

Charford First School

Charford Road, Charford, Bromsgrove, B60 3NH

Inspection dates 5–6 June 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.

- The atmosphere of the school is exceptionally open, welcoming and inclusive. This is a happy school.
- Pupils achieve well, making good progress throughout the school. Present Year 4 pupils are approaching average standards in English, mathematics and other subjects, despite joining the school with standards that were often below expectations.
- The achievement of pupils receiving the pupil premium funding is outstanding.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Teachers make lessons interesting and motivating so that pupils enjoy learning and try hard.
- Behaviour in lessons is good and staff convey their high expectations to pupils calmly and consistently. Behaviour around the school is often excellent. Pupils feel safe and act with consideration for others.
- The headteacher leads and manages the school extremely well, ensuring that leadership and management work effectively at all levels. Consequently, the proportion of outstanding teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and with it pupils' achievement.
- The enthusiastic and purposeful governing body ensures leaders are held fully to account for the quality of education the school offers.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to learn from and improve their work once it has been marked.
- There are insufficient opportunities for good teachers to learn from those who are outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons including lessons involving the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make). All teachers were observed at least once. Two lessons were observed with senior managers. An assembly for Years 1 to 4 was also seen.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- Individual pupils read aloud to inspectors.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documents including those relating to safeguarding, records of attendance, lesson planning, and records of pupils' behaviour and assessments of their progress.
- Inspectors took account of 67 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and several letters and e-mails from parents. Inspectors also spoke informally to parents collecting their children after school and met individual parents who requested it.

Inspection team

Michael Farrell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Green

Additional Inspector

Rena Saggi

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Charford is a much larger-than-average First School.
- The percentage of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is much lower than that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is a little lower than average while the proportion of pupils supported at school action is higher than average.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils is eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding from central government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority, or who have a parent in the armed forces).
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than the national average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a morning and an afternoon nursery class, and three reception classes.
- A nurture class supports and educates a small group of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable in the mornings, and they join the other classes in the afternoons.
- Since the previous inspection the former head teacher has retired and a new head teacher has been appointed who has been in post for three years. There have been several changes in other management positions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide better opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking of their work
- Ensure the majority of teaching is outstanding by providing more frequent and better planned opportunities for good teachers to learn from outstanding ones.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter nursery in different years either well below or below expected levels. Those entering nursery at levels well below expectations make good progress, reaching below expected standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and improving further in Years 3 and 4. Children entering nursery at levels below expectations reach expected standards by the end of Year 4.
- Learning is good in all years. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage progress well over time because they enjoy a rich variety of resources and because staff are very skilled at questioning children and developing their ideas.
- This good progress continues into Key Stage 1 and through the school. In one good lesson, pupils achieved well in adding and multiplying money because the teacher shaped the lesson according to pupils' previous knowledge and the activities were interesting. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils progressed well in understanding area and perimeter because the tasks were challenging and the teacher encouraged pupils to use their own initiative.
- Pupils read frequently and enjoy reading. In the national phonics check in 2012, they were below the national average but this represented good progress given their low starting points. Pupils use their phonic skills with great persistence to tackle unfamiliar words. Phonics teaching is well structured and moves along at a brisk pace.
- Pupils work demonstrates they gain secure knowledge and are well prepared for the next stage of education. Over time, the challenge and quality of their work improves. Pupils achieve well in literacy and mathematics and many other subjects, developing their skills in these subjects in interesting contexts such as 'themed learning' lessons. In art, pupils use a wide range of techniques and media while learning about other cultures and countries.
- The good progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is encouraged by targeted support and carefully considered interventions, for example to accelerate progress in writing.
- Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those for whom English is an additional language are equally well supported and make good progress.
- Pupils receiving the pupil premium funding make outstanding progress because the excellent additional support the school has organised and the well-chosen resources it has purchased combine to provide an exceptionally positive atmosphere for learning, which powerfully motivates these pupils. The nurture group also provides very effective support and education. In mathematics, eligible pupils achieve at the same level as non-eligible ones, while in writing they are half a term behind and in reading a term behind.

The quality of teaching is good

- Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Behaviour is well managed in a calm manner and pupils respond very well. Parents are very confident that teaching is good. The proportion of outstanding teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children achieve well over time. During the inspection, outstanding teaching was seen in this phase, which is accelerating progress. In a well-organised nursery lesson, children achieved well because the activities they were set encouraged language development very well and children were enabled to make choices including using computers. In an outstanding Reception lesson of 'free flow' activities, children were fully absorbed in activities and staff extended the children's language exceptionally well through skilfully commenting and questioning.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are all taught in ways that are interesting and relevant to pupils. In one Key Stage 1 lesson there was a working buzz because the teacher had motivated pupils to discuss ideas relating to zoos stimulated by a video. Some pupils discussed whether zoos might save certain animals from becoming extinct.
- Teachers maintain a good pace to lessons and plan carefully so that work is pitched at the right level for different groups of pupils. In a guided reading lesson, older pupils achieved well because the work was pitched accurately and the teacher and teaching assistant worked closely together to assess and challenge pupils.
- Teaching assistants are highly valued and well-trained, enhancing pupils' progress and enjoyment of lessons. They keep careful records of the contribution of individual pupils to ensure progress is good enough. Teachers use questioning well to check what pupils understand so that the lesson can be modified when necessary. Resources including computers are used effectively.
- The marking of pupils' work has improved since the previous inspection and is up to date, encouraging, and indicates how pupils can improve. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to show they can make use of the teacher's comments, for example by responding to these in writing. This reduces their ability to make further progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- In lessons, pupils behave well reflecting teachers' good management of their behaviour. Pupils are interested in their work, try hard and concentrate well. They grow in confidence to put forward their ideas and pose questions.
- Pupils are punctual to lessons because they look forward to their learning. One pupil, representing the views of many said, 'I love everything in school'. Pupils, parents and staff all recognise that behaviour is good.
- Pupils are courteous and well-mannered, helped by the excellent examples of conduct set by staff. Around the school, including in the breakfast club and after school clubs, there are many examples of outstanding behaviour and of pupils being sensitively aware of the needs of others. At break times, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Behaviour in the Early Years Foundation Stage is often excellent.
- Bullying is very rare but pupils know about the different types of bullying, for example ignoring somebody or name calling, and they say that if this ever happened they would go to a member of staff and the adult would do something about it.
- In lessons and around school, pupils act safely. Pupils say they feel secure. They can give examples of how to keep safe such as using the internet properly. They know how to keep out of harm's way near roads or water. Even the youngest children can give examples of sensible ways of keeping safe, such as holding a parent's hand near a road. Parents are very confident

that the school does all it can to keep their children safe.

- Attendance is average and has improved each year for the past three years. The school does everything that can be reasonably expected to improve attendance, including working with others to help families recognise the importance of regular attendance, and having reward systems for pupils attending regularly. Attendance is very closely monitored and the school carefully assesses the impact that the different strategies it has introduced to improve it are having.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides exceptionally effective leadership, enabling leaders and managers at different levels to develop their skills and impact. Staff morale is high and staff say typically, 'I feel supported and valued' and 'I could not imagine a better place to work'.
- Clear assessment systems enable the school to monitor when pupils are slipping behind so prompt action can be taken. Self-evaluation is accurate and used to set ambitious targets. Secure systems have ensured that staff absences have not slowed pupils' progress. The school has a very good capacity to improve.
- Well-planned teaching programmes encourage pupils to develop strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and a keen sense of citizenship. Work throughout the year and in themed weeks provide rich experiences of other cultures and places which the pupils vividly remember.
- Equal opportunities are well promoted by the school's high expectations of all pupils. Discrimination of any kind is not accepted.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support, which has been effective in helping the school to improve.
- Performance management is scrupulously organised so staff feel supported and know clearly what is expected of them. Good school development planning indicates when targets have been reached and helps ensure that whole school requirements are balanced with the training needs of individual staff. However, the school does not provide frequent opportunities for teachers to learn from the outstanding teaching of others, either from within the school or outside.
- Parents are exceptionally well involved and their views are overwhelmingly positive. Inspectors received letters and e-mails from parents expressing their deep appreciation of the school. The school works very effectively with other services and schools and with the adjoining Children's Centre.
- Safeguarding meets requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors support and challenge the school well, using members' wide ranging skills and experience to good effect. Many members of the governing body have served for long periods but are still fresh in their commitment to the school. They have a good understanding of how their pupils' achievement compares with other schools, and know the school's context, of the quality of teaching and of the safety of children and how it is ensured. Governors' knowledge

of pupil premium funding is thorough so that they know the amounts, how they are used in different ways and their impact. They are fully involved in managing the head teacher's performance, drawing on 'outside' advice as necessary, and have a clear overview of staff's performance management.

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	116659
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	413401

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Norman Hewer
Headteacher	Anita McLaren
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2009
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