

# Phoenix Primary EBD School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135460
<b>Local Authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	381887
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian McAllister

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karen Richman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Toplass
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Odell Road Leamore Walsall WS3 2ED
<b>Telephone number</b>	01922 712834
<b>Fax number</b>	01922 493505
<b>Email address</b>	ntopl@phoenix.walsall.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	20–21 September 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	381887

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011



## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. During the inspection, nine lessons were observed taught by four different teachers. Meetings were held with staff, senior leaders, pupils and members of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including planning notes, pupils' work, assessment and tracking data and safeguarding policies. A quarter of parents and carers, amounting to seven in all, responded to the questionnaire.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of the curriculum on the academic and emotional/behavioural development of the pupils.
- The effectiveness of strategies to improve behaviour.
- How well attainment and achievement have improved since the last inspection.
- The impact of leadership and management on improving teaching and learning.

## Information about the school

Phoenix School is for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A small minority of pupils have autistic spectrum disorder. The school serves the whole of Walsall Metropolitan Borough. There are many more boys than girls. Nine children are designated as being looked after and most pupils are of White British heritage.

**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: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It has continued to improve since the last inspection. Parents and carers are right when they say their children are extremely safe and secure in school. This is because of outstanding safeguarding procedures and the school's excellent care, guidance and support. One parent summed up the views of others when they wrote, 'Phoenix is truly effective in managing the behaviour of my child. His behaviour and attitude towards the school environment has really improved.'

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils settle in very quickly and make rapid progress from their individual starting points, so that by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 they are well equipped for the next stage of their education. Those with Autistic spectrum disorders and those who are looked after by the local authority achieve equally as well as all others in the school. Pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe in school, and they understand that they need to look after the safety of others as well as themselves. They are confident that issues they raise will be dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Parents and carers agree very strongly that the school keeps their children safe.

The pupils benefit from the spacious accommodation, and from an extensive outdoor area that, as well as a wide range of play environments, includes a woodland area for outdoor education activities. This gives pupils opportunities to develop creativity, to explore and to investigate, and contributes well to pupils' healthy lifestyles and to their enjoyment of sport. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent, and teachers have very high expectations of the pupils. Teaching and learning are good, and some excellent lessons were seen. When lessons are outstanding, the teachers use assessment procedures very effectively throughout the lesson to support the pupils' learning. The school has high-quality facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) that are not yet fully used to support learning. Pupils' moral and social development is particularly strong and this makes a major contribution to their positive behaviour and high levels of attendance.

Accurate self-evaluation means that leaders know what the school does well and what needs further improvement. The headteacher provides exceptional vision, commitment and a determination to deliver the highest quality provision for the pupils. He is very well supported by the deputy, and they have established a highly-motivated and effective team of teachers, support staff, administrators and other professionals. The governing body is influential in delivering, and maintaining, the

**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

strategic direction of the school. The governors are rigorous in ensuring the safety of everyone on site. They have particularly constructive relationships with parents and carers. As a result, there is an excellent capacity to improve.

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

- Fully embed the use of assessment in lessons in order to further improve progress.
- Improve the use of information and communication technology across the school to further enhance learning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All pupils' attainment on entry to the school is low. For a few, attainment is likely to remain low compared with pupils nationally. However, all groups of pupils achieve well, and the vast majority make significantly better than expected progress in all core subjects, as well as exceptional progress in their personal development. Pupils make better progress in English than in mathematics, and their progress in science is very good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to answer questions.

As a result of successful interventions by the school, including in the specialist unit, pupils' behaviour is generally good in and around the school and often exemplary in lessons, a reflection of the excellent care and very good teaching pupils receive. Pupils enjoy working with partners or in small groups, when they listen attentively and contribute their ideas constructively. They make most rapid progress when they are actively involved and given time to reflect upon their learning. During their time in the school, all groups of pupils, regardless of background, ethnicity or special need, make good progress in English, mathematics and science. The school's data show that attainment is rising, and this is confirmed by inspection evidence. In one very effective science lesson, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils developed an understanding of how matter changes state through the teacher's effective questioning. Working in groups allowed the pupils to negotiate roles and to share and record their ideas for investigations effectively.

Pupils have an outstanding understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. Even the younger pupils can say what foods are good for them, and why. Participation rates in a wide range of sport-based enrichment activities are high. Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy taking responsibilities, for example by 'meeting and greeting' visitors, or belonging to the 'Pupil Voice'. They are active fundraisers for a range of local and world-wide charities. Very high levels of self-confidence, good manners, positive attitudes, tolerance of others' needs, and rapidly improving attainment in English, mathematics and science mean that pupils are well prepared for success in the next stage of their education. Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in their behaviour, their appreciation of art, music and nature, and their respect for each other, as well as

**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

their willingness to discuss and accept other cultures and religions.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is exceptionally well matched to the needs of the pupils. It is integral to a whole range of interventions which all come together very effectively to bring about positive changes in the behaviour of the pupils. The curriculum is broad and balanced and, while focusing very effectively on the basic skills of numeracy and literacy, addresses self-esteem and feelings of security through a particularly extensive range of enrichment activities and interventions.

Teaching is at least good in all lessons and is sometimes outstanding, and pupils' behaviour is managed very well. Lessons have clear learning objectives which show that teachers have high expectations of pupils' successes. There are particular strengths in the support offered to pupils in crisis which enables them to continue learning effectively in the classrooms. Assessment is generally good, but information is not always used fully to maximise the effectiveness of teaching. Questioning is a strength in many lessons which helps to extend pupils' understanding and ensures that pupils of differing abilities learn well. Exceptional skills by the teachers and teaching assistants ensure that all pupils are able to interact in lessons and enjoy their learning. For example, one teacher skilfully diffused a potential conflict by quietly taking over from a colleague and re-directing the pupil on to the task in hand.

Pupils are extremely well cared for by the whole school community. Very effective

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**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

links with a wide range of other professionals from health and social care ensure that each pupil’s personal needs are very well met. Induction and transition arrangements are excellent so that new pupils very quickly settle into the school, and the older pupils transfer smoothly to secondary schooling. Strategies to support the most vulnerable groups are excellent, resulting in full inclusion and enjoyment by these pupils. Attendance is high and Phoenix School can point to some impressive examples of improved attendance due to the excellent curriculum and strong collaboration between the school, support services and families.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Purposeful and effective leadership is an outstanding feature of Phoenix School. Leaders are driving improvement in all areas. As a result, the school is extraordinarily successful in addressing the needs of the pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The headteacher is ably supported by his deputy and the whole of the staff. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination well. Accurate self-evaluation means that leaders have already identified the issues highlighted in this inspection. The senior management team has successfully embedded its ambition for the school by working closely with local schools and other agencies to create an environment in which pupils thrive.

Governors are fully involved in the school’s management and offer significant challenge as well as support. The school makes a highly effective contribution to community cohesion by its involvement in a very wide range of community activities. The school takes a leading role in a number of local partnerships which makes an excellent contribution to pupils’ good, and often outstanding, achievement and well-being. Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, are excellent. They fully meet current government guidelines. They are tailored to the specific needs of the pupils. Safeguarding procedures are rigorously monitored and the site is exceptionally safe and secure.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and</b>	<b>1</b>
---	----------

**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

<b>driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

A quarter of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. The views expressed have been supplemented by using information from the school's own surveys. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly pleased with the school. One parent commented, 'A wonderful school, wonderful staff. My child is very happy and really enjoys school.' Of the group who responded to the inspection questionnaires, all felt that the school keeps their child safe and that the school addresses pupils' behavioural needs very well. One parent felt that their child could be challenged more academically.



### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Phoenix Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 7 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 29 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	4	57	3	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	6	86	1	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	5	71	2	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	4	57	3	43	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	6	86	1	14	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	4	57	2	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	71	2	29	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	5	71	2	29	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	6	86	1	14	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	86	1	14	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	57	3	43	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	5	71	2	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	6	86	1	14	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**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.**



22 September 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Phoenix Primary School, Walsall WS3 2ED**

Thank you for your help during my recent visit to your school. This letter is to tell you some of the things I found out during my visit.

- Your school gives you an excellent education, which means you make very good progress.
- You told me you enjoy coming to school, and I know that most of you come as often as you can.
- You are all working successfully to improve your behaviour. Behaviour around the school is good. In lessons it is often excellent and because of this you achieve very well.
- Most of you are very polite and you try hard to work well together.
- You told me about your healthy lifestyles, and I know you take lots of exercise.
- The staff and other adults keep you extremely safe and secure in school.
- I was impressed by the way you think about others, whether it is by supporting other pupils in school, or working well with your community or for charities. Well done for this.

I have asked your school to do two things to help you to do even better.

- To improve the way teachers measure how well you are doing in your lessons to help you make more progress
- To improve the way you use the excellent information and communication technology equipment that you have in your school.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Ian McAllister  
Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**