

Blowers Green Primary School

Blowers Green Road, Dudley, DY2 8UZ

Inspection dates 31 October–1 November 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 make good progress throughout the school. Standards are rising strongly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Teachers continually question pupils to find out what they already know and they use the information to help the pupils learn well.
- Pupils are immensely proud of the school. Their extremely positive attitudes support their good learning.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct are excellent. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Excellent partnership with parents has raised expectations and aspirations for their children's achievement.
- Clear and determined leadership from the headteacher, in close partnership with governors and the whole staff team, has resulted in a school that continues to improve strongly the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Writing standards remain below reading and mathematics because more able pupils and those known to be eligible for free school meals do less well in this subject. Pupils' handwriting, spelling, punctuation, grammar and writing content are not always good enough.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because teachers ask pupils to do work that is sometimes too easy or too difficult. They do not always then make changes quickly enough when they find that pupils are not learning as fast as they could.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by ten teachers. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and heard some pupils read.
- The inspectors met with small groups of pupils to talk about their learning and gather their views of the school. Inspectors also met with staff, and with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at past and current information about pupils' progress, pupils' writing, mathematics and topic books, pupils' work on display, and documents relating to behaviour, safeguarding, monitoring, and school improvement planning.
- The inspectors talked to parents informally at the start of the day and took into account nine responses shown in the online questionnaire (Parent View), parent forum minutes and the school's recent parent survey.

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mary Le Breuilly

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Blowers Green Primary is an average-sized school.
- The majority of pupils are from Pakistani backgrounds, with White British being the next largest group. The remainder of pupils are from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported through school action plus and with a statement is above average, mostly for moderate learning difficulties and speech, language and communication needs.
- An above-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- There is a breakfast club at the school managed by the governing body. This was visited as part of this inspection and is included in this report.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expected standard for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Speed up learning and progress in writing, especially for more able writers and those known to be eligible for free school meals, by ensuring that:
 - pupils improve their handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar when they write in English lessons and in other subjects to help them write down their ideas quickly and accurately
 - pupils think for themselves the words they plan to use when writing down their ideas.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by ensuring that all teachers use information from assessments to:
 - plan tasks and activities that always provide the right level of challenge and support for all pupils in lessons
 - make changes to tasks and activities if teachers find that they are not supporting every pupil's learning and progress as well as they have planned.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception. Bilingual support helps them to become confident talkers quickly, and a varied range of activities helps them develop curiosity and an enthusiasm for learning. For the last two years, children have reached average levels in all areas of learning despite starting Nursery with knowledge and skills below the levels expected for their age. Before that, few pupils reached average levels.
- Good progress continues across the school. Reading and mathematics have improved particularly well. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is now average. From previously below average levels at the end of Year 2, pupils have reached at least average levels at the end of Year 6 for the last three years. A good number reached above-average levels last year.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. Nearly all pupils who have remained at the school throughout their schooling reach average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy reading. In Reception and Years 1 and 2, pupils use their good knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds that they make to work out unfamiliar words for themselves. Older pupils work with teachers to develop their vocabulary and good comprehension skills. They are confident to use books and the internet to find information for their topics.
- Pakistani pupils achieve as well as all pupils across the country. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress and are rapidly closing the gap with other pupils across the country in reading and mathematics. More able pupils and those eligible for free school meals achieve less well in writing than they do in reading and mathematics.
- Writing is improving and pupils reached average levels last year at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 from previously below-average starting points. The strong emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary and language throughout the school, such as through role-play, drama and talking stories, is helping pupils' writing to make sense and be written in a way that interests the reader. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals still lack the vocabulary and language to do this without help from adults, particularly in the younger classes. Pupils are diligent in presenting their work carefully but poor handwriting skills prevent some from writing quickly and neatly.
- Pupils talk knowledgeably about their targets and how they use the writing toolkit introduced last year to check their 'SPAG' (spelling, punctuation and grammar) before handing in a finished piece of writing. Weaker 'SPAG' skills of some older more able pupils hinder the flow of ideas as pupils concentrate on skills rather than content when writing. As a result, they do not always write enough and of a high enough quality to reach above-average levels.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Lessons promote pupils' excellent enthusiasm for learning, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In history, pupils consider how people feel during certain events and times; in art, how artists depict nature; in religious education, how we should treat one another; and in personal, social and health education, how to keep themselves and others safe.

- Teachers and teaching assistants ask questions that help pupils to think carefully about what they are learning and why, and which help them to complete tasks independently on most occasions. Learning targets and teachers' clear feedback, in lessons and comments on work, help pupils understand what they have done well and how to improve.
- The reading, writing and mathematics toolkits introduced this year are helping pupils to check for themselves against clear 'I can' statements that they are setting out their work neatly, are including certain words and phrases in their writing and are using a correct method to work out problems in mathematics. The checking of handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar is included but is not yet making a big enough difference to more able writers because the use of these skills is not a natural part of every pupil's writing habits.
- At the end of every day, teachers check pupils' work carefully. They use the information well to plan learning for the next lesson that builds on what pupils can do, and to plan extra help for those who have had difficulties. Teachers and teaching assistants give good support to those groups they work with, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. In particular, they help pupils to rehearse their ideas before putting pen to paper. Adults introduce new words and phrases and explain their meaning. However, they do not always then encourage pupils to use them independently in their writing.
- Occasionally, tasks are not challenging enough for more able pupils and so they find them too easy. Teachers do not always adjust the task or activity quickly enough when they find that those pupils working independently are not learning fast enough. This includes when children in the Nursery and Reception class are leading their own play and learning.
- 'Inspire workshops' help parents to support their children's learning at home.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and extremely positive relationships ensure that the school is a welcoming place for all. Playtimes are friendly times, with everyone involved in some kind of game or activity. Pupils enjoy the varied range of activities and clubs organised at lunchtimes and value being able to stay indoors if they choose to read or continue with their work. This they do sensibly.
- Pupils talk positively about behaviour in school and know the school's ten stages for managing behaviour. They are pleased that no-one usually 'gets beyond number three at most'. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what bullying is and are confident that, should it occur, it will be dealt with promptly and successfully.
- Pupils' manners and conduct are exemplary. They hold doors open for each other and 'please' and 'thank you' are commonly heard. Pupils are extremely sensible during the roof renovations that are currently underway, being careful to keep to the designated paths and to avoid the areas where work is taking place.
- Extremely positive attitudes support learning highly effectively in lessons and ensure that the school's improved accommodation is looked after well. When asked who kept the resources tidy, pupils answered, 'We all do. It's everyone's responsibility.'
- The school takes pupils' views seriously and listens to them carefully before making decisions about improvement. Pupils have good opportunity to make their views known through school

and class council meetings, and meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher over lunch. Pupils are fully involved in checking the school's safety, adding any suggestions or concerns about safety in a book with requests for the headteacher and governors to take action.

- Attendance is improving and is now average due to the positive support from parents for the school's drive to reduce extended holidays abroad.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's determined and methodical approach to school improvement in close partnership with the effective support from the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, has created good and sustained improvement and a positive climate for learning. School improvement has involved the whole staff team. As a result, everyone is proud to be part of the school. Staff take personal pride and responsibility for their work. In recognition of its outstanding partnership with parents, the school has received the Leading Parent Partnership Award for the second time.
- A rigorous cycle of monitoring provides an accurate view of the school's performance and results in planned improvements that are relevant and demanding. The strong link between targets for the school's improvement, teachers' performance, pupils' progress and staff pay holds everyone accountable and rewards success.
- Teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. A number of staff have good subject and teaching expertise which is shared on a regular basis with colleagues so that everyone is skilled to teach all subjects. The planning of a rich and interesting curriculum that enables pupils to practise and apply skills in all subjects is just one example of this.
- The school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination through its day-to-day dealings with people. All pupils have chance to take part in school events and activities and have equal access to good teaching. 'We're all equal,' one pupil commented when talking about the different religions and ethnic groups in school. Parents are fully supportive of the school's work, recognising that some pupils need more support than others to help them succeed.
- The use of pupil premium funding to enrich the curriculum through visits and visitors has raised pupils' aspirations and helped accelerate learning through first-hand experiences. As a result, pupils' reading has improved through reading about and researching different topics. Some pupils still do not have the breadth of vocabulary required to help them reach the same standards in writing.
- The local authority provides good support to the school. The School Improvement Partner regularly attends governing body meetings to help governors to evaluate whether the school is improving as fast as it should and could. Subsequent action planning identifies clear areas for improvement and how governors will know if these are being successful.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have high expectations and play a full role in school improvement. They visit the school regularly to ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met and to listen to pupils' and parents' views about the school to involve them fully in decision making. Governors check closely that planned spending is making the expected difference to pupils' learning and progress, especially in reading and for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium funding. . They do not yet check writing with the same rigour. The breakfast club is managed well and ensures that pupils have a positive start

to the day.

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	103771
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	404901

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	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Raggett
Headteacher	Surinder Sehmbi
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2010
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