

Stirchley Community School

Pershore Road, Birmingham, B30 2JL

Inspection dates 12–13 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.

- Pupils make good progress in a range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics.
- A good number of pupils who stay at the school for more than two years make excellent progress in reading and writing.
- Teaching has improved and is now consistently good. Some is outstanding.
- Teachers give pupils ample opportunity to talk about their learning and to explain their thinking.
- Pupils' positive attitudes make a significant contribution to their learning in lessons.
- Pupils feel safe because they feel that the school gives them good strategies to deal with any concerns and issues in their lives.
- Behaviour is good. Improvement to the behaviour of pupils with particular behavioural needs is excellent because of the positive and respectful way that all staff engage with pupils.
- The headteacher has established a vision of high expectations for pupils' personal and academic achievement. As a result, all teachers and other staff are constantly looking for how they can improve what they do.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make it clear enough what pupils will be learning in lessons and how precisely they will know when they have been successful.
- Occasionally, teachers set activities that do not give pupils just the right amount of challenge in lessons because they are too easy or too hard.
- Pupils do not have frequent enough opportunities to solve real-life problems in mathematics and so apply and extend their knowledge and skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, three with the headteacher. Eleven teachers were observed. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Inspectors met with small groups of pupils to talk about their learning and to gather their views about the school. They also heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff, and with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at past and current information about pupils' progress, pupils' literacy and topic books, their mathematics books, their work on display and documents relating to behaviour, safeguarding, monitoring, and school improvement planning.
- The inspectors talked to parents informally at the start and end of the day and took into account the 21 responses shown in the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 101 responses in the school's recent parent survey.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Appleby

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stirchley Community School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The remainder of pupils are from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A well above-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- A well above-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A high number of pupils leave and join the school in all year groups at different times throughout the year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expected standard for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers always:
 - share lesson objectives and planned outcomes that focus precisely on what pupils will learn and on how they will know when they have been successful
 - plan activities that meet the full range of pupils' abilities in all lessons.
- Further extend opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their mathematical knowledge and skills through the solving of problems related to real life.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress in Nursery and Reception from starting points which are below and sometimes well below expected levels. In most years, only half of the children reach the expected levels for their age by the by the end of the Reception Year.
- The attainment of children currently in Nursery and Reception has improved. Most children are reaching the levels expected for their age this year in all areas of learning except in writing and mathematics.
- Children in the Reception class talk animatedly about what they have been learning and are keen to find out more. Well-planned activities enable them to explore and find out things for themselves. For example, during the inspection, children used a range of computerised toys and equipment to find information and to develop their reading and number skills, including making talking books about the school for next year's Nursery children.
- The proportion of pupils who make and exceed expected progress is higher than national figures in reading and writing, and about the same in mathematics. Talking to pupils and work in books indicate that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is average in reading, writing and mathematics, reflecting good progress from their low starting points. In Year 6, where movement in and out of the school has been less dramatic, attainment is above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make good progress. The gap was much wider in 2012, with pupils about two terms behind in English and a year behind in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who joined the year group in Years 4 and 5 some with low starting points was high. This year, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals remain about half a term behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 but the gap closes more and more each year as pupils move up the school.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress and, of those that stay at the school, most reach the same standards as their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress and a good number reach their potential, especially those who have a statement for their special educational needs.
- The school's information about pupils' attainment and progress posted online does not fully reflect the effect of some pupils' low starting points when they join the school in year groups other than Reception. Once they have settled, these pupils make good progress but they often have too little time to reach national expectations in the time available. This makes pupils' progress at the end of Years 2 and 6 look less than it is.
- Younger pupils have good knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make (phonics) which helps them read and spell words quickly and accurately. Despite lower starting points, an average proportion of Year 1 pupils reached the expected level in last year's phonics check.
- Older pupils read widely for pleasure and to find out information to support their good learning in a wide range of subjects, including history, geography and religious education.

- Progress in mathematics is good but is not improving at the same rapid rate as reading and writing because pupils do not always have frequent enough opportunities to apply and develop their knowledge and understanding of numbers by solving real-life problems.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and sometimes outstanding. A consistent strength is the way in which teachers constantly ask pupils questions during lessons to check their understanding and to give them additional support and guidance when they find the work too difficult.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to check their own work and to respond to teachers' comments to improve it, especially in literacy. This helps them to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers use a range of different methods to keep pupils interested in lessons. Teachers plan excellent opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and writing in a number of different subjects so that there is always a good and relevant reason for the activity. Computers, role play and regular discussions build pupils' computer and speaking skills effectively.
- Homework supports pupils' learning well. Pupils read regularly at home and often complete additional examples to help consolidate what they have learned in lessons. After-school clubs, such as the weekly book club, provide additional learning enrichment opportunities.
- Sometimes, lesson objectives tell pupils what they will do and the steps they should take to complete the planned task. Pupils are not always clear, however, about whether they have been as successful as they should. When teachers explain clearly what a good-quality piece of work will look like, pupils are able to check for themselves whether they are being and have been successful.
- On occasion, teachers do not give pupils different tasks and activities to meet the range of abilities in all lessons and so give them all just the right amount of challenge to help them to reach their potential without support.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are fully involved in lessons. They settle quickly to tasks and strive to do their best. They are keen to answer questions and listen attentively and respectfully to others' point of view. They help each other out if someone gets stuck, and try to work things out for themselves first before asking the teacher or another adult for help.
- Behaviour is good at all times. Pupils from different backgrounds get on extremely well together. Playtimes are fun. Pupils enjoy joining in with a wide and varied range of games and activities. Play leaders and house captains play a significant role in leading play and in rewarding good behaviour and conduct with stickers.
- Pupils always show great respect to adults and each other. Relationships are positive. As a result, the behaviour of pupils who sometimes find it difficult to always behave well has improved significantly. Pupils say, 'We are happy in school and are proud to be here.'
- Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility and to make their views known through the

school council and house captain meetings, and by expressing their point of view in lessons. They are learning to be democratic by accepting the majority vote for decisions taken, such as who will be house and vice-house captains and which charity the school will raise money for each year.

- Pupils feel safe. They know how to stay safe in school and when out and about. They know about different kinds of bullying, including homophobic and cyber-bullying, and what to do if it happens to them. They are confident that the school will solve any issues. Although they are adamant that instances are extremely rare. The parents' responses in surveys support this view.
- Attendance has improved significantly over the last three years and the school is close to reaching its target of 95% attendance this year. Nearly all pupils have good attendance but, despite the school's efforts, a small number of families still do not send their children to school regularly enough.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has established a shared vision of high expectations for pupils' achievement. Systems for gathering, analysing and sharing information about pupils' progress have improved and so teachers challenge each other if pupils' progress starts to dip. Immediate steps to improve teaching ensure that the large majority of pupils quickly regain any lost ground.
- All leaders, including teachers who lead particular subjects and aspects, work in close partnership to check the quality of teaching across the school. They have an accurate view of how well the school is doing through regular conversations with teachers about pupils' progress, by observing learning in lessons, and by talking to pupils about their work.
- The quality of teaching has improved. Training for teachers supports the school's needs and the needs of individual teachers as identified in performance management plans. Other adults who work in school have attended relevant training that helps them to support learning in lessons, to maintain a safe environment and to lead play activities at lunchtimes.
- The school promotes equal opportunities well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, especially those with a statement for their needs, are given the support that they need to make good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Teachers plan subjects that promote pupils' good learning and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In particular, pupils have good insight into their own feelings and so empathise well with others. They have good knowledge and respect for different religions and beliefs, and develop a strong sense of the world around them through subjects such as computer studies, art, music, religious education, history, science and geography.
- Pupil premium funding is checked closely, including by the governors, to ensure that the additional staff and resources the funding pays for is raising the attendance and the achievement of eligible pupils in reading, writing, mathematics and computer skills.
- The local authority knows the school well due to regular checks, visits and conversations about its work. It offers advice and support to improve further the quality of teaching. Training for teachers and governors is provided when requested.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's work through regular

meetings and frequent visits to classrooms. They check regularly that the money they have allocated is being spent in the right way to raise pupils' achievement. Suitable training has given them the knowledge they need to ask the school probing questions about pupils' progress which they use to make decisions about staff pay rises and promotion. Safeguarding arrangements are monitored closely to ensure that they meet national 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	103264
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	412259

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve McFall
Headteacher	Davie Clifford
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2009
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