

Old Park Primary School

Brunel Road, Malinslee, Telford, TF3 2BF

Inspection dates 12–13 December 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.

- Pupils make good progress from what are often very low starting points.
- Achievement has rapidly improved over the past three years. Standards are average by the time pupils leave in Year 6.
- Teaching is good. Teachers make it clear to pupils what they need to learn and they ask searching questions. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils show respect to adults and listen well to each other. The relationships between staff and pupils are caring.
- Pupils behave well, enjoy school and say they feel safe.
- Pupils find that things they do in school are stimulating. Learning is made exciting and varied by working with, for example, artists, dancers and theatre companies.
- The headteacher shares with her staff a very clear view of what they need to do to make the school more successful. They have shown that they can continue to make the school even better for its pupils.
- The governing body knows about the day-to-day life of the school. They give strong support and ask helpful questions to the school's leadership.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some pupils are not always clear what they need to do to improve.
- Some do not yet get enough opportunities to work things out for themselves.
- Work is at times quite easy, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- A few pupils in Key Stage 1 have not made a good enough start in their reading.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons of which 5 were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team looked at pupils’ work in their books and listened to them read.
- There were meetings with groups of pupils, senior leaders and representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and talked to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the 32 responses to a staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team examined the school’s own data on pupils’ current progress; planning and monitoring documentation; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Richard Boswell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Barkway

Additional Inspector

David Bowles

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Old Park is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are identified as disabled or who have special educational needs is higher than national levels for those supported by school action and significantly higher than national levels for those at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- Nearly a fifth of pupils enter the school between Year 3 and Year 6.
- The school runs a breakfast club on the premises.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school received the Times Educational Supplement Outstanding Primary School of the Year award in 2011 in recognition of its innovative approach to the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standards of all pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics so that a greater proportion achieve and exceed national expectations by:
 - ensuring that pupils are regularly asked to respond to the teachers' marking of their work
 - giving pupils more opportunities to work things out for themselves.
- Improve teaching by:
 - further strengthening the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics), especially for pupils in Key Stage 1, so that those who find reading difficult make a more secure start
 - increasing the challenge for pupils, particularly the more able, ensuring work is neither too hard nor too easy.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The great majority of children begin school in the Early Years Foundation Stage at a level well below what is expected for their age. This is particularly the case in the development of their language and in their understanding of numbers. They make good progress through to the end of Reception.
- The standards that pupils achieve at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 have been rising rapidly over the last three years. Although still below national averages at the end of Key Stage 1, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are now in line with those for all pupils nationally.
- Almost all pupils in Key Stage 1 make expected progress and many do better than this. The rate of their progress over the last eighteen months has been particularly good. However, those whose reading is at a lower level when they start the Key Stage have tended to make slower progress through Years 1 and 2. They do not all understand the links between letters and sounds well enough.
- The proportion of pupils who make or exceed the amount of progress that the government expects from Year 3 to Year 6 compares favourably with national averages.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making at least as good progress as other pupils. There is no difference in the progress made by pupils from different ethnic groups. Those pupils who arrive in the school after the normal time of starting are helped to settle quickly and make good progress.
- Pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium also make at least as good progress as others. The school uses the money to fund projects with a focus on improving attendance and developing learning skills. For example, daily nurture group sessions increase pupils' willingness to come to school and pupils develop skills, co-ordination and concentration through music in brass ensemble sessions.
- The work in pupils' books shows they are making good progress. Teachers mark work conscientiously and say what pupils have done well. However, pupils are not yet all regularly responding to this marking in order to take more responsibility for raising their own standards.

The quality of teaching is good

- At the start of lessons teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn and during lessons teachers make good use of effective questioning. Pupils are clear about the targets that teachers expect them to achieve in their work.
- Pupils learn quickly and get on with their work well. Good management of behaviour by teachers means that any minor misbehaviour shown by pupils is dealt with quickly and in a supportive manner and is not allowed to disrupt the learning of the rest of the class.
- The way that teachers organise their classroom and choose their materials helps pupils to learn well. Teachers also work closely with teaching assistants who show good understanding of pupils' needs and support them very effectively.

- In the most effective lessons teachers adapt their teaching as required. For example in a Year 1 lesson, about understanding time, the teacher changed their lesson in response to pupils' answers and went on to allow pupils to make up their own questions for each other.
- While the level of challenge is sufficient for pupils to make good progress, it is not consistent enough to enable pupils to make outstanding progress, particularly for the more able. Work is at times too easy for them.
- Pupils are being set a wide variety of tasks in their different subjects and work in their books shows they are receiving regular homework to complete. This helps them to be sure about their learning. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to give pupils activities to make them work things out for themselves and so help them to think more deeply about problems.
- The teaching of letter and sounds has improved rapidly. Teachers now take pupils in different classes through the same carefully planned steps and so they are beginning to make better progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and say they feel safe. They behave well in lessons and around the school, show respect for adults and are caring and thoughtful towards each other.
- Pupils whose circumstances might put them at risk are particularly well cared for. The nurture area that the school calls "Safari" is very well used and allows some pupils time away from the classroom while still ensuring that they make as much progress with their work as possible.
- All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. The school's child protection procedures and approach to family support show a particularly high level of care for pupils. The advice and guidance for parents and carers is excellent.
- The school succeeds in encouraging pupils to behave well and behaviour around the school is good. Pupils know how to stay safe and while they play energetically at breaktime, they do so in a spirit of friendly co-operation and do not endanger themselves or others. Inspectors saw another example of working together in a performance of a play by Years 3 and 4. It was clear that pupils show respect for each other's talents and are used to getting things done as a team.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including through new media, and they say any incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance and it is now average. There has also been a strong downward trend in the number of exclusions over the past three years.
- The great majority of parents who shared their views of the school with the inspection team were very positive in their responses.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers spot issues when they arise, produce detailed plans and take swift action.

They then measure the effect of this action on the progress pupils are making in their work. These are key reasons for the improvements the school has made.

- Joint observations carried out with the headteacher confirmed the accuracy of the school's judgements about teaching. Most of the teaching is good or better and school leaders have been energetic and determined in improving it. The quality of teaching is reflected in the proportion of teachers who are making progress on the salary scale.
 - There is a sense of pride in the school among pupils and staff. The local authority has helped the school to work out its priorities and provides a good level of support.
 - The whole school takes part in a more than usual number of projects that are outside of the regular timetable. These exciting and varied events fire the children's imagination and give pupils plenty of chances to practise their reading, writing and mathematics. For example, the pupils' "discovery" of a mysterious object in the school playground one Monday morning led to a detailed and dramatic investigation.
 - The subjects and topics that are taught help pupils to gain a good knowledge and a broad understanding of the world around them. Pupils are encouraged to research and discover things about different cultures and countries. The work they do in school also helps to build the skills they will need in future, for example in business and communication. These skills are often brought together in a single project, such as a Year 4 class who set up a holiday company to research and identify honeymoon destinations around the world. They then gave presentations and offered travel advice to actual honeymoon couples.
 - Links with other schools encourage understanding of the multicultural diversity of modern Britain; they include a small rural school in Shropshire and a midlands city primary school.
 - Pupils enjoy music, dance, drama and visual art at school and they often work with visiting professionals. The school is working with the local council and regional orchestras on a new and exciting music project, one of only six in England.
 - Every class has a chance to work outside in 'Forest School' activities and pupils learn to respect and understand the natural world and their place in it.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes sure its members are properly trained and have a good understanding of the progress that the school is making. Governors have a detailed knowledge of the school's targets and use expert advice to be able to compare the pupils' achievement to others in the country. They have a very clear view of the school's finances and ensure that money is always spent where it will best benefit the pupils' education. This includes pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Governors are very thorough in their questioning of the headteacher's plans, making sure that any underachievement that is identified is dealt with successfully. They ensure that teachers' performance is assessed in terms of the impact they are having on pupils' progress before they are promoted or have a pay rise.
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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	133270
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	406505

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	515
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Harris
Headteacher	Mandie Haywood
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2010
Telephone number	01952 387250
Fax number	01952 387260
Email address	oldparkprimary@telford.gov.uk

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