

Donnington Wood CofE Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Leonard Close, Winifreds Drive, Telford, TF2 8BH

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.

- Teaching is good across the school. Teachers know their pupils as individuals and their good subject knowledge ensures lessons are interesting.
- Pupils' progress is better than that found nationally and attainment is above average in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as those supported through additional funding, make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding.
- Pupils' good attitudes to learning and improving attendance reflect their enjoyment of school.
- The passionate and determined leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school is not complacent and no pupil is left behind.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not high enough to accelerate pupils' learning.
- At times, teachers are too ambitious and pupils are not always ready to take the next step.
- Opportunities for pupils to learn and apply problem-solving skills across subjects are under-developed.
- The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and feedback is not always well timed.
- Pupils do not check the quality and accuracy of their work with sufficient exactness.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to reflect on their ideas, use their initiative or develop independent learning skills.

Information about this inspection

- Sixteen lessons or parts of lessons were observed. All classroom teachers present during the inspection were observed teaching and almost all were observed at least twice. Inspectors undertook two joint lesson observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body and different groups of pupils.
- An inspector heard individual pupils read and discussed with them their reading preferences and individual reading record.
- Inspectors sampled pupils' work, scrutinised the school's tracking records of pupils' progress and took account of the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors met with three teachers to examine their pupils' work and to evaluate the quality of teachers' assessment and marking.
- The lead inspector held a discussion with a member of the local authority's advisory staff.
- The views of parents and carers were sought during the two days and 5 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were examined. Inspectors took account of the school's own surveys of the views of over 100 parents and carers undertaken since January 2012 covering Year 3 induction, views regarding safety at school and feedback from parents and carers after a parents' evening in November 2012 to discuss pupil progress.
- The views of staff were sought through a questionnaire. In total, 11 questionnaires were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Gordon Ewing, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steven Cartlidge

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized junior school.
- Pupils come from a range of different heritage groups. The largest group (85%) is of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- A well-above-average proportion of pupils is eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a daily pre-school group called 'The Early Bird Club' which hosts up to 15 pupils. This provision is managed by the governing body.
- A very few pupils who have behavioural and emotional needs attend Admaston House Centre on a part-time basis.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further so that all lessons are consistently good and most are outstanding, by:
 - making sure that all teachers understand and can deliver the key components of outstanding teaching
 - sharing the existing best practice in the school through teachers observing each other's lessons and discussing the outstanding features
 - making sure that pupils confidently know their targets and, through consistently high quality marking and discussion between teachers and pupils, can take the next step with greater independence
 - making sure that pupils receive prompt feedback in the lesson on how well they are doing and are given tasks that are closely matched to their stage of learning.
- Increase pupils' abilities to work on their own and reduce their reliance on adults, so that they develop the skills to learn independently, by:
 - helping pupils to use step-by-step strategies to solve open-ended and harder problems
 - providing planned and regular opportunities for pupils to develop and apply thinking skills across a range of subjects
 - developing pupils' skills in the use of dictionaries, thesauri, atlases and on-line encyclopaedias
 - improving pupils' ability to carefully check their own work, including the accuracy of calculations in mathematics and the range of vocabulary they use in their writing
 - guiding pupils to set new targets in their work and in assessing their own performance and that of others.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good because close links with the local infant school make sure that pupils get off to a good start. From the launch pad of Year 3, pupils' achievement strengthens year on year because lessons are well structured and stimulating. When they start in Year 3 they have broadly average skill levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment and progress have steadily risen in recent times. A key factor in securing better and sustained achievement has been the school's drive to improve teaching through holding teachers more closely to account for pupils' progress. As a result, current pupils throughout the school are achieving levels of progress in reading, writing and mathematics above those expected nationally. In 2012 the pupils at the end of Year 6 attained levels above the national average in English and mathematics. The school's tracking data show the current Year 6 are predicted for further improved results.
- The teaching of reading, through linking letters and sounds, is consistently good across the school. Consequently, pupils' attainment in reading, by the end of Year 6, is above average. Pupils read fluently and widely. They talk with confidence and enthusiasm about the range of books they are currently reading.
- The work in pupils' books shows that pupils make consistent progress over time. They apply a range of key skills, including information communication technology (ICT), with increasing confidence and success. However, pupils are not systematically taught how to solve problems or to break down tasks into smaller, simpler steps. Consequently, this reduces the development of higher-level skills and limits opportunities to accelerate their achievement further.
- The learning and progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have been inconsistent until recently. Concerted efforts to close the gap in these pupils' learning are increasingly successful because adults work closely with each other, pupils and parents. This has led to significant and sustained improvements, particularly in reading and self-esteem. The use of small teaching groups and one-to-one teaching is a key feature of the school's successful drive to support pupils who find learning tricky.
- Pupils who attend Admaston House Centre on a part time basis are supported well by both schools so that, like their peers, they make good progress in their academic and personal development.
- Pupils who qualify for additional funding (the pupil premium) achieve as well as their peers. Steps to improve their attendance help them fully take part in activities inside and outside of school hours and through one-to-one support are paying real dividends. The school can point to striking examples where pupils' reading, writing, mathematics and enjoyment of school have improved significantly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers are committed to their pupils and know them as individuals. Consequently, good teaching is a common feature across the school. Teachers use their good subject knowledge, shared planning and some careful questioning to ensure that pupils enjoy a range of stimulating activities.

- Teachers have high expectations although checks during the lesson, to make sure that pupils understand the work that they are doing, are not always timely. Such high expectations also, at times, lead to activities that are too ambitious for some pupils. This is because teachers set some tasks at too early a stage before pupils have grasped some of the key skills necessary to take the next step.
- Teachers work conscientiously and share with their pupils each lesson's learning objective. This helps the pupils understand what and how they are going to learn. However, sometimes, teachers talk for too long and question pupils without really giving them enough time to consider their ideas or answers. As a result, the quality and pace of learning suffers and some pupils lose concentration.
- Lessons flow smoothly because relationships are good and pupils collaborate well. Disruption to learning is rare and teachers use reward and sanction well to encourage distracted pupils to regain focus.
- Teachers are diligent in their marking so that it is regular and supportive. However, feedback to help pupils move their learning forward is not consistent across the school or sufficiently immediate to have maximum impact. The quality of teachers' marking and the setting of meaningful short-term targets are not always precise enough to help pupils advance in their learning with independence. Consequently, pupils are sometimes too reliant on adults to take the next step or in the setting of new targets.
- In some classes pupils are encouraged to assess their own progress and that of their peers. For example, in a PE lesson, pupils were working in groups to develop a gymnastic sequence involving balance, shape and symmetry. Pupils used a tablet computer to video short sections of their performance, to play back the recording and improve their sequence accordingly. In the latter part of the lesson, pupils assessed the work of other groups by judging whether the sequence met the lesson's success criteria. This effective practice is not a common feature across the school, however.
- Teachers' planning makes sure that pupils' skills in reading, writing, mathematics and ICT are improving steadily. However, pupils do not independently check their spellings and choice of vocabulary in literacy or the accuracy of their calculations in mathematics. As a result, silly errors go unchecked.
- Opportunities to acquire and apply literacy and numeracy skills to solve problems that make pupils think hard and check that they have understood the task are under-developed. In addition, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and access learning resources such as dictionaries, thesauri, atlases or encyclopaedias on their own.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Most pupils display good and, sometimes, outstanding attitudes to learning. They are polite, courteous and considerate towards others. As a result, they build strong relationships, take on responsibility with enthusiasm and work well in pairs and groups. Previous above-average levels of exclusions have now been significantly reduced as a result of actions taken by leaders to support these pupils more effectively.
- Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school. Their attendance, although historically low, has improved year on year as a result of the school's pro-active stance in challenging any unnecessary absence and through sustained improvements in teaching. One pupil commented, 'Every day is different. I like the teachers and the learning. Attendance is now average.'

- Parents and carers rightly judge that the school offers every pupil a safe and caring environment. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at school and beyond. They have good awareness of different types of bullying, including that based on prejudice. They report that racism, bullying and homophobia are rare. The school's detailed records support this.
- Pupils are sensitive to the dangers presented to them in life, such as alcoholism, drug taking and smoking. They know to whom to turn for help and report confidently that all the adults at school are approachable and caring. On the very few occasions that incidents occur, pupils report that adults respond swiftly and effectively.
- Pupils who attend the 'Early Bird Club' have a great start to the day, sharing breakfast together as well as learning how to use tablet computers, playing board games, designing and making gifts for Easter and caring for the school guinea pig. This club helps them to develop good routines, to start each school day in a positive frame of mind and to develop good attitudes towards school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's passion and thirst for school improvement is the driving force behind this school's success. She is ably assisted by other leaders and the governing body. Their vision is ambitious and supported by all the staff, whose morale is strong.
- The quality of education and provision at the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. Training is well tuned to identified need and the school is clearly not prepared to rest on its laurels. The school is well placed to improve further.
- Improvement planning and self-evaluation are good. They are not outstanding because, although the correct priorities are identified, planned strategies to overcome any weaknesses are not precise enough to target resources and actions to maximum effect.
- The headteacher's high expectations are communicated through the school's rigorous approach to managing teachers' performance. Procedures are clear and teachers strive to do their best. Systems to link pupils' progress to the quality of teaching make sure that salary progression is based on merit. Teachers regard this as fair and value the opportunities to improve their practice by observing each other teach and by additional training.
- The school works closely with other schools, for example, the infant school, as well as a range of external agencies to ensure that no pupil is left behind. The recent survey of Year 3 parents and carers shows strong approval of the school's induction of new pupils. Work with particular agencies and with individual families, particularly by the Pastoral Support Manager, has had a positive impact on attendance and on the quality of support given to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs as well as those in receipt of additional funding.
- Teachers use regular and focused tracking of pupils' progress, often on a weekly basis, in order to identify any pupil at risk of not making enough progress. This process triggers an impressive range of additional strategies to provide these pupils with prompt and focused support. These actions reflect the school's strong commitment to equal opportunities and in tackling any form of discrimination.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They value that every pupil is treated as an individual and rightly judge that pupils are given many opportunities

to develop and learn. One parent commented, 'My child is well above the levels he should be.' Another praised the teaching by saying, 'It's a lifestyle choice. They are so dedicated.'

- The local authority knows that the school is in good hands and provides effective light touch levels of support.
- The curriculum is broad and vibrant. It is enhanced by a range of other activities, including educational visits, for example, to Liverpool and the theatre, and visitors to enhance subject teaching such as PE and art. It is well organised and provides good opportunities for learning, especially through the focus of applying pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics across subjects. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to solve open-ended problems in different contexts or to develop independent learning skills such as using dictionaries, thesauri, atlases or on-line encyclopaedias.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and are able to place themselves in others' shoes. They show good awareness of the cultural diversity within their locality and beyond and display sensitive respect to other faiths and religions.
- Safeguarding and staff recruitment procedures are excellent. Key policies and procedures, such as child protection, safeguarding and behaviour, make sure pupils and staff are safe and well cared for.
- **The governance of the school is good:**
 - The governing body plays a full part in the life of the school. Governors are committed and effective in holding the school to account for pupils' attainment, progress and well-being. They attend training in order to increase their skills and be able to ask demanding questions. They play a key role in monitoring the work of teachers through the effective setting of targets for teachers to improve their work and through school visits. As a result, decisions about salary progression are increasingly based on first hand knowledge. They have scrutinised teachers' marking and played a key role in updating the marking policy. They astutely judged that pupils do not have enough opportunities to solve problems in mathematics that make them think more and have carefully planned a programme of future visits to gain an even sharper view of the school's work. The governing body can account for how additional funding to support particular pupils is used and know that it is having a clear impact on their academic and personal achievements.

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	123473
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	406167

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bill Price
Headteacher	Sandra Osman
Date of previous school inspection	03 March 2011
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