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sam Smith
Headteacher	Simon Stubbs
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Farrell

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed six lessons involving four teachers, comprising nearly four hours teaching, and an assembly. He held meetings with groups of pupils, parents and carers, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, heard a sample of children read, and looked at a range of documents including data on pupils' progress, documents relating to safeguarding, and those concerning pupils' behaviour, and scrutinised 42 questionnaires from parents and carers.

Information about the school

Astley C of E Primary School is smaller than average. Some of the year cohorts are very small. The great majority of pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is high. The school meets current government floor standards. Since the previous inspection there has been a drop in the school role. The previous headteacher left in August 2010 and a temporary headteacher took up the post until, in September 2011, an executive headteacher was appointed with responsibility for the school and another local primary school. The two schools are in the early stages of experimental federation arrangements whose continuation is due to be considered in July 2012. A breakfast club and an after-school club are run by the governing body.

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

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. In its exceptionally welcoming and inclusive ethos, pupils are cherished as individuals. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted with conviction, including through outstanding assemblies. The school is not outstanding because pupils' achievement and the teaching are good rather than excellent. The reasons vary for different classes. For example, very occasionally, opportunities are missed to use visual aids to the full, the teaching assistant is not fully deployed in every aspect of the lesson, or a lesson tries to cover too many points. This prevents progress from being outstanding. Pupils greatly enjoy the before and after school activities.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Groups of pupils including boys and girls and those whose circumstances make them and their families vulnerable all make good progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are correctly identified and achieve well.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together. Enthusiastic teaching and good subject knowledge ensure pupils are engaged by lessons, and try their best. Accurate assessments of progress inform lesson planning and marking is very thorough and constructive.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils act safely and have a good understanding of how to keep safe. While a small minority of parental and pupil questionnaires stated lessons are sometimes disrupted by unacceptable behaviour, a range of evidence indicates behaviour over time is good.
- The governing body is effectively developing closer links with that of another local primary school and challenges and support the school well. The dynamic leadership of the headteacher and conscientious leaders and managers ensure a clear vision and high aspirations. Comprehensive, self-evaluation enables the school to know how to improve further. Safeguarding meets statutory

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requirements. Arrangements for managing performance ensure support is channelled effectively to enable staff improvements. Rigorous leadership of teaching includes regular lesson monitoring where accurate judgements clearly conveyed to staff lead to improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards by ensuring there are more examples of outstanding teaching by:
 - using visual aids to the full
 - deploying the teaching assistant to the fullest extent throughout the lesson
 - ensuring a lesson does not try to cover too many points.
- Ensure parents and carers and pupils always have the highest confidence in the school's management of behaviour by:
 - giving regular voice to parents, carers and pupils to express their views on behaviour
 - developing and implementing strategies for measuring and evaluating improvements in behaviour and how it is perceived.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

An overwhelming majority of parents rightly consider their child is making good progress at the school. Children enter the Reception class attaining at expected levels and leave Key Stage 2 with above average standards in English and mathematics. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children progress well and achieve good outcomes; recent progress in communication, language and literacy is especially strong. Pupils develop good understanding in a range of subjects, including literacy, leading to growing confidence. Over time, attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly average and improving and by the end of Key Stage 2 it is above average. Pupils whom the inspector heard read spoke with pleasure about books they had read and used a good range of strategies in confidently and effectively tackling unfamiliar words. Scrutiny of pupils' work over time confirmed good achievement and pupils were proud to show examples of work indicating good progress over the previous year. Strong leadership in literacy and numeracy has ensured these are planned innovatively across the curriculum so that literacy and numeracy skills are reinforced and developed effectively. In all lessons observed, achievement was good and the school's own lesson observations over a longer period confirmed this and showed occasional outstanding lessons. National data show good progress over time. Different groups achieve well including boys and girls and pupils whose circumstances make them and their families vulnerable. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. The school

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identifies the needs of these pupils with considerable care, and tracks their progress rigorously to check the effectiveness of interventions. A wide range of support from beyond the school is skilfully co-ordinated including other services such as speech and language therapy and expertise from special schools when appropriate.

In lessons, progress and achievement is good because lessons are well paced and work is pitched at the right level to challenge pupils and stimulate their interests. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children achieved well in a session where they could choose their own activities. This was because in the richly stimulating environment, they were fully engaged in activities that effectively encouraged a wide range of areas of development including writing and communicating. Younger pupils achieve well because relationships are strong and pupils enjoy their activities. A numeracy lesson for older pupils on improving the understanding of the properties of shapes enabled good achievement because the task innovatively used flag designs from the pupils' Olympic project to give stimulating opportunities to explore and measure shapes and angles.

Quality of teaching

A very high percentage of parents and carers and pupils correctly have the view that their child is well taught. All the teaching observed was good. The school has a very accurate perspective of its teaching which was confirmed by the close agreement in a joint observation made by the inspector and a senior leader. The school's records of teaching confirm good teaching over time. Literacy teaching is well developed so that pupils tackle challenging texts with confidence, using the effective strategies the school has systematically taught them. Staff convey high expectations of both progress and behaviour, successfully promote pupils' independence, and work as a team. Because lessons are well planned and teaching assistants are skilled they make a valuable contribution overall. Questions are varied and well-pitched so teachers can assess what pupils are learning and fine tune the lesson accordingly. Lessons are suitably paced and pitched at the right level to challenge pupils. Well-considered homework enhances learning. Behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding because it is well-managed. Teaching fully supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because it draws on a wide range of curriculum activities designed for this. The planned curriculum supports teaching well because it is imaginative and regularly reviewed to ensure it challenges and engages pupils.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children greatly enjoyed a session on their outer space theme including making paint prints of Martians, using fruit and vegetable sections. Children were skilfully encouraged to work independently and to assess their own work and that of others. In a well-paced literacy lesson including work on phonics and the use of dictionaries younger pupils achieved well and enjoyed their success because the lesson was carefully structured and the work was well-pitched for different groups. Trusting relationships encouraged pupils to try their best. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs participated fully because of challenging activities and good support. Older pupils achieved well in a

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lesson about solving word problems in mathematics because the pace of the lesson was right and the different activities challenged pupils while giving them the opportunity to succeed. Teacher and teaching assistant worked as one and the questioning of pupils was searching and skilfully adapted to different levels of understanding. In individual lessons there are different aspects which prevent teaching from being outstanding for example, the fullest use of visual aids including the white board or the deployment of the teaching assistant to the fullest extent when the teacher is speaking to the whole class.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is a calm, well-ordered and welcoming community. Parents, carers and pupils are very confident that pupils are safe and the inspector agrees. Risk assessments are carefully carried out and procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Pupils act safely in lessons and around school and a range of planned curricular activities raise pupils' awareness of how to keep safe, for example, near roads or rivers. In all lessons observed behaviour was good and sometimes outstanding. In an enriching whole-school assembly presented by older pupils and enjoyed by parents and carers, behaviour was excellent. Around the school, at meals, in the play areas at lunchtimes and in the morning break, and in the before- and after-school provision, behaviour is good or better. Pupils are proud of their school and eager to show off the school environment and talk about their work. Exclusions are very rare indeed.

Bullying is uncommon and pupils are very aware of different kinds of bullying including cyber bullying and name calling and know they can go to adults in the school if they have any concerns. In questionnaires, a small minority of parents, carers and pupils indicated that they thought lessons are occasionally disrupted by bad behaviour. In a meeting with parents and carers and in one with pupils, the consensus was that teachers handle behaviour and any occasional disruptions well. Evidence over time including school records indicate that disruptive incidents seldom occur. The school is deeply committed to ensuring behaviour standards are as high as possible and keen to engage with parents, carers and pupils to achieve this.

Leadership and management

The governing body challenges and supports the school well, drawing on a wide range of skills of its members. Effective links between individual governors and staff subject co-ordinators help provide the governing body with a clear picture of provision. The early stages of experimental movement towards a more federated governing body are being suitably monitored to ensure benefits accrue. Joint staff training, moderation of pupils' work and sharing governors' expertise have already been successfully implemented. The headteacher dynamically leads a committed and cohesive staff team so that there is an ambitious vision for the school and high expectations for behaviour and progress. Teaching is well-led and supported and effectively monitored leading to improvements. The school records of teaching identify points in individual lessons that prevent teaching from being outstanding and

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staff are working to improve these. The curriculum meets pupils' needs comprehensively so that they achieve well and enjoy their learning. It successfully promotes good behaviour, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school has a clear vision of its strengths and weaknesses, vigorously tackling areas to be developed. It has the capacity to improve. Data are used very effectively to monitor individual pupils' progress and address any underperformance. Pupils have an equal opportunity to progress and develop well and any discrimination is tackled effectively. In the well-led Early Years Foundation Stage, comprehensive assessment information is painstakingly analysed and fully informs developments in provision. Professional development is conscientiously co-ordinated in line with the school's requirements. There are strong links with parents and carers, who are deeply appreciative of what the school offers and the school is keen to extend opportunities for parents to give their voice. For example, every parent or carer who responded in questionnaires stated that the school helps them support their child's learning. Links with other agencies and schools are very well developed. Pupils are kept safe and safeguarding meets requirements.

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).

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.



12 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Astley CofE Primary School, Stourport-on-Severn, DY13 0RH

It was lovely to meet you when I inspected your school recently. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for being so eager to show me all the things you like about school. Thank you especially to those of you who read to me, those who talked to me about your work over the past years, and those who met me to discuss aspects of the school.

Yours is a good school. It is well led and managed and the teaching is good so you make good progress and do well in your lessons. You behave well and sometimes excellently. Well done for this. Some of you in your questionnaires said you thought there was some poor behaviour but when I looked at all the evidence it was clear this was rare. The school wants to make sure teaching and behaviour are as good as they can possibly be and that you feel confident that it is. Therefore I have asked the school to:

- Make sure there are more examples of outstanding teaching by building on the already good teaching.
- Make sure you and your parents and carers are fully confident about the way the school manages behaviour by letting you all express your views and finding ways to measure improvement in behaviour and the way you see it.

You can contribute to this by continuing to work hard as teaching becomes even better.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Farrell
Lead inspector

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