

# Timbertree Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103966
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	382265
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	193
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kate Antill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracy Ruddle (Executive)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 2010
<b>School address</b>	Valley Road Cradley Heath B64 7LT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 567830
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 567830
<b>Email address</b>	hayley.walker@corngreaves.sandwell.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	8–9 November 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	382265

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 of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector visited 18 lessons and saw 9 teachers teach. She held meetings with members of the governing body, the local authority representative, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, looked at pupils' work and records of their progress. She also looked at a range of documents, including minutes of governing body meetings, its improvement plan, a range of policies and the school's monitoring of its performance.

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

- To what extent has the school increased the proportion of good teaching and eradicated inadequacies in order to accelerate the progress made by pupils in lessons?
- How successful are the school's strategies to reduce levels of absence, including persistent absence?
- How effectively do leaders at all levels, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, implement rigorous self-evaluation to secure sustained improvement?
- How well do different groups of pupils perform, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and looked after children?

## Information about the school

This is smaller than the average-sized primary school. While the majority of pupils are of White British origin, the proportion from minority ethnic groups is increasing. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above that found nationally.

When the school was judged to require special measures, the local authority instigated the formation of a hard federation with a very successful neighbouring school. The headteacher of the supporting school is the executive headteacher of both schools. There have been considerable leadership and staff changes since the last full inspection, including the appointment of three assistant headteachers and, most recently, a head of school reporting directly to the executive headteacher. The school operates a breakfast club managed 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: how good is the school?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Timbertree Primary School is a good and strongly improving school, which offers increasingly well-balanced provision for its pupils.

The federation is having a highly positive influence on several fronts:

- developing teachers' skills
- strengthening such systems as assessment for learning
- monitoring of teaching and learning to secure greater consistency between the two schools.

The executive headteacher provides the key inspiration for the overall improvement of the school. Not only does she personally provide outstanding leadership and management, she is also able to develop effective leadership in others because she is exceptionally skilled in managing change. Consequently, leaders and other senior managers carry out their roles to a good standard. Leaders have an extremely clear and accurate grasp of how well the school is doing and where further improvements need to be made. This means that the school has a good capacity to consolidate its successes and to bring about further improvements in the future.

The key strengths of the school include:

- teaching that is consistently good and increasingly outstanding in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6
- good attention paid to pupils' safety and adopting healthy lifestyles, particularly in relation to their physical and emotional well-being
- rapidly improving results in the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 national tests, with above average attainment in mathematics and reading.

Staff and pupils alike work hard, display an ambition to succeed and a commitment to give of their best. Consequently, from below average skills on entry to school, pupils leave with average attainment in the core subjects and good achievement. Nonetheless, children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage remains slower than that of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils' attainment and progress in science and information and communication technology (ICT) lag behind those in English and mathematics.

**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

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

- Raise attainment further by:
  - ensuring that pupils' learning and progress are at least good in all key stages particularly the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - enabling pupils to make at least good progress in a wide range of subjects and in particular science and ICT
  - reviewing the curriculum for ICT and science to ensure that each topic studied gets progressively harder
  - making sure that pupils practise their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and teachers have worked hard to promote better learning and progress for all groups of pupils. Gaps in attainment and progress between different groups of pupils are closing owing to effective intervention strategies, particularly for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their needs are identified clearly and the provision to meet them is regularly reviewed. Effective links with outside agencies, such as the educational psychologist and speech and language therapists, ensure that extra help for individual pupils is available as required. As a result, these pupils make similar progress to that of their peers.

A high proportion of the most-able pupils are attaining levels above those found nationally in mathematics. There are examples of consistently good learning and progress for pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Here, pupils forge ahead because the work is challenging and the pace of learning is brisk. Pupils tackle activities with enthusiasm and concentrate for lengthy periods. They particularly enjoy working collaboratively to investigate and solve problems practically. This group of pupils have well-developed mathematical calculation skills and apply these with increasing success to solve real-life number problems.

Very strong emphasis on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills ensures that the level of attainment in English and mathematics is rising rapidly. Highly effective work to support pupils with poor reading levels, including the strong emphasis on the sounds that letters make (phonics), enables pupils to make excellent progress in improving their levels of fluency and comprehension when reading. Outcomes in other subjects, including ICT and science, lag behind those achieved in English and mathematics.

Pupils are tolerant and understand the needs of others. They mix well together, including in the breakfast club, because of the good and often excellent trusting

**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

relationships they have with adults in the school. Assemblies are instrumental in the formation of the positive whole-school ethos. Pupils reflect on a range of moral and social issues. Nonetheless the pupils’ cultural and spiritual development are less well developed. Their commitment to supporting the rest of the school and the wider community is reflected in the positions of responsibility they take on, such as monitors, and in the range of local roles that pupils take on, such as the weekly reading session at a local home for the elderly.

Attendance has improved over the year and is above average. The family support leader maintains rigorous data, which track pupils’ attendance on a daily basis. Careful analysis pinpoints where there are attendance problems and the school follows these up with telephone calls, letters and home visits to establish the reasons for absence.

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

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching in lessons typically includes the following features:

- good subject knowledge, conveying ideas with clarity and providing a clear structure to the pupils’ learning
- pupils who are engaged and provided with a good level of challenge that accelerates their progress towards specific targets
- strategies common to all classrooms, including effective classroom management and targeted questioning, with pupils expected to give a detailed explanation

<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

for their answer

- an ethos for learning that motivates pupils and encourages their positive self-esteem, particularly for those whose circumstances make them most vulnerable
- increased focus on the quality of pupils’ marked work
- pupils’ increasingly secure knowledge of basic grammar, spelling and punctuation
- pupils’ improved understanding of their current achievement and what they need to do to improve their performance.

Opportunities for pupils to apply skills such as ICT to their learning are less well developed. The way in which the curriculum is planned for subjects like science and ICT slows pupils’ progress because it does not systematically build on their prior learning and does not focus well enough on developing the key concepts and skills in these subjects. Teachers are less adept at identifying opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their writing and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. Residential trips provide exciting new outdoor experiences such as archery, and problem-solving activities support pupils’ personal development well.

Removing barriers to learning and establishing a caring environment in which pupils feel confident they can succeed lies at the heart of the school’s work. Strong links with parents and carers, and effective partnerships with a range of agencies helps to ensure good care for those whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. The school can demonstrate several examples of previously disaffected pupils who have been helped to re-engage with learning and succeed.

*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The journey of improvement over the last year is due to the decisive and effective action taken by a highly focused executive headteacher, ably supported by the head of school and a committed governing body. The executive headteacher has worked collaboratively with the governing body and has secured the determination of all staff to ensure that they get the best out of pupils. A highly robust approach to performance management and the clarification of leadership roles have enabled leaders to understand their individual and collective accountability for whole-school improvement. However, the school is aware that some aspects of its policies and procedures are not informed by the latest guidance and are, therefore, not fully up to date.

**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

Strengths in leadership and management include:

- effective senior leaders who share and deliver the executive headteacher’s vision for improvement
- effective middle leadership trained to observe lessons accurately and provide feedback to staff, although there is still some variability in the extent to which they provide challenge and support to staff
- setting challenging targets for all pupils and not tolerating any lowering of expectations
- effective use of assessment information to track pupils’ progress and to quickly intervene with additional support if necessary
- a well-conceived professional development programme for staff that is very well matched to the school’s priorities.

Governance is good. A well-informed governing body holds the school effectively to account for its decisions, actions and results. The governing body has a good understanding of its strategic role across both schools. It has worked swiftly to establish a committee structure to focus directly on school improvement. There are secure and robust systems to safeguard pupils, including effective systems for child protection. Arrangements exceed basic requirements because of the way the school family liaison officer keeps a close eye on the emotional well-being of those pupils whose circumstances may make them most vulnerable. The school is a cohesive community and it is building increasingly strong connections within the local area. International links are in the early stages of development, as are links with a contrasting school within the United Kingdom, but the school has appropriate plans to expand them. The school demonstrates its commitment to equal opportunities by ensuring that the gap in the performance of groups is rapidly reducing and that all are well supported and enabled to access everything the school has to offer.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</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

**The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money**

**2**

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are well cared for and thrive in this setting. The many and varied activities ensure that children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Attainment on entry is below what is typically expected for three-year-olds. Children gain appropriate experience of the six areas of learning because they are taught satisfactorily.

The majority of children achieve satisfactorily. When they leave Reception, children are working just below the expected level for their age. As they grow in confidence, most develop a range of skills that contribute to their future economic well-being. Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible. They know how to take turns when sharing resources such as the bikes and computers, and they handle books and equipment with care. Children show interest and generally concentrate for increasing amounts of time when working in a group, with an adult or at a task on their own. There is a sound balance of adult-led and child-led activities. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory because some of the systems and procedures are not fully embedded to enable leaders to track children’s progress robustly.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the school’s own parental survey indicated that they are pleased with the quality of education and care that their child receives.

**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

### **Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire**

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## 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.**



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Timbertree Primary School, Cradley Heath, B64 7LT**

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when I visited your school. I greatly enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. I am pleased to tell you that your school no longer needs extra help, its performance is now good. Therefore, this will be my last visit to the school. I enjoyed listening to your school target song in assembly; it helps you to remember just how important it is to work hard to achieve your targets. Pupils told me that they work very hard to become a 'very important pupil' (VIP) and that they all want to be included in the 'pot of perfection' when they have met their targets.

There are now many positive things to report:

- you listen carefully to what your teachers have to tell you
- you behave well
- you are making good progress in English and mathematics
- you are coming to school much more often
- the headteacher and the governing body keep a very careful eye on just how well the school is doing
- children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress.

There are still some things that need to be done to help you achieve even better results in your other subjects. We have asked your teachers to:

- make sure that teaching always helps you to make good progress in all subjects, especially in ICT and science.

You can help your school improve further by continuing to try your best in all you do.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wordsworth  
Her Majesty's 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).**