

Gorse Hill Community Primary School

Hollymount Road, Worcester, WR4 9SG

Inspection dates 12–13 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.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They quickly start to make good progress and continue to achieve well throughout the school. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is close to average.
- Teaching is usually good and there are some examples of outstanding teaching.
- Nearly all pupils behave well. Teachers manage behaviour effectively so that low-level disruption in lessons and anti-social behaviour around school are uncommon.
- Pupils feel safe and well-supported by the school staff. Attendance has risen significantly over recent years and is now average.
- The curriculum is planned well, provides pupils with a wide range of experiences and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The headteacher's relentless determination to improve all aspects of the school, coupled with support from other leaders and the governing body, are the main reasons why pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have improved significantly since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attainment in writing is lower than reading and mathematics, mainly because few exceed expected levels for their age.
- In some writing lessons, the work given to the more-able pupils is too easy and does not promote best progress.
- In a few lessons, teachers lack the subject knowledge to enable them to break down the learning into stages and guide pupils through small learning steps.
- The assessment of pupils' progress in subjects other than mathematics and English is not fully developed.
- Not all leaders have fully developed their skills of monitoring, evaluating and improving the work of the school through lesson observation and rigorous analysis of pupil progress information.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed guided reading sessions, heard pupils reading and observed 22 lessons. Many of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, a representative of the local authority and the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspectors looked at the school's plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, the school's monitoring information, school policies and governing body documentation.
- There were no responses to Parent View at the time of the inspection, but informal discussions were held with some parents and carers. Their views were taken into account by inspectors.

Inspection team

Roy Bowers, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Andy George

Additional inspector

Enid Korn

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average sized primary school.
- Just over half of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is considerably more than most other schools. The pupil premium provides additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of those learning English as an additional language are average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is well above average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average. The needs of all these pupils are mainly related to moderate learning difficulties including speech, language and communication difficulties, and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in writing by ensuring that, in all lessons, teachers plan tasks that maximise progress and enable the more-able to exceed the expected levels for their age.
- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that the teachers have sufficient subject knowledge to enable them to break down the learning into stages and guide pupils through small learning steps.
- Improve the monitoring of pupils' achievement by implementing a system to track the attainment and progress of pupils in all subjects.
- Ensure that all leaders fully develop the skills of monitoring, evaluating and improving the work of the school through lesson observation and rigorous analysis of pupil progress information.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All groups of pupils make good progress, but because of their low starting points on entry into the nursery class, their attainment when they start Year 1 is below that normally expected of 5-year-olds. Strong pastoral support in the Nursery and Reception classes ensure that children's social and emotional development is outstanding.
- The slight decline in pupils' attainment over recent years at the end of Key Stage 1 has been halted and all groups of pupils are now making good progress. This is the result of better teaching and improved support for those pupils identified as not making the expected progress. Consequently, although pupils' attainment remains somewhat below average by the end of Year 2, it is rising steadily and more pupils are exceeding the levels expected for their age.
- Over the last two years, pupils' progress throughout Key Stage 2 has improved considerably. As a result, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has risen sharply and is now very close to average in reading and mathematics. However, pupils' attainment is just below average in writing, mainly because too few pupils exceed the level expected for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and some read widely. They say that they enjoy reading in school. Many read at home and older pupils in particular make good use of the local library.
- Pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium make good progress. This funding is used effectively to provide a range of support such as additional staff, attendance at after-school clubs and specialist literacy and numeracy resources.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those supported at school action and school action plus, and those pupils who are learning English as an additional language also make good progress because of the wide range of specialist provision and the tightly focused support in lessons and in intervention groups.

The quality of teaching is good

- New staff appointments and staff training have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching. It is now consistently good and in a few mathematics and reading lessons teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers and support staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour. In lessons and around school, staff treat pupils with respect and courtesy. These strong relationships help create a very positive climate for learning, which ensures that pupils are motivated and engaged well.
- In mathematics and reading lessons, pupils of all levels of attainment are usually challenged well, so that their knowledge and skills are extended and their understanding deepened. However, in some writing lessons, the work given to the more-able pupils is not sufficiently demanding to take them beyond the expected levels for their age.
- In lessons where pupils make most progress, teachers have the subject knowledge to enable them to break down the learning into stages and then guide pupils through small learning steps. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, one group of pupils was carefully guided from a basic understanding of counting up to ten to identifying the pairs of numbers which add up to ten. However, not all teachers have this level of subject-specific expertise and this is the

main reason why a small number of lessons are not good and a higher proportion of lessons are not outstanding.

- Skilled teaching assistants support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs very effectively in lessons. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language often receive good quality specialist support to enable them to overcome their language barriers to learning.
- Teaching supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For instance, in one English lesson, issues relating to anger were discussed sensibly by the pupils. In another lesson, pupils looked at the habitats of the animals that lived in the school grounds and were careful not to destroy them or cause harm.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of pupils behave well. Nearly all of the pupils and parents and carers who spoke to the inspectors believe that behaviour is very good and has improved, especially over the past year. Pupils say that they like the rewards they get for good behaviour, especially the use of the visiting climbing wall. Pupils take great pride in moving their photographs up the classroom 'rocket' when they have behaved well.
- The proactive and caring nature of the school has resulted in barriers to learning being overcome for pupils who find school life difficult. For example, the small nurture class makes an effective contribution to pupils' behaviour and achievement. Individual support for pupils' pastoral and academic needs help pupils learn well, and understand and control their emotional responses.
- The caring ethos of the school is a strong feature and is promoted effectively through the respectful relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are friendly, care for each other well and are respectful and courteous to others. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well with each other.
- Visits to a variety of places of religious worship and discussions in lessons and assemblies about cultural similarities and differences help ensure that there is no discrimination and good relationships are fostered. Pupils' good attitudes to learning are shown through the way they readily answer the teachers' questions and quickly settle down to their work.
- Pupils say they feel safe but that very occasionally bullying occurs. Pupils know who to approach if they have a problem and say that the school deals effectively with bullying when told about it. Through the school's personal and social development programme pupils are made aware of make types of bullying such as emotional-bullying, cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying.
- Pupils' attendance was an area recommended for improvement at the last inspection. The appointment of a home-school liaison teacher to work with parents and carers, and more enjoyable experiences at school that make pupils want to attend, have led to an improvement in attendance. Attendance is now average and pupils arrive on time.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. High expectations are communicated and shared by all staff and there is a very strong sense of teamwork. Effective procedures to manage teachers' performance and good-quality, on-going training have improved teaching from satisfactory to good.

- All leaders have done much to improve behaviour and remove barriers to learning for the most challenging pupils. They have helped create a safe and caring environment in which pupils are nurtured very well and have instigated early intervention programmes to boost the achievement of identified pupils.
- Most leaders are involved in aspects of school self-evaluation and improvement. However, some leaders still do not have the necessary skills to monitor trends in pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance, or to evaluate pupils' learning in lessons.
- Pupil progress meetings hold teachers to account rigorously for pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. In these subjects, self-evaluation is robust and accurate and the outcomes are used well to raise standards of achievement and to tackle areas of weakness. In other subjects, arrangements for assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress do not yet have such a positive impact because they are not fully developed.
- The curriculum is enriched well by a wide variety after-school clubs, visits out of school and residential experiences. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is nurtured effectively through music, French, arts, visits to different places of religious worship and opportunities for self-reflection and discovery. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit greatly from the frequent use of the school's own 'forest' area. Pupils' social and moral development is promoted regularly through opportunities to talk to each other about their learning and through clearly defined boundaries of what is right or wrong.
- The local authority's support for the school over recent years has been very effective and proportionate to need. As leadership and management has strengthened and pupils' achievement has improved, the local authority has correctly ensured that leaders take increasing responsibility for all aspects of school self-evaluation and improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is effective, because the governing body fulfils its duties well and, with the guidance of an external adviser, is rigorous in setting and reviewing the headteacher's management objectives
 - is informed by the regular analysis of samples of individual pupils' progress data and discussions with senior leaders about pupils who are not on course to achieve their targets
 - allocates funding conscientiously to ensure that the school's leaders are challenged and supported to raise pupils' achievement.

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	116752
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	401619

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	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phil Clayton
Headteacher	Vivienne Cranton
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2010
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