

Minsterley Primary School

Minsterley, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY5 0BE

Inspection dates 7–8 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 feel safe in this happy and caring school.
- All groups of pupils make at least good progress during their time at Minsterley.
- For the past three years, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have been above the national average in English and mathematics.
- The work set by teachers helps pupils of all abilities to learn well.
- Reading is taught particularly well throughout the school and pupils show great interest and enjoyment in books.
- Pupils' behaviour in the classroom is good and they show pride in their work.
- Pupils are well behaved around the school and look after each other.
- The school is improving and the high expectations of the headteacher, the staff and the governors for good teaching and achievement are helping pupils to do well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers are not giving pupils enough time in lessons to find things out on their own and to improve their work for themselves.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils, particularly boys in Key Stage 2, to improve their skills in writing longer pieces of work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector looked at pupils' work in their books and listened to them read.
- There were meetings with: groups of pupils, senior leaders, middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 41 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of a parent questionnaire carried out by the school. The 13 responses to a staff questionnaire were also considered.
- The inspector 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

Full report

Information about this school

- Minsterley is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is below the national average, while the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- All pupils are educated on site. The school does not use alternative provision elsewhere to support any of its pupils.
- More pupils join the school between Year 3 and Year 6 than in the average primary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching which is outstanding by providing more opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves and to reflect on their work during lessons so as to take their learning forward for themselves.
- Further accelerate pupils' achievement by ensuring that the focus on writing, particularly for boys in Key Stage 2, includes sharing best practice among teachers and evaluate the impact in creating more opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement in reading is outstanding for many pupils. They make excellent progress in their reading throughout the school and achieving standards that are above average nationally.
- When children start school in the Reception class, they have the level of skills that might be expected for their age. They make good progress and, by the end of Key Stage 1, results in reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average. In 2012, pupils in Year 2 were the equivalent of around six months ahead. Results have risen steadily over the last three years.
- Attainment in Key Stage 2 has been average. Pupils in this key stage, including those who join the school after the start of Year 3, now make good progress in lessons. As in Key Stage 1, they do particularly well in reading.
- Progress and attainment in pupils' writing are less consistently strong than in reading, particularly among the boys in Key Stage 2. The school has recognised this weakness and has put in place a wide range of strategies to tackle it by requiring more practice in writing longer pieces of work, but it is too early to evaluate the impact of these changes.
- All groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for the pupil premium, achieve better at Key Stage 1 than similar groups of pupils across the country. The attainment of those eligible for free school meals at Key Stage 2 also compares favourably with that of others nationally, and the gap between their attainment and that of others in the school is closing in both English and mathematics.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to that of other pupils at Minsterley and many achieve better standards than those of similar pupils nationally. They are well supported, particularly by teaching assistants who have experience and considerable expertise in helping pupils to fulfil their potential.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers ask pupils very searching questions to get them thinking. A good example of this was in a Year 4 and 5 English lesson in which pupils were planning to write a fantasy story. The pupils listened to a short story and were then asked by the teacher if they agreed that 'the best pictures are on the radio'. Their reflective responses were very helpful to their learning.
- Teachers set work that is well matched to pupils' different abilities. Teachers have a finely tuned understanding of each individual pupil's progress, and plan learning accordingly. However, opportunities for extended writing are too limited.
- Where two year groups are in the same class, teachers' planning of learning allows the older pupils to benefit from revisiting a topic at a higher level in order to avoid repetition. The younger pupils then benefit from the older pupils' prior knowledge.
- Due to good teaching, the younger pupils' knowledge and use of letters and sounds (phonics) develops quickly at Minsterley. Consequently, pupils at the end of Year 1 do well in the national phonics check.

- It is clear from looking at pupils' books and talking to them, as well as from observations of lessons, that they are very aware of what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers' marking gives them helpful guidance and pupils are given time to correct their work.
- The experience and expertise of well-trained support staff are used to good effect both in the classroom and in one-to-one sessions. Support staff are particularly helpful to pupils eligible for the pupil premium and to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because pupils are not getting opportunities in enough lessons to be involved in helping to design their own projects and to carry out their own research. However, where learning is most successful in lessons, pupils are involved in making choices about the direction of their inquiry. Their learning is improved by them discovering the key facts for themselves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' good behaviour, positive attitudes to learning and the pride they take in their work all contribute to the good progress they make in lessons.
- Although they very seldom see or hear bullying or name-calling, pupils are aware of what they should do and who they should tell. The school records show that there are very few incidents of this sort, but when they occur they are acted upon swiftly.
- Pupils are polite and courteous and are respectful to adults. They look after each other and show concern for fairness and equality.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. They are aware of physical dangers in the classroom or the playground, as well as having an understanding of the need to protect their identity and show caution on the internet. The school's practice of encouraging them gradually to build these skills and manage their own e-safety is exemplary.
- Pupils are keen to arrive on time for school and attendance figures are higher than the national average. The school takes appropriate steps to ensure that pupils do not miss school days unnecessarily.

The leadership and management are good

- The school's leaders and staff ensure that every pupil makes, at least, good progress. There are good systems for checking pupils' progress and the information is used well to focus support to help any pupil who falls behind.
- School leadership at all levels, supported by the local authority, has made a clear and rigorous analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This self-evaluation is supported by a detailed development plan that is sharply focused on further improving pupils' progress.
- Leadership of teaching is good. Any weaknesses are tackled quickly and successfully. Teachers' targets are linked to their pupils' progress.
- Pupils are provided with a range of learning opportunities that help them to make links between different subjects. For example, in a lesson exploring Mexican art, pupils practised their Spanish and learnt about the history and geography of the country. In addition, they compared day-to-

day life in Mexico with their own lives.

- All pupils are encouraged to take advantage of the wide range of activities that are available to them outside of lessons. These include all pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 playing brass instruments and some pupils go on to join local brass bands. There is a singing club, run by a school governor, which performed for the Queen during the Jubilee celebrations. An indoor-games club at the local secondary school helps pupils to become familiar with their possible destination after Year 6.
- There is a sharp focus on literacy in the school, particularly on reading. The school is now turning its attention to a more systematic approach to writing, because pupils lack enough opportunities to write at length. The best practice in the teaching of writing is not fully shared across the staff.
- Pupils are made aware of the diversity of modern Britain through visits, visitors and special projects. For example, they have been writing to pupils in a school in the West Midlands that is very different to their own. They show understanding of various faiths and different cultures.
- The school develops very good relationships with the parents. All parents who expressed a view thought their children were happy and safe at school and were making at least good progress. As one parent put it about the care and guidance of pupils, 'Teachers frequently go above and beyond the call of duty.'
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the progress that pupils are making and how well the school is doing. They offer good support to the headteacher while still asking searching questions and looking closely at information that is presented to them. Their management of the headteacher's performance and that of the staff is rigorous. They observe lessons and engage directly with teachers, so they understand the quality of teaching in the school and are vigilant in making sure that promotion and pay are justified by the progress pupils make. The governors are engaged, committed and show familiarity with the day-to-day running of the school. They are also involved with activities such as the school choir. The governing body are aware of the good use made of the pupil premium funding and have a clear oversight of the school's finances. They ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory 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	123383
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	403526

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	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Goodwin
Headteacher	Clive Roe
Date of previous school inspection	15 July 2008
Telephone number	01743 791398
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Email address	admin.minsterley@shropshirelg.net

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