

Hargate Primary School

Hargate Lane, West Bromwich, B71 1PG

Inspection dates

2–3 October 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.

- Almost all pupils make good or better progress in most subjects because of good teaching.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have improved the teaching of reading, mathematics and writing by setting targets for teachers and checking they are doing the right things.
- Teaching of the oldest pupils is particularly strong. These teachers are skilled at using questioning to encourage pupils to think and work things out for themselves.
- The school has used additional government funding well to increase the number of pupils achieving at or above the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well supported through the wealth of interesting topics they study and the many visits and clubs available.
- Pupils feel safe. They behave well, and often better in lessons. Pupils and staff respect and value each other. One pupil said, 'I like the way they treat us. It shows they really want us to do well.'

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons work is not always set at the right level of difficulty for every pupil.
- A few teachers do not use questioning effectively to help pupils work things out for themselves.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including some who are deaf, also progress well but not always as rapidly as the other pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which seven were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, they made a number of short visits to other lessons, looked at pupils' work and heard them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors, local authority advisers and the school's staff, including senior leaders.
- Although there were very few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), inspectors considered the school's recent survey of parents' views and analysed questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including: the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement; records relating to behaviour and attendance; the school's safeguarding documentation; and the data that the school keeps on pupils' current progress and achievement.

Inspection team

Susan Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lucy Maughan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- There are more girls than boys.
- A very high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding received by the school.
- The proportion known to speak English as an additional language has increased significantly since the last inspection and is very high.
- Over half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is much higher than in most primary schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at 'school action' level is high. The proportion supported at 'school action plus' or through a statement of special educational needs is higher than in other schools nationally.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This 'focused resourced' provision is for deaf pupils and is managed by the local authority. There are seven pupils currently on the school roll, so their progress was evaluated during this inspection.
- The school meets the current government floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a higher proportion is outstanding, particularly in Key Stage 1, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers and learning support staff use questioning effectively to challenge pupils to think and to work things out for themselves
 - key vocabulary, phrases and ideas are written down more in lessons and used to model writing and spelling conventions effectively
 - tasks set for pupils are carefully linked to their levels and next steps, including targets within their individual education plans where they have these.
- Improve the consistency of progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those who are deaf, by:
 - ensuring all staff who work with such pupils have had appropriate training and know how to support their progress to next steps and their independent learning
 - working with the local authority to develop and monitor the quality of the focused resourced provision for deaf pupils that clarifies roles, responsibilities and staffing levels, including those who will lead this provision
 - implementing the development plan for the focused resourced provision
 - ensuring sufficient time is available from qualified teachers of the deaf to advise school staff, and to enable pupils to improve their language and communication levels more rapidly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well overall in all groups, regardless of ability or background, although there is more individual variability in the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Progress is improving rapidly because of a more rigorous approach to teaching mathematics and English, and the carefully planned support for literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Standards are rising and are broadly average by Year 6, despite children's low and often very low starting points in the nursery. The gap closes steadily as pupils progress through the school, and new whole-school approaches to reading, writing and mathematics are making this happen even more quickly.
- A high proportion of pupils in Key Stage 1 are making more than the expected progress in their work and are on track to achieve closer to nationally expected levels than predicted by the end of this year.
- The new approaches to reading and writing are strengthening the range of skills pupils have to work out meaning in their reading and to spell words. Younger pupils have a real go at sounding out words when reading.
- Although the percentage who achieved the expected level on the phonics (the sounds that letters make) test was low last year, these pupils have made rapid progress since. Older pupils have a good range of ways in which they work out the meaning of difficult texts, because they are given systematic support to develop them.
- Good support for personal development and for speaking and listening skills enables pupils who speak English as an additional language to make rapid gains in these areas. This lays firm foundations for their other work, including their reading and writing skills.
- Additional funding has been used well to provide extra teachers for one-to-one sessions and the groupings for literacy and mathematics in Years 5 and 6, and new approaches to phonics in Key Stage 1. This is already raising standards so that pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve in line with their peers. Occasionally there is a mismatch between the task the pupil has to do and their current level, for example in reading, and this slows their progress in that lesson.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress overall. Some occasionally do even better, but some pupils who are deaf progress more slowly in developing their language and communication skills. The local authority specialist teachers have limited time to train other staff or reorganise provision to ensure that this happens more rapidly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. It is sometimes outstanding in Key Stage 2, where the teachers and support staff use questioning effectively to make pupils think about what they are learning, and create many opportunities to work on tasks together.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well because staff have received good-quality training and understand the approach the school uses. Occasionally a mismatch between pupils' ability and the whole-class task means work is too easy or too hard for some pupils, and the teacher does not always respond quickly enough by adapting the work.
- Teachers are skilled at gaining pupils' interest and managing their behaviour. Excellent relationships ensure that pupils have high expectations of what they can achieve and take great care with the tasks they are set.

- The additional adults in the classroom are generally used well. The majority of support staff are skilled at checking on pupils' understanding and giving them just the right amount of help. Occasionally disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, particularly those who are deaf, are given too much help when support staff tell them answers too quickly or make the task too easy.
- Teachers are skilled at getting pupils to suggest ideas or new words for what they are doing. Opportunities are lost in some classrooms for spelling and reading skills to be reinforced because these ideas and words are not written down for all to see.
- Most teachers take good account of pupils' targets, including any in their individual education plans, and this supports pupils' learning well. Occasionally the work pupils are given to do does not take sufficient account of these targets.
- Homework and marking are used well to help pupils to understand how they can achieve even more. Pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next level in their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well. Their behaviour in lessons is sometimes excellent, although occasionally younger pupils' enthusiasm leads to high noise levels.
- Children settle quickly in the Nursery and Reception classes because of the clear routines established and high expectations of their teachers.
- Children in the Nursery quickly form trusting relationships with staff. They achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development. They behave well, work well together and try hard to do things by themselves because staff nurture these skills carefully.
- Pupils, including those who are deaf, say that bullying never happens because 'we all get on'. A strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development in many lessons supports this, as pupils are encouraged to think about the needs of others alongside their own.
- Pupils understand all the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. Older pupils are clear about what they should do if they encounter any; younger children and those who are deaf are aware of 'stranger danger' and the importance of moving safely around the school.
- Attendance is average but has improved considerably because of the school's work with parents and the new reward systems. Pupils are keen to receive a 'gold card', but also say they don't want to miss school because lessons are so interesting.
- The school provides a very safe environment, but when accidents or incidents do occur it records and reflects on these meticulously.
- Parents agree that the school keeps their children safe and that behaviour is good.

The leadership and management are good

- All leaders and managers are determined to improve the school to the highest level. They know exactly what needs to be done because they gather detailed information on how well pupils are performing.
- Leaders set challenging targets for both pupils and staff, and check regularly on how well everyone is doing towards them. The progress is discussed regularly in meetings with teachers, and those whose might be slowing are given extra help.
- The new topic-based approach to many subjects enthuses pupils and gives them many opportunities to practise their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. It also supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Good leadership of mathematics and literacy has ensured the new approaches are raising standards.

- Concern for pupils' well-being and safety underpins everything the school does, and policies and procedures are rigorously applied. Good work with partner agencies supports those pupils at risk of not doing as well as their classmates, helping to ensure equal opportunities for all.
- The local authority has provided good support to help the school improve rapidly. However, although the school works hard to provide for its deaf pupils and is ambitious for them, unclear roles and responsibilities regarding staffing and leadership of the resourced provision restrict the school's ability to improve these pupils' progress, particularly in specialist areas such as their language skills.
- The school and a part-time local authority teacher of the deaf have reviewed provision and have devised an appropriate development plan. There has been no agreement with the local authority as to timelines, financial arrangements or how it will be implemented.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is effective; governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are very involved in the school
 - checks regularly on how well pupil and staff performance is improving, and holds the leadership team to account for this well
 - is careful in checking that money and resources, including any additional funding the school receives to support the learning of those who are in danger of not achieving well, are used effectively.

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	103905
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	400669

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	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Sanders
Headteacher	Andrew Orgill
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2009
Telephone number	0121 553 4178
Fax number	0121 553 4178
Email address	headteacher@hargate.sandwell.sch.uk

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