

Great Malvern Primary School

Pickersleigh Road, Malvern, WR14 2BY

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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.

- The school's leaders and the governing body have a very clear vision for improving pupils' education, and have already made marked improvements by giving the staff high-quality training.
- Pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds make good progress in English, especially reading, and mathematics in all year groups because of good teaching.
- Teachers typically expect pupils to work hard in lessons, and ask them detailed questions to extend their skills in helping them to find answers for themselves.
- Pupils behave well. Attendance has risen and is now above average. Pupils feel safe and secure at school.
- Pupils learn through a wide range of interesting and exciting activities, both indoors and outdoors, that also promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well.
- Parents are pleased with the school and rightly say their children achieve well.
- Through careful planning and thorough checking, the governors make sure that the money available to the school benefits all groups of children.
- The school is well placed to continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in writing, though good, is not as strong as in reading and not all pupils write every day.
- Some governors are new to their role and are not yet fully confident in holding the senior leaders to account for their decisions.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, staff, groups of pupils and governors.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of evidence including pupils' books, teachers' planning, the school's improvement plan, records of pupils' progress and safeguarding documentation.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons, several jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors listened to several groups of pupils read.
- The inspectors also observed senior leaders reporting back to teachers on the quality of learning and pupils' achievement in lessons.
- Several parents were met informally at the start of the school day and inspectors took into account 12 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as two letters from parents.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steven Cartlidge

Additional Inspector

Jacqueline Hibbert

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average primary school.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school converted to an academy in September 2011. The overall effectiveness of predecessor school, which had the same name, was judged to be satisfactory when it was last inspected in March 2011. The school is currently working in partnership with three other local academies.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing to at least the levels reached in reading by:
 - giving pupils lots of opportunities to write every day
 - making sure pupils regularly write in all subjects, not just English
 - improving the marking of writing in all subjects so that pupils always know how to improve it.
- Develop the role played by new members of the governing body in improving the school, by providing training so that they are better able to ask searching questions of senior leaders about the school's performance and their decisions.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils leave at the end of Year 6 with broadly average standards. From low, and often very low, starting points this represents good achievement in writing and mathematics, and particularly good achievement in reading.
- Pupils make the best progress in reading. A strong focus on learning to read ensures that from their time in the nursery, children learn about phonics (the link between letters and sounds) and even the very youngest children can recognise their own letter name and sound. In their project on dinosaurs, many children showed that they knew the names of their chosen dinosaur and could recognise its letter sound. Throughout Reception and Years 1 and 2 children continue to build on this good start, showing a love of stories and books.
- Progress in writing is not quite as strong. Pupils' books show that they do not all have opportunities to write every day, and some do too little writing in subjects other than English.
- Most pupils in each year group now make good progress, because of the effective action the school has taken to strengthen teaching in the past three years. Consistently good teaching engages pupils in exciting learning so that they work hard to achieve their goals. The pace of learning accelerates in Years 5 and 6, where outstanding teaching ensures that they work at a very fast pace, preparing them well for their future lives.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium, and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is equally good. These pupils benefit from good support, including extra help and guidance, to ensure that they stay focused and keep up with their classmates. The daily free breakfast club attracts high numbers of pupils, who enjoy their toast and are prepared well for their learning in the day ahead.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well in music. They all have the opportunity to learn to play an instrument in Year 4 and the school choir, of over a hundred boys and girls, regularly sings with local male voice choirs and performs on stage.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is at least good across the school, and some is outstanding. This is the key reason why, despite their low starting points, pupils are now reaching the average standard expected by the time they leave at the end of Year 6.
- Teachers are skilled at questioning and extending pupils' knowledge. They plan and manage lessons well, ensuring that their pupils make the best possible use of time.
- Pupils benefit from exciting tasks that encourage them to learn. A wide range of practical activities means that pupils are given work that interests them and builds their confidence. For instance, Year 4 pupils made good progress in solving mathematical problems because of the individual resources that were provided. Each pupil had access to their own number lines, hundred squares and data sheets so that they could work out answers for themselves.
- The highly demanding activities in Years 5 and 6 encourage pupils to work at a fast pace. This was evident in literacy where well-prepared material, carefully adapted for pupils' differing ability

levels, extended all pupils' use of adjectives in their writing. The more-able pupils were given well-planned additional tasks to extend their learning even further.

- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but their comments do not always help pupils to improve their work or understand the next steps they need to take in learning.
- Funding through the pupil premium has enabled the school to increase the number of additional adults who support pupils in lessons. The impact of this initiative was evident in literacy, when a group of pupils with additional needs made good progress in developed their phonic knowledge because a specialist teacher helped them to break down words into small sections so that they could spell and write for themselves. This sort of support is helping to narrow the gap between these pupils' attainment and the national average.
- Teachers work closely with families, providing good information about pupils' achievements and their next steps on a regular basis. Parents are involved in many of the school's additional activities and are welcomed warmly.
- Good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, often from teaching assistants, helps to make sure that these pupils keep pace with other pupils in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in and around school, including in lessons and at playtimes and lunchtimes, is good. It has improved because leaders have successfully raised expectations and have succeeded in tackling a history of poor attendance. The current clear focus on managing behaviour has reduced exclusions and pupils are now attending regularly and arriving on time. The thorough work done on raising attendance has ensured that it is now above average.
- Pupils are really proud of their school and were anxious to show the inspectors their animals. The introduction of an animal, such as a guinea pig, rabbit or bearded dragon, to every class has resulted in pupils developing a good understanding of responsibility and has improved classroom behaviour. They are very proud of their animals and take turns to keep them clean and fed, coming into school at weekends to do so.
- The very high attendance at after-school clubs shows that pupils are keen and eager to try new things, have positive attitudes and enjoy school. They know how to keep themselves healthy and are prepared to push themselves physically in physical education lessons. Year 3 pupils showed this as they worked hard to extend themselves when practising new stretching activities.
- Instances of all kinds of bullying and disruptive behaviour are very rare. If they do occur, pupils and parents say that staff deal with them effectively.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know about unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe. Break times and lunchtimes are well supervised and any incidents are recorded and monitored. Pupils enjoy the exciting outdoor area, where they can play ball games, relax in quiet areas and learn in 'forest school' activities as well as looking after the chickens.
- Pupils are polite and helpful to visitors, get on well together and are kind to others, regardless of age, race and ability. They react well to the school's consistent approach to making sure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs join in fully with all activities.

- The school council has been instrumental in helping to improve the outdoor area. Its members have not yet met with the councils from the partner schools to share and extend practice.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have improved the quality of teaching and learning and developed an exciting environment in which pupils thrive and feel valued. They have a very strong partnership with parents, who are pleased with all that the school does.
- Leaders have given the school a good capacity for further improvement by giving staff high levels of training and introducing many initiatives to provide memorable experiences for pupils. For example, annual residential visits for pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 are helping to build their confidence and a good sense of community.
- The way subjects are taught helps pupils to take responsibility, learn about the world around them and develop good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Reception children, for example, were observed eagerly making 'shoes' from different junk resources. This was because the headteacher recently brought them a real pair of shoes from Tanzania made out of old car tyres. Children's own models were wearable and they were able to explain why people in that country need to make their own shoes.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to develop their numeracy skills, particularly in subjects such as science and design and technology, but relatively few planned opportunities to improve their writing in different subjects.
- Leaders at all levels are fully involved in improving teaching and raising standards. Good use of the national 'Teachers Standards' demonstrates their commitment to improving teaching so that staff can develop their skills and seek promotion. Leaders are working closely with their partner schools to improve their practice further.
- The senior leaders regularly check staff performance and are good role models in making sure that teaching and learning continue to improve. Staff are clear about what is expected of them.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is supportive and helpful to leaders and staff. Governors promote a welcoming atmosphere in which all pupils feel valued and do well. Several members of the governing body are relatively new to their academy roles. They are beginning to evaluate the school's strengths and areas for improvement and receive regular updates from leaders, but do not all yet ask leaders searching enough questions about their decisions. The school is rightly planning to improve their skills through increased training. The more experienced governors know how well pupils are doing and regularly check the performance of teachers and pupils. The Chair of the Governing Body visits regularly and takes an active part in the school's day-to-day life. Governors understand the importance of linking staff pay to performance. They have a good grasp of the school budget and allocate sufficient funding to regular high-quality training to ensure teaching continues to improve. They manage the finances well and use the additional money such as the pupil premium well, for example funding extra staffing and experiences, for eligible pupils. The governors make sure that safeguarding practices and procedures fully meet current national requirements.

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	136984
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	406653

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Philotts
Headteacher	Paul Jackson-Read
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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