

Wren's Nest Primary School and Children's Centre

Marigold Crescent, Wrens Nest Estate, Dudley, DY1 3NX

Inspection dates 27–28 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils from all different backgrounds achieve well in this rapidly improving school.
- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, and make good progress in all the areas of learning.
- Teaching is good, and the help given to pupils who are at risk of not doing well is outstanding.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well, feel very safe, and are very proud of their school.
- Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is helping them to become mature, confident individuals.
- The way in which the school involves parents, carers and the local community in its work is outstanding.
- Leadership and management, including governance, are good.
- The headteacher is an inspirational leader who is key to the school's success.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always demand enough of pupils to ensure that those capable of reaching the highest levels in their reading and writing are encouraged to do so.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop their literacy skills in different subjects.
- Marking does not always show pupils clearly enough how to move on to the next step in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons taught by 21 teachers and support staff. Three lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, representatives of the governing body and local authority, and staff, including senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met with people who have links with the school to find out more about its community involvement.
- Inspectors took account of 13 responses to the online Parent View. They spoke informally with parents and carers and looked at the results of the school's own parental questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school. They looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress, child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Kath Campbell, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Lafford	Additional Inspector
Mary Le Breuilly	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Wren's Nest is much larger than average for a primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- A high proportion of pupils are supported through school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. Many of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The governing body manages an on-site children's centre. This is inspected and reported upon separately.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in reading and writing throughout the school by:
 - making sure teachers consistently demand the very best of what pupils can achieve
 - giving pupils more opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills in different subjects.
- During the current academic year, raise the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - sharing the outstanding practice that exists within the school
 - using assessment and marking more effectively on a day-to-day basis so that the work set consistently provides the right level of challenge, particularly for the more-able pupils, to move pupils rapidly on in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below the levels expected nationally for their age. Early talking and writing skills are particularly weak.
- Progress in Years 1 to 6 is good. Attainment has been improving rapidly and is now close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the 2012 national tests, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher National Curriculum levels in mathematics was above average. The number of pupils reaching higher levels in reading and writing throughout the school was not as strong, though much improved.
- Raising attainment in reading and writing, particularly of the more-able pupils, remains a priority for the school. There is some variation in the progress of these pupils in lessons. It is sometimes outstanding, particularly when work is demanding, and sometimes satisfactory when teachers do not ask enough of them.
- The way in which the school teaches reading through letters and sounds (phonics) is very effective. It gives younger pupils the confidence to read without help and allows them to develop a genuine enjoyment of books. However, opportunities for pupils to apply reading skills in different subjects are not always strongly developed.
- Writing assessment books give valuable information about pupils' progress over time. In many lessons, writing is a very important part of learning. There is good evidence of writing being used effectively in different subjects, such as Year 5 writing about their Black Country Museum visit. The extent to which writing skills are developed in different subjects is variable.
- The school is outstandingly successful at narrowing the gap in attainment between the least able pupils and the rest. There are many examples of pupils supported by pupil premium funding making exceptional progress. Help is targeted with pinpoint accuracy at pupils in the most need. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good, and often excellent progress, because they receive highly effective individual help.

The quality of teaching is good

- Better teaching has been at the heart of the school's improvement.
- Classrooms are lively, exciting places where pupils want to learn and succeed. Activities are interesting and teachers are very careful to ensure they share the purpose of the lesson and their expectations with pupils.
- Most teachers have high expectations. In the best lessons, teachers and other adults move learning along at an impressively rapid pace and their sense of urgency motivates pupils to learn well in a short space of time.
- Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is consistently good. Children do well because they receive high-quality individual attention. Indoor and outdoor areas are attractive places where learning is fun. Staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, there are many examples of outstanding practice but also a few lessons where teaching requires improvement. In such lessons, more-able pupils do not always make

as much progress as they should. This is partly because the pace of learning is not crisp enough, and partly because some teachers do not use day-to-day assessment to move them on to harder work quickly enough.

- Reading is taught well. Standards are improving because the school develops pupils' understanding of letters and sounds right from the start. Younger readers in Years 1 and 2 have greater confidence to work out and understand unfamiliar words.
- The school uses its extra funding to support pupils at risk of not doing well very effectively. Teaching in small 'booster classes' is always of high quality. Pupils of all abilities benefit from working in smaller groups for their literacy and numeracy work. Progress speeds up because teachers and other adults have more time to give individual help.
- Teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is outstanding because work is matched very accurately to the needs of individual pupils.
- The quality of marking is variable. Some teachers mark work very well and pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve. A few teachers do not always use marking to guide pupils, particularly those who are more able, to the next steps in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' very positive attitudes and excellent behaviour contribute greatly to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They show keenness, enthusiasm and a secure ability to work together in lessons and around school. These skills were observed many times during the inspection.
- The headteacher and staff have successfully created a vibrant, welcoming school where pupils do well. Everything that the school does is aimed at improving pupils' future prospects.
- Adults manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well. There is a very strong sense of community, where adults and pupils get along well together and have much mutual respect for each other.
- Pupils and families greatly value the help they receive. Parents and carers are offered an impressive range of adult learning opportunities. For pupils, the nurture group is an outstanding example of how well the school integrates pupils who are at risk of not doing well into school life.
- In discussion, pupils are immensely proud of their school and its new building. They love school and take advantage of the many opportunities on offer to talk about their work and experiences with families at home. Homework shared with families has a very important place in pupils' learning.
- The uptake on a thriving 'Early Birds' breakfast club is very high. Lunch in the dining room is also a very special social occasion. Good manners are expected at all times.
- Any rare incidents of bullying and racism are recorded carefully by the school. Swift action is taken to ensure that there is no recurrence, and the school has been highly successful in dramatically reducing incidents of this kind.
- Pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of how to stay safe, and say they feel very safe in school. Safeguarding procedures are very robust. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a

good understanding of how to avoid the dangers posed when using computers and the internet.

- Attendance is currently above average. This is a real success story. Efforts to reduce the number of pupils who are regularly absent have been very effective, although the school is still working with families of a small number of pupils who are absent from school too often.

The leadership and management are good

- The tenacity of the headteacher, combined with strong effective support from the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, has created a culture of rapid, sustained improvement and a good climate for learning.
- The checks carried out by senior leaders on the quality of teaching give an accurate view of its good quality. Meticulous systems for tracking the learning and progress of individual pupils have also contributed to a rise in the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good. However, the school is aware that these systems do not always focus enough on the impact of teaching on the learning of specific groups, particularly the more-able pupils.
- Self-evaluation is very accurate. Areas for improvement are clearly identified and teachers are very accountable for the standards pupils achieve.
- Parents and carers hold the school, and especially its headteacher, in high regard. Initiatives to involve the wider community, including links with the on-site children's centre and other schools at home and abroad, are very impressive.
- The school values every pupil as an individual. It is highly successful in removing barriers to learning so that all pupils, but particularly those at risk of not doing well, have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The curriculum provides rich, memorable experiences that contribute greatly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have access to a wide range of cultural activities and have a very good understanding about cultures and faiths in Britain and the wider world.
- The local authority has provided effective support, particularly in helping the school to raise attainment and improve pupils' behaviour. In recent years, this support has been reduced, as the school has shown good capacity to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - plays an effective role in school improvement, thanks to an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
 - is actively supported by regular meetings between governors, subject coordinators and other middle managers in order to monitor the work of the school
 - monitors areas such as safeguarding well
 - keeps a close watch on how well funding, particularly pupil premium funding, is spent
 - is in the process of gaining better first-hand evidence of the impact of initiatives on pupils' learning.

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	103823
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	400661

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	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Benson
Headteacher	Ruth Wylie
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2010
Telephone number	01384 818515
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