

Northfield Manor Primary School

Swarthmore Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 4JT

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

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 throughout the school in English and mathematics.
- Standards in English and mathematics have been rising in recent years to average levels at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is mainly good. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their individual needs are well met. Teaching across the school is sometimes outstanding.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and in the playground. Any issues that arise are dealt with effectively. Pupils report they feel very safe in school and parents agree. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good.
- Leaders and managers have raised achievement across the school and improved teaching in Year 3 and 4 to match other year groups. The headteacher gives strong leadership and has made some excellent appointments. He has been successful in improving the school's image in its community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers do not always use marking to help pupils know what to do to reach the next step in their learning.
- Pupils are sometimes not given enough freedom to make their own choices and decisions about their work.
- The work is not always hard enough for the more-able pupils. Consequently, too few reach the higher levels.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes, including a joint observation with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher. A total of 17 lessons were observed including an extra teaching group. Inspectors made short classroom visits to observe pupils at work and to look at pupils' books.
- Inspectors had discussions with representatives of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher, other members of the school leadership team, teachers, outside agencies and two groups of pupils. Inspectors also listened to pupils of different ages read.
- Inspectors looked at documents including past and current information about pupils' progress, including the school's pupil entry assessment data and pupil tracking information, documents relating to behaviour, safeguarding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the school's own self-evaluation and improvement summary document.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 19 parents from Ofsted's 'Parent View' online questionnaire, a telephone call and letters received. Responses to the school's latest parent questionnaire were also considered and a number of parents were met informally at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors also considered 35 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Kathryn Skan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Joanne Speller

Additional Inspector

Peter Lawley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils come from White British families. The proportion of minority ethnic pupils is above average and some of these speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is high.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school does not use off-site alternative provision to support any of its pupils.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, the government's extra funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children, or pupils with a parent in the armed forces, is high.
- A breakfast club is run by the school every morning. Clubs are also run after school.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - making sure teachers' marking of pupils' work consistently set out the next steps in their learning so that pupils make as much progress as they can
 - increasing time for pupils, especially the more able, to find things out for themselves, both on their own and with others, so that they can use their own initiative in all subjects
 - making sure work is always hard enough for more-able pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils are making consistently good progress across the school. They join Reception with communication and mathematics skills that are low for their age. They then make good progress and enter Year 1 at improved levels but which are still mostly below average.
- Year 1 and 2 pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and now reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. Year 2 pupils are on track to increase standards further this year. This is due to improvements in teaching.
- In Year 5 and 6 pupils continue to do well. There has been a gradual improvement in standards since 2010 and they are average in Year 6. The proportion of more-able pupils reaching higher levels is increasing but is below average. This is because more able pupils are sometimes not stretched enough.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress which is consistent with their peers. This is because teachers plan for their learning well and the school makes sure their specific needs are met.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium also make good progress. Extra funds have been used to recruit an extra teacher and extra support staff, specialist teaching resources and an attendance worker. These measures are helping pupils known to be eligible for free school meals to narrow the gap in attainment with all pupils nationally.
- The school has made solid gains in achievement since the last inspection, especially in the last two years. Pupils are now more effectively developing and applying a range of skills in reading, writing, communication and especially mathematics due to a strong focus on improvement. The proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress has considerably improved since the last inspection.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is mainly good, especially in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. There are some examples of outstanding teaching. Teaching has improved in Years 3 and 4 and is as good as in other year groups.
- Teachers create a positive environment for pupils to learn. They listen to pupils carefully and use questioning and discussion to strengthen learning. Pupils respond to this very well, taking an interest in what they are learning and enjoying their lessons. They want to do well.
- Teachers check pupils' progress regularly in lessons and share what pupils need to do to improve to the next level. Pupils know what they are working towards. They enjoy and value gaining stickers for reaching their learning targets. However, teachers do not use marking enough to help pupils move on to the next step in their learning.
- Teachers are good at using other adults in lessons to support learning. Assistants are well trained and play an important part in helping the pupils, including supporting disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

- Teachers plan carefully to set work at the right level for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils have harder work than others, including the more-able pupils. However, the work is not always sufficiently demanding to stretch the more-able pupils in all subjects.
- Teachers make lessons interesting for pupils by choosing engaging tasks, sometimes including the use of laptop computers. However, teachers do not consistently plan for pupils to think for themselves so that pupils use their initiative more when working on their own and with others.
- Homework supports learning well following a recent focus on improving this area. Pupils enjoy homework tasks, particularly when they are linked to what they are learning about in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good and they are keen to learn. Teachers use rewards and sanctions appropriately. When a difficulty arises with any pupil, prompt and appropriate action is taken. Exclusions are rare.
- Pupils are courteous and show good manners towards adults. They take a pride in their school and say behaviour has improved greatly over the last few years. The very large majority of parents say the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved and deals with any unacceptable behaviour.
- Bullying is infrequent and pupils say appropriate action is taken should it occur. Work has been carried out with pupils to help them understand what different types of bullying are. Most parents agree the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Most pupils say they feel very safe in school. All replies on the staff questionnaire were positive on safety. The very large majority of parents are happy with the school and would recommend it to another parent.
- Attendance rates have risen gradually over the last few years and are now average. The school tries to help those pupils who have family difficulties or who travel a long way on public transport, to get to school regularly. The school's breakfast club is run well. It provides social activities with pupils' breakfast in the school hall.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher expects the best of teachers and pupils and is ambitious for the school. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher who is knowledgeable about teaching and learning and who provides good leadership for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Excellent leadership appointments have been recently made to the school by the headteacher. These leaders are already showing the capacity to make a difference to speeding up pupils' progress.
- Teachers are helped to improve their practice following lesson observations and checks on planning and how well pupils are doing. The setting of targets for teachers is effective and linked to pay rises. The school offers high quality training to its staff.
- The school's teaching programme has a thematic approach and pupils find it is interesting and

exciting, especially when it involves opportunities to learn in the outside environment. English and mathematics and also mathematical problem-solving and speaking and listening skills are taught separately. Writing is included within other lessons to practise basic skills and pupils are sometimes helped in smaller groups. Pupils learn about different cultures in the United Kingdom through links with other schools and this helps to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning.

- Leaders and managers have brought about good improvement since the last inspection. They have the capacity to continue this upward trend. Parents were bubbling with enthusiasm about the changes that have taken place to the school over the last few years. There is considerable support for the headteacher's vision from staff and from pupils.
- The local authority maintains a watching brief. It has previously brokered support for the school with other schools and there is support available through the local consortium if required. The local authority has confidence in the school's leadership, based on rising standards. The school is regarded as able to manage its own improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection, the governing body has become more effective in providing support and in asking searching questions of the leadership team. Governors have a clear understanding of pupils' achievement compared with all pupils nationally and know what the school is doing to improve it. They have kept a close eye on the finances and turned around a financial deficit. They make sure finances are used in a way that supports pupils' learning effectively, know how pupil premium money is being spent and are clear on the impact it is having on raising standards. The governing body uses information provided about teaching quality to make decisions about staffing and staff training, making sure pay is linked to performance. It has undertaken training for the safer recruitment of staff, and all health and safety procedures are checked regularly. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet current 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	103304
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	400606

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	325
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Hynds
Headteacher	Matthew Smith
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2009
Telephone number	0121 6752489
Fax number	0871 9116062
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