

Oakham Primary School

Darbys Hill Road, Tividale, Oldbury, B69 1SG

Inspection dates 27–28 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The high expectations of the headteacher, shared by all leaders and governors, have empowered teachers to make improvements so that teaching across the school is consistently good with much that is outstanding.
- Pupils make excellent progress across the school because teachers plan tasks that motivate pupils and enable them to meet and exceed the challenging targets set for their work.
- Attainment in reading has been consistently above the national average at the end of Year 6. Mathematics has risen strongly since a dip in 2011 and is now well above the national average and writing is steadily improving so that it is above the national average.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well; they are very polite and well-mannered. They work extremely well together and so live up to the school's mission statement of 'succeeding together'.
- Pupils feel very safe, play well together and are very confident that adults will always help them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils reflect on their work and their place in the world and have mature discussions about faith, values and issues that they may face.
- The broad range of subjects and topics studied is highly effective in ensuring excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The extremely well resourced Early Years Foundation Stage, especially the outside area, gives children an excellent start to school.
- All leaders have been effective in making improvements in the quality of teaching through mentoring and coaching. This has resulted in improving standards, particularly in mathematics and writing. It has also ensured that more pupils make progress that is better than might be expected in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Members of the governing body have an excellent understanding of the work of the school and ask pertinent questions of leaders that enable the school to make further improvements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons and part-lessons. They were accompanied by the headteacher or deputy headteacher in eight of the observations.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and with pupils from Years 2 to 6.
- The inspectors heard pupils read from Years 1 and 6.
- Inspectors looked at the school's development plans and monitoring files, the headteacher's leadership files, and arrangements for the management of staff performance, and minutes of the governing body meetings. They also looked at the school's records of pupils' progress and evaluated work in pupils' books. Inspectors also considered the 45 staff questionnaires that were returned.
- There were 38 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors held informal discussions with parents and carers at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took note of the school's survey of parent views on the school website.

Inspection team

Jenny Batelen, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Trevor Neat

Additional Inspector

Rena Saggi

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the 30-place Nursery and two Reception classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. These include pupils with complex learning needs, behavioural, social and emotional needs and medical needs.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with a small minority from a range of other backgrounds. A small minority speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority) is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has had considerable staff changes in the last two years, particularly in Key Stage 1. There has also been a reorganisation of the senior leadership team.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the opportunities for pupils to further improve their work by enabling them to identify for themselves the sequence of skills that they need to develop.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children enter Nursery with skill levels that are well below those typical for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy.
- All pupils, including those from a range of backgrounds and the few who speak English as an additional language, make at least good progress throughout the school and many make outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This excellent progress is clear from work seen in lessons and in books, as well as the records of pupils' achievement held by the school.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 6 making rapid progress from their end of Key Stage 1 levels, is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Previously variable progress in Key Stage 1 has now been addressed as new leadership and staffing has raised expectations, improved teaching and consequently progress is now raising standards to above the national average.
- Skilled teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) means that pupils have confidence in tackling unfamiliar texts. The recent phonics screening check shows Year 1 pupils improving on last year's standard and again exceeding that found nationally in 2012. Pupils enjoy a range of books and pupils in Year 6 are currently enjoying the tasters they are sharing of a range of classic texts including Shakespeare.
- Writing skills are practised across the full range of subjects studied. Pupils are very clear about what they must do to succeed and they know how to improve; as a result the number of higher levels achieved by pupils in Year 6 in this year's assessments has improved considerably on 2012. Pupils in Year 5 clearly demonstrated their skilled use of description as they wrote about their experience 'inside the Trojan horse' in a history themed English lesson.
- Pupils have an excellent grasp of basic mathematics skills and this, alongside a good grasp of the language of mathematics, enables them to continue to make excellent progress and to reach higher standards than previously, especially in reaching higher levels.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress at least in line with their peers with many making much better progress than would normally be expected. This is because their needs are clearly identified and they are helped through small group work, support in class and one-to-one support from skilled teaching assistants.
- Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium make progress at least in line with their peers and there is strong evidence of faster progress so that the gaps between their attainment and that of their peers is closing. Attainment for these pupils currently at the end of Key stage 2 means that they are half a level behind their classmates in mathematics and reading and one third of a level behind in writing. Funding is used to provide extra staff and resources and to ensure that these pupils are able to participate in all school activities, thus ensuring equality of opportunity for all and that there is no discrimination.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The high expectations of what pupils can achieve was clearly demonstrated in a well-planned lesson where Year 6 pupils were planning a flyer to attract people to the Globe Theatre to see a

Shakespeare play. Pupils already had an excellent understanding of how to use persuasive texts, the increased challenge was to use 17th century language to communicate with those of Shakespeare's time.

- Focused questioning from all adults helps pupils to make excellent progress in their learning as they are able to think more deeply about their tasks.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and this ensures that pupils learn correctly and develop a very secure understanding of the subject. This was evident when a Year 2 more able group were learning how to find fractions of numbers. They confidently used subject specific language such as numerator and denominator and applied their knowledge of number facts to solve the problems. This secure understanding meant that they were able to solve harder, more challenging problems without adult help.
- Teachers give thorough oral and written feedback which enable pupils to know how well they have done and how they can further improve their work. They have opportunities to comment on their classmates' work and to give mature reasons for their comments.
- Pupils are skilled at assessing their own work. Very clear success criteria mean that they know what they must do to succeed in each lesson and they are clear about how well they have met the criteria. School leaders are keen to strengthen this further by helping pupils to understand the sequence of skills needed in each area of learning so that they can more clearly identify their own next steps to improve.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a wide range of exciting opportunities to explore and develop their own learning through adult-led and self-initiated activities, both inside and outside. They especially love being outside, whatever the weather. They use their imagination extremely well as was demonstrated when three children cooperated to 'bake a cake' using soil and water, and grass for the icing. Many opportunities for discussion with adults help develop their communications skills, and phonics teaching is introduced when children are ready.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils behave exceptionally well at all times. They are often complimented on their behaviour when out of school and records show that behaviour seen during the inspection is typical of life in school.
- Very clear behaviour management strategies and highly effective behaviour support means that those who find it difficult to manage their feelings are helped to get on well with others. There are no exclusions recorded and the few incidents recorded relate to friendship issues and are quickly resolved.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are keen to learn, ask questions and work well with each other so as to make excellent progress. They value the help they are given by all the adults in the school. Relationships between all in the school are very strong and the respect for each other is very evident. As one pupil said: 'different people make school fun, if we were all the same it would be really boring'.
- Pupils feel very safe and they are helped to know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations such as fire safety, cycling proficiency, in the community and when using the range of modern technology. Parents wholeheartedly agree that their children are safe in school.

- Pupils are confident that there is no bullying of any kind and most of their parents agree with this view. They are very confident that the adults in school will help them if they have any concerns or worries.
- Attendance has risen since the previous inspection and is now above average.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The dedication of the headteacher and his clear focus on improving the learning for every pupil is well supported by all staff and governors. As a result there is a relentless drive on improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils. This has led to more outstanding teaching, the number of higher levels achieved rising in all subjects, and gaps in attainment narrowing for all groups of pupils. This clearly demonstrates the school's strong capacity to make further improvements.
- All teachers, including senior leaders, feel valued in the work they do and appreciate the opportunities to develop and improve their skills further. The careful analysis of how well individual pupils are doing and holding staff to account for this progress, with targets for improvement, ensures that staff fully understand their responsibility for pupil achievement.
- Senior leaders, including the headteacher, support staff in local schools as well as their own, through monitoring, coaching and training teachers to improve their skills and so improve learning.
- Partnerships are strong with a range of outside services that further support pupils' achievement and also with parents who feel that they are well-informed and able to help their children make progress.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about the range of subjects they study and the visits and visitors that make these even more exciting. Their studies promote the skills for pupils to be lifelong learners and to be active citizens of the United Kingdom and globally. Pupils have many chances to appreciate each other's cultures and beliefs and also to experience art, literature, music and sport.
- The local authority gives light touch support to this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are very committed to the school. They undertake training and constantly visit the school at work so that they can effectively monitor and support the work of the school. They have an excellent understanding of the standards reached by pupils compared with those nationally and share the headteacher's determination to continually improve this. They know about the quality of teaching and how this has an impact on the progress pupils make. They know how any underperformance is tackled. Governors fully understand and check the process of setting targets for teachers and make sure that any increase in pay or promotion are justified by pupils' progress and achievement. They monitor school finances carefully and understand how the pupil premium funding is used and how this makes a difference for those pupils. They are rigorous in undertaking their statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding pupils. Parents know the governors and share any concerns or worries, to which governors respond and work with staff to resolve these concerns.

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	103950
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	402931

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	466
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Moore
Headteacher	Philip Jones
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
Telephone number	01384 254368
Fax number	01384 254422
Email address	school.office@oakham.sandwell.sch.uk

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