

# Ashwood Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	103818
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	376971
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Susan Lewis

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<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>	331
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Reverend Colin Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steve Hudson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 June 2010
<b>School address</b>	Bells Lane Wordsley Stourbridge DY8 5DJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818545
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818546
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<b>Age group</b>	3-11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	11–12 July 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376971



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Lewis	Additional Inspector
Sarah Warboys	Additional Inspector
Richard Boswell	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons led by 15 different teachers and were accompanied for part of the inspection by a sign language interpreter. Inspectors held meetings with senior staff, the head of the enhanced resourced base for pupils who are deaf. They heard pupils read and talked with them about their work. Inspectors also had discussions with members of the governing body, parents and carers and pupils, including those who are deaf. They looked at a wide range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning, the data it holds about pupils' progress and its safeguarding documents and practices. They scrutinised 146 questionnaires from parents and carers, 92 from pupils and 21 returned by staff.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The large majority of pupils are White British, with a small proportion of mixed heritage or from other minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. There is an average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including 29 pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This enhanced resourced base provision is for deaf pupils and is managed by the local authority. The nineteen pupils currently supported by the base are on the roll of the school. As a consequence, their progress was evaluated on this inspection.

The school provides a daily breakfast and after-school club, which was inspected as part of the inspection. The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' 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>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory but improving school. The school is not yet good because achievement and teaching, though improving, are not yet consistently good. The new curriculum, though it excites and engages pupils, is not detailed sufficiently well to ensure the secure progression of pupils' skills and understanding in all subjects. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory and improving for all groups whatever their starting points, backgrounds or needs. Pupils who are deaf also make satisfactory and sometimes better progress. This is because the leadership now collects detailed data on how each child is doing, analyses it rigorously and checks that different groups have work that is appropriate for them. However, it does not always check how well the different interventions put into place are working to raise pupils' achievement further.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm make a real contribution to their learning in lessons. Pupils themselves say that they feel very safe in school and the very large majority of parents and carers agree.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but rapidly improving. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good although pupils' progress over time is adequate, not good. The leadership has worked hard through effective use of performance management to improve teaching quality with some success. However, occasionally, teachers are too quick to provide answers, when pupils could work them out for themselves. Opportunities are missed to use information and communication technology to aid pupils' learning, particularly their writing.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the governing body know the school's strengths well and have accurately identified areas for further

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development and have clear plans to improve school outcomes further. They are demonstrating the capacity to improve in the way they have improved teaching and accelerated learning, however, the curriculum is not yet planned in sufficient detail to be fully effective.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
  - the balance of teacher and child talk in lessons is appropriate and gives pupils sufficient opportunities to think and work things out for themselves
  - key vocabulary, phrases and ideas are recorded more in lessons and on displays to model writing and spelling conventions effectively
  - information and communication technology is used frequently and effectively to support pupil's learning.
- Improve the analysis of performance data so that the impact and effectiveness of interventions, for example for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those who are deaf, is suitably evaluated, particularly with regard to how well they are accelerating pupils' progress and meeting their specific needs.
- Complete the detailed planning of the curriculum, including the planned opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, so that the progressive development of skills and understandings in all subjects is planned for and is secure.

**Main report****Achievement of pupils**

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills generally typical for their age, although they are lower in communication and language. They get off to a sound start, making satisfactory progress overall and better progress in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development because of continuous support provided for these particular skills. Early reading, writing and mathematical skills are supported well by different activities and new approaches to letters and sounds (phonics) work. In Years 2 and 6 attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics with evidence that Year 6 pupils have made at least the expected progress in these subjects since Year 2. A higher percentage of Year 6 pupils achieved the higher National Curriculum levels this academic year in reading and mathematics, because more focused approaches to teaching these subjects are accelerating pupils' progress throughout the school. Pupils generally read confidently and well. More opportunities are being provided for pupils to practise their reading skills in all subjects, particularly for those who find reading more difficult, and this is accelerating their reading progress. Pupils in Years 5 and 6

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apply their mathematics and literacy skills well in 'irresistible learning' activities, where they design a new bread, estimate its costs, design logos and attempt to sell it to the school's cook. In Year 2, pupils generally work out meanings, and approach unfamiliar texts with confidence, because of the systematic support for pupils' skills in sounding out words and the well-targeted comprehension work undertaken in reading groups. Writing has improved because there are many more opportunities for pupils to write in different subjects, although opportunities to support writing and spelling further are missed when teachers do not write down their own and pupils' suggestions during lessons.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those who are deaf, make satisfactory and, sometimes, better progress particularly in mathematics. They make good progress in their personal development from their starting points because the school is careful to ensure that they have many opportunities to express their views and join in all of the activities offered. All other groups make at least satisfactory progress, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.

Parents and carers are pleased with the improvements in their children's achievements and comment specifically on the progress their children have made more recently although inspection findings were that achievement is satisfactory over time.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching is improving because staff have increased pupils' involvement in learning and take better account of pupils' individual starting points when planning learning. Good use has been made of paired observations to improve teaching and share good practice. Pupils and parents and carers are very positive about the quality of teaching. Inspectors judge that teaching is satisfactory, but it has some stronger elements such as the quality of the relationships between staff and pupils and the interesting things which teachers plan for pupils to do. Teachers have generally appropriate expectations about what pupils can achieve, and in the main pupils rise to them. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 think of, and write down, interesting questions that they can ask the carrier of an Olympic torch, having a real go at how to spell 'tricky words'. Tasks are usually suitably matched to pupils' specific needs, notably in guided reading sessions. However, occasionally the youngest, and some pupils in other years, spend too long sitting on the carpet listening to their teacher when they could be more involved in finding things out for themselves. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning in group activities, although they are not always used effectively in the whole-class part of lessons. Work is usually matched to pupils' capability. This ensures everyone, including those who are disabled and have special educational needs is helped to move on in their understanding. Pupils who are deaf are supported effectively to be included in lessons through good use of technological and other aids and effective positioning of communication support. They say that they enjoy learning with their hearing friends and particularly when their teachers and their friends use signs to help them to

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understand.

Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral and social development because the teaching and curriculum provide many opportunities for these aspects. Plenty of opportunities are provided for reflection; good behaviour management and worthwhile social activities, including excellent work with a partner school in music, all help to promote pupils' personal development effectively. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The lack of whole school planning for this aspect means opportunities are missed in topics to extend awareness of cultural diversity further.

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

Inspectors judge that the school has good practices which promote good behaviour and keep pupils safe and secure. Indeed behaviour in lessons is sometimes exemplary and particularly so when pupils are engaged in their 'irresistible learning' topics. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 behaved and engaged extremely well when designing costumes and cooking, using utensils and tools carefully and safely. Incidents of bullying whether verbal, physical or linked to race, or other factors, are rare. They have occurred in the past but pupils are quick to say that they are dealt with fairly. The large majority of parents, carers and pupils agree that behaviour is good and pupils are kept safe and secure. A few have concerns but indicate that the problems were in the past not now. Inspectors' discussions with pupils, including those who are deaf, show that pupils feel very safe in the school. Pupils understand and respect the school's rules. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage give very clear and consistent messages as to how children are expected to behave. Children are taught how to be kind to each other and how to move safely around the school. Pupils self-manage their behaviour well from the youngest class upwards. They have a good understanding of the risks that they might face in different contexts, for example, they know how to keep themselves safe when meeting strangers or using the internet. Attendance is average and steadily improving.

### **Leadership and management**

The leadership team and governing body have worked hard with staff since the last inspection to drive school improvement. Effective whole-school monitoring has led to improved teaching, particularly where it was weaker. Professional development has raised teachers' expectations as to what pupils can achieve. Monitoring systems, including the various ways in which the school now collects and analyses its data, have supported improvements in performance well. As a result there is now a much higher proportion of good or better teaching than in the past. The school regularly meets with teachers to review pupils' progress and identify those who are falling behind. Following discussions suitable catch-up programmes are put in place to raise standards. In the main assessment data informs lessons planning and this means work in lessons is generally suitably matched to pupils' needs. However, the use of data to analyse the impact of interventions to judge their effectiveness is in its infancy. The governing body knows the school's strengths and areas for improvement and holds leaders to account. Although several longstanding staff are

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due to retire at the end of term, the new leadership staff and middle managers are identified and are already planning the next steps to move the school forward.

Senior and middle leaders have worked well together to establish a curriculum that has an appropriate emphasis on developing key skills, but is also inspired by 'irresistible learning'. Parents and carers comment on how the revised curriculum is exciting their children who 'can't wait' to come to school and they speak in positive terms about the learning experiences that their children have. The curriculum has particular strengths in the ways it allows pupils to apply their key skills in mathematics and English, although there are fewer planned opportunities for the use of information and communication technology in all subjects and to further enhance pupils' cultural development. The breakfast and after-school clubs, and other school clubs, are well organised and are appreciated by parents and carers and the provision develops pupils' social and independence skills well.

Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. The school works well with other agencies, and with parents and carers, to secure pupils' safety and well-being and to improve attendance. It also works well in partnership with others, such as educational audiologists and the local authority, to provide support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those who are deaf. Gaps in pupils' performance are narrowing when compared to national expectations and provision secures equality and inclusivity for all. The school is a very tolerant and harmonious community where discrimination is not accepted.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.**



13 July 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Ashwood Park Primary School, Stourbridge, DY8 5DJ**

Thank you for being so welcoming when inspectors visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and would like to give particular thanks to those of you who read to us, showed us your work and filled in the questionnaires. It was good to hear from all of you, including those of you who are deaf, how much you like your school. We judge that your school is satisfactory, but it is improving quickly, because the headteacher and the staff are so determined to give you the best opportunities to learn. These are some of the other things we found out about your school.

- You really like 'irresistible learning' and all the interesting things you do in those lessons.
- Your behaviour is good overall and sometimes excellent. You usually all get on really well together and help each other.
- You make satisfactory and sometimes better progress in all subjects.
- Your reading skills are developing well because of all the different opportunities teachers provide for you to practise these.

We have asked your headteacher and the governing body to do the following things to make your school even better by:

- improving the teaching to ensure that teachers give you more opportunities to work things out for yourself and to use computers in lessons
- making sure that all the exciting things you do in 'irresistible learning' are carefully linked to the different skills you need to learn in subjects.
- checking carefully how well the different activities provided, to help some of you to catch up or progress faster, are working.

You can help too by continuing to improve your behaviour and attendance.

Yours sincerely

Susan Lewis  
Lead Inspector

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