

Uplands Manor Primary School

Addenbrooke Road, Smethwick, B67 6HT

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Boys and girls from all groups, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well.
- The drive to improve attendance has resulted in levels which are now above average.
- The headteacher and senior staff have high aims for the school and work diligently to ensure that these aims are achieved.
- As a result, there has been a steady improvement in the quality of teaching.
- Teachers plan lessons that are interesting, and use a range of techniques and tools to make learning memorable and enjoyable.
- Senior staff carefully check the progress made by pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, and respond swiftly if it slows.
- Pupils know what is expected of them and their behaviour is good.
- The governors do a good job. They are well informed about the school's performance and confidently seek out information.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not do as well in writing as in mathematics.
- Teachers do not refer to pupils' targets, the next steps they need to take in developing their work, enough when marking their writing in different subjects.
- Although pupils practise speaking and writing regularly, they are not helped enough to extend these skills through demanding discussions or writing in a wide range of styles.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all parts of the school and observed 28 lessons, including two which were shared observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons, attended assembly and ate lunch in the dining hall with pupils.
- Discussions were held with representatives of the senior leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body, pupils, parents and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 16 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as 29 responses to staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on the pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Sheelagh Barnes, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Verna Plummer	Additional Inspector
Peter Lawley	Additional Inspector
Carolyn Wood	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than average, and is gradually changing from three to four classes in each year group due to rising numbers.
- The population of the school is very diverse, with around half of the pupils coming from a wide range of minority ethnic groups.
- A higher proportion of pupils than nationally speak English as an additional language, and many pupils are at early stages of speaking English.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This caters for 12 pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties. It also has a 'nurture' provision.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at 'school action' is broadly average, as is the proportion who are supported at 'school action plus' or through a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is above average.
- There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection. Currently six classes are taught by teachers who are at the start of their career.
- Refurbishment to the school was completed in the first week of September 2012. It included the development of four new classrooms and a community room, new staff room and office area.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in writing to at least in line with their progress in mathematics by:
 - developing pupils' vocabulary and confidence in articulating their thoughts in a wide range of subjects
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write in a broader range of styles and for a wider range of purposes
 - consistently applying the messages they are given about how their writing can be improved when marking subjects other than English.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of children start school in the Nursery with standards which are below national expectations for their age. They make good progress throughout their time in Nursery and Reception across all the areas of learning.
- Throughout the school, boys and girls from all groups make good progress, including those who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils referred to the school for speech and language delay. This is because of the good quality of leadership and management of these aspects.
- Strong leadership has ensured that pupils' progress has been accelerating and the gaps in attainment between different groups closing to a significant degree over recent years. For example, pupils supported by the pupil premium and those who attend the nurture group now achieve similarly to their classmates.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2012, standards in mathematics were above average, with nearly all pupils attaining the expected National Curriculum Level 4 and over half attaining the higher Level 5. A small number attained Level 6. In English, 90% of the pupils attained Level 4 and a third Level 5.
- Progress is particularly good in mathematics because of an emphasis on improving teaching and learning in this subject.
- Pupils' progress in reading is good and improving because the regular sessions to teach phonics (letters and sounds) are demanding, and the pupils who need extra support are heard reading daily.
- Progress in writing, while good, is not yet as strong. In part this is because many pupils from a range of backgrounds have a relatively limited vocabulary, and do not have the confidence to articulate their views. More able pupils can use technical vocabulary well and talk, for example, about using embedded clauses in their writing. However, their range of vocabulary to discuss and write about issues relating to the world beyond school is more limited.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is now typically good. The teaching in a few lessons requires improvement. Some teaching is outstanding. Work in pupils' books suggests that this range is typical.
- Teachers use assessment information well to plan lessons that effectively meet the needs of the range of abilities in each class. They make good use of techniques to make learning memorable, such as pupils making reflective shapes with their own bodies when learning about symmetry, or using simple signs to remember French phrases.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught well and there has been a recent heightening of the emphasis placed on teaching of phonics. As a result, the proportion of pupils who could identify letters and sounds in the assessment at the end of Year 1 was above average.
- There has been an increase in effort to ensure that every pupil is heard reading very regularly in school. In addition, pupils are now provided with books to build their own reading libraries at home. As a result, progress in reading has improved significantly across the school.

- The focus on improving writing is still at early stages, but the impact is starting to show. Teachers give pupils regular opportunities to write, and place an emphasis on the use of interesting words. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to write in a wider range of styles and for a broad range of purposes.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is regular, celebrates success and points to areas for improvement. Opportunities are missed to link marking tightly to the specific next-step writing target each pupil has, particularly in writing in science and humanities.
- Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. This is particularly the case for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.
- Teachers make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example in singing, art, French and teaching pupils to play steel pans.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. This is demonstrated by the improvement to their attendance over the past year. They are proud of school and of their successes, and treat the resources and environment with respect.
- Pupils from all groups are fully included in all school activities and access is available to all parts of the school so that no pupil is disadvantaged.
- Pupils pay attention in lessons and are keen to answer questions. Instances of them becoming distracted or distracting others are exceedingly rare. This is because teachers pay great attention, when planning, to making lessons interesting and exciting.
- Behaviour management is good and all staff display a consistent expectation of good behaviour. As a result, pupils quickly learn what is and what is not acceptable. They reflect the standards that adults model for them, and show care and concern for others. Exclusions have dropped significantly and are now rare.
- Parents say that they know that their children are safe in school, and the majority would recommend the school to other parents. Pupils know about different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying; they say that it is unusual and any that does occur is dealt with effectively.

The leadership and management are good

- The high aspirations of the headteacher, senior leaders and governors are effectively underpinned by robust and accurate self-assessment. The issues raised by the previous inspection have been very effectively addressed.
- The quality of teaching has improved significantly in the past 18 months, because of the focused mentoring and training provided for teachers by senior leaders. The teaching of mathematics is now particularly effective, because of the recent emphasis that has been placed on how this subject is taught. The subject leader is very proactive in her support and encouragement.
- Good support from the local authority has enabled an effective programme of training to take place on a range of matters for governors, teachers and teaching assistants. This is further reinforced by a mentor scheme to improve the quality of teaching still further.

- The school has established beneficial links with schools and other agencies. The links with parents are strong and being developed still further. Parents' views are regarded as important.
- Safeguarding policies and practice meet current national requirements. They are applied consistently and, as a result, pupils and parents say that they have confidence in the care provided by the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is effective because governors keep themselves very well informed and, because of this, they are confident to ask questions and challenge leaders
 - is aware of the diversity of the school community and works efficiently to build upon this strength
 - is suitably involved in shaping the strategic direction of planning for improvement; this planning is astute and focuses on the most important next steps needed to drive standards up still further.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131184
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	406417

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	719
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Davies
Headteacher	Sue Gormley
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2011
Telephone number	0121 5581602
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Email address	sue.gormley@uplandsmanor.sandwell.sch.uk

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