

Widney Junior School

Clifton Crescent, Solihull, B91 3LQ

Inspection dates 20–21 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching, although improving, does not consistently challenge all pupils, particularly the most-able, to make good progress.
- The rate of progress across the school varies too much and not all pupils achieve well.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Pupils do not have enough chance to solve practical problems in mathematics.
- Reading activities are not sufficiently focused to stretch and develop pupils' reading skills.
- The quality of marking is variable and teachers do not always give pupils opportunities to respond to comments that teachers make in their books.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership of the new headteacher and the deputy headteacher is strongly improving the quality of teaching.
- Governors hold staff to account effectively for their performance and take firm action.
- Improved checks on pupils' progress mean the school is able to give specific help to those who need it so that no pupils are left behind.
- In 2012, pupils eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium reached higher standards in English than their classmates.
- Pupils are friendly, enjoy school and behave well. This is because adults promote positive relationships so that pupils feel valued and safe.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, an inspector listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, a representative of the local authority, members of the governing body and school leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 responses to the online (Parent View) questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at many documents including: the school’s own information on pupils’ current and recent progress; planning of work in different subjects; leaders’ monitoring of teaching and learning quality and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Steve Nelson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Taylor

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average school.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is average and they come from a wide range of heritages. Only a few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is well-below average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding available to the school to assist pupils eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services) is average. There are no pupils in care or with a parent in the armed forces currently in the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected nationally for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a specifically resourced provision for pupils with specific learning difficulties and this is managed by the school.
- The headteacher was appointed to his post in March 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good or better by:
 - reducing the amount of time teachers talk in some lessons so that pupils spend the majority of their time on activities
 - ensuring that lessons provide sufficient challenge for all pupils particularly the more-able
 - making sure that teachers' marking always helps pupils improve their work, and they have more opportunities to respond to teachers' comments.
- Improve achievement in mathematics and reading by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities for focused reading and applying their mathematical skills across a range of subjects
 - pupils having more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in solving practical investigative problems
 - making better use of the school reading diaries to encourage more pupils to read at home.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils' progress is not yet good as it varies too much across year groups. In 2012, pupils' attainment was above average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, when pupils start Year 3, their attainment is typically above average.
- The number of pupils making the progress they should in English and mathematics has increased. Pupils' progress was better than that of other schools in writing and similar to that of other schools in mathematics. However, some pupils did not make the progress they should in reading.
- More-able pupils are not achieving as well as they should because the tasks they are set are not always difficult enough and do not extend their skills sufficiently.
- The learning needs of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are quickly identified by the school and additional support provided. Consequently they make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who attend the specifically resourced provision make good progress. This is because teachers and other adults support them very well in lessons and provide work and teaching materials best suited to their learning needs.
- Pupil premium funding is used to support additional small-group activities and individual support in lessons. School evidence for eligible pupils shows that improvements in provision mean they are now making similar progress to their classmates and so beginning to narrow the gap in attainment. In 2012, the Year 6 pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were the equivalent of around three months ahead of their classmates in English but about twelve months behind them in mathematics; however, a few of these pupils had specific mathematical learning difficulties and attended the additional resourced class.
- Pupils enjoy reading and older pupils discuss at length their reasons for choosing particular styles of writing or authors. However, pupils are not given sufficiently focused opportunities to read in other subjects and some do not read as regularly as they could at home.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has improved and more teaching is now good or better. However, teaching requires improvement because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that result in variations in the rate of pupils' progress. Pupils do not routinely have opportunities to use their mathematical skills to investigate and solve practical problems.
- The pace in lessons is sometimes not quick enough because teachers spend too long talking to the whole class when explaining what they are going to learn. This limits the time available for pupils to work independently and get on with their work. Pupils are encouraged to read every day but activities across the school are not given a sharp enough focus and are not challenging.
- Senior and subject leaders strongly focus on the quality of teaching and there is good evidence of improvement. For example, in lessons where teaching is good, tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities and they are challenged by the tasks set. In some lessons, however, the more-

able pupils are given work that is too easy.

- Teaching in the additional resourced class for pupils with specific learning difficulties needs is good. Specialist staff and other professionals support pupils' learning and personal development well. Consequently, they make very good progress although their attainment levels are often lower than their classmates.
- Teachers generally demonstrate sound subject knowledge and use a wide range of teaching methods effectively. For example, 'talking partners' help pupils explore and express their ideas and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to work together and help each other in activities.
- Some teachers' marking shows pupils how to improve their work. However, it is inconsistent, as some marking does not provide clear guidance. Pupils are increasingly involved in checking their own progress. However, pupils are not always given the time to respond to teachers comments in their books.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to learn. They are polite friendly and hard working. The work in their books shows that they take care with their presentation and always do their best.
- All the parents who completed the online (Parent View) questionnaire say behaviour is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including discrimination-based bullying and use of unacceptable language.
- Incidents of bullying are rare and pupils are sufficiently confident to report concerns to an adult and say that any worries they have are dealt with straight away. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They understand how to keep themselves safe and know how to avoid unsafe sites on the internet.
- There are very positive relationships between staff and pupils with good opportunities for pupils to take on extra responsibilities, for example as peer mentors or members of the school council. Pupils have good social skills and strong moral values. This is because they have frequent opportunities to work together in lessons and they develop good levels of mutual respect as a result.
- Attendance is above average and the efforts made by senior leaders in promoting regular attendance continue to achieve success.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong ambition of the senior leadership team, driven by the effective headteacher and deputy headteacher, has brought about significant improvement in teaching. Since the headteacher's appointment, he has increased the progress made by most pupils, especially in writing. However some pupils, particularly the more able, are not reaching their full potential as a result of previous weaknesses in teaching.
- The leadership team and governors have a clear vision of how they want the school to be, having high achievement as a result of good teaching at its heart. They have taken decisive action to improve teaching and are supporting staff well to develop their skills. There has been

insufficient time to see the full impact.

- Self-evaluation by senior leaders is accurate and reflected in the priorities for improvement in the school's improvement plan. There are good procedures for checking the progress and attainment of individuals and groups of pupils. Any pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly identified and given extra support to help them keep up with other pupils.
- The leadership of the specifically resourced provision is good and the school ensures there is no discrimination and actively and very successfully promotes the key values of inclusion, respect and tolerance.
- Pupils develop and apply understanding of right and wrong in their school life and outside school and this promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. During the inspection, a school assembly effectively linked the subject of right and wrong to 'doing the right thing'.
- Good planning for subjects and the use of topics such as the Aztecs and Ancient Egypt provides exciting and interesting learning. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practice their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The school has drawn on the effective support of the local authority. It has worked well with the school to improve the quality of teaching and contributed effectively to its improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They know how well the school performs in relation to similar schools and challenge the school leaders to ensure further improvement. The governors carefully monitor the school's finances, including the extra pupil premium funding, and understand how it is helping pupils achieve better. They assess their own training needs to get the best balance of skills to serve the school. Governors ensure that leaders take action in the event that any teaching is weak, and make sure that any pay increases are directly linked to pupils' performance. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet 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	104054
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	404922

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Morgan
Headteacher	Leon Chamberlain
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2011
Telephone number	0121 7058516
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Email address	office@widney.solihull.sch.uk

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