

Aldermoor Farm Primary School

Acorn Street, Stoke Aldermoor, Coventry, CV3 1DP

Inspection dates

9–10 July 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.

- The quality of teaching, although improving, is not consistently good and not enough is outstanding to accelerate pupils' learning.
- Some teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what their pupils can achieve, particularly the most able. They sometimes miss opportunities to move them on quickly to their next steps once they show that they understand.
- Although pupils know their targets, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to make it clear in lessons and through marking, what pupils need to do in order to achieve their target levels.
- Achievement in writing is rising at a slower pace than in reading and mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Achievement is rising rapidly across the school and particularly in mathematics where progress is now outstanding.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and develop good social and learning skills.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and are keen to learn. Their behaviour round the school is good and they are polite and welcoming to visitors. They say that they feel safe and are well known and supported by adults.
- Attendance rates have risen and are now above average.
- The care and support provided for pupils facing challenging circumstances, including those in the special resource unit, and for their families, is outstanding.
- The inspirational new headteacher is well supported by her senior team and by governors. They have established high expectations for the achievement and well-being of pupils. They have ensured that inadequate teaching has been eradicated and that the quality of teaching rapidly improves.
- The range of subjects that pupils study and the outstanding variety of extra activities that are provided promote their social skills and their enjoyment of learning, and enrich their experience.
- The school's engagement of parents and carers, raising expectations of what their children can achieve, is outstanding. The school is a beacon of good practice in engaging with the local community.
- This is a rapidly improving school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons, five of which were jointly observed with one of the school's senior leaders. They also made a number of further short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, the local authority improvement partner and staff, including year group leaders.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policies, self-evaluation and development planning, monitoring records, information about pupils' progress, safeguarding documents, and samples of pupils' work.
- The views of parents and carers who responded to the school's questionnaire were taken into account. There were six responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also took account of 43 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection took place in 'Transition Week' where all pupils moved to their new classes with new teachers.

Inspection team

Mary Davis, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Trevor Neat	Additional Inspector
Russell Hinton	Additional Inspector
Kate Robertson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is high, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, with the largest group having speech, language and communication needs. Currently fifteen pupils on roll have been diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum.
- The school has a special resource unit for nine children with autism, many of whom are included in mainstream classes on a part-time basis.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high with the largest groups being of African heritage. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language with some, newly arrived, at a very early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for looked after pupils, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils who have a parent in the armed forces) is high.
- The school serves a community where a high proportion of pupils and their families face challenging circumstances.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher took up post in January 2012.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club that is free for all pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what their pupils are able to achieve, particularly the highest attainers, so that they consistently provide appropriately challenging tasks, especially in writing
 - increasing the pace of learning by making sure that teachers quickly move pupils to their next steps as soon as they identify that they understand
 - enabling pupils to take more responsibility for their own progress, by making sure that they understand precisely what they need to do to reach and exceed their target levels, through clear advice in lessons and through the marking of their work.
- Accelerate progress in writing further by:
 - providing more opportunities for extended writing and using the wide range of experiences the school provides across different subjects to stimulate and inspire creativity.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children join the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding that are typically well below the levels expected for their age, particularly in their very low language and communication skills. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage, developing good learning and listening skills, preparing them well for Key Stage 1, but are still below expectations by the end of the key stage.
- In Key Stage 1 pupils continue to make good progress. Levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of the key stage have been consistently significantly below average. In 2013, however, they have risen to broadly average in reading and mathematics but remaining below average in writing due to some pupils' exceptionally low starting points.
- Results of Key Stage 2 national tests have also risen. Recent results show that attainment has risen strongly in mathematics to above average with a high proportion of pupils attaining the highest levels. This demonstrates outstanding progress from very low starting points. Attainment in reading has also improved to broadly average although that in writing dipped from 2012 levels but with an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5. There is no significant difference between the achievements of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
- Pupils' achievement over time requires improvement because attainment in writing still lags behind that in reading and mathematics. Leaders' robust tracking of progress across the school indicates that the proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected rates of progress compares favourably with pupils nationally in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing is slower, particularly for those pupils with complex needs. Some opportunities are missed to use the exciting experiences provided for pupils, to accelerate their writing skills and to inspire them to describe their experiences using a variety of writing styles.
- All pupils enjoy reading. From the start children learn how to sound out words. Systematic support to develop reading continues throughout the school. By Year 6, the large majority of pupils are reaching or exceeding expected attainment levels in reading. Pupils expressed their pride in winning a recent competition where the prize was selecting new books for the school library.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress as a result of the specialist support they receive. Those with severe and complex needs in the resourced provision achieve well because of the expert support that enables them to be included wherever possible, supported by their key worker. The pupils who speak English as an additional language are similarly well supported and achieve well.
- In 2012 the gap between the attainment of those receiving the pupil premium and their classmates had narrowed. These pupils were two terms behind their classmates in English and mathematics. This gap has narrowed further in 2013 to less than a term behind. This shows the effective use of the additional spending on a wide variety of support, including one-to-one tuition and small-group teaching.
- Pupils say that lessons are fun. Inspectors observed Year 1 pupils learning directional language thorough a lively, active task involving actions. They then applied this new language to explain how a character should move to its destination avoiding the monsters on the way.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Leaders' rigorous checking shows that, although teaching has improved strongly during the year, it is not yet consistently good. This was confirmed by inspection evidence, which showed that the teaching in literacy lessons was not as strong as that in numeracy lessons.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils are able to achieve in literacy and set tasks that are too easy and that do not offer enough challenge for the most able pupils. A small minority of teachers were observed setting tasks for the lowest attainers that did not sufficiently promote their learning, for example, by asking them to draw pictures rather than develop their literacy skills.
- During the inspection, teachers were teaching classes that were unfamiliar to them as it was 'transition week.' Some missed opportunities to assess pupils' prior understanding effectively and to move pupils on quickly to something new once they showed that they understood.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of their targets through the detailed information provided for them and their parents in their progress files. However, some teachers are missing opportunities to refer to these targets when they set learning objectives. As a result, pupils do not always understand precisely what they need to do to achieve them and to take responsibility for their own progress.
- Marking of work is clear and many opportunities are provided for pupils to respond to advice or to practise skills, together with opportunities to assess their own work and that of others. However, some teachers miss opportunities to link advice to pupils' targets.
- Teaching in mathematics is strong and tasks and resources are well matched to pupils' individual needs. In a good numeracy lesson, the teacher was quick to identify when pupils required extra support and brought them to the carpet, where she could explain again and build their confidence before sending them back to try the task again.
- Teaching assistants are a strength of the school's provision, whether they are providing one-to-one expert support for pupils in the resourced provision, or supporting a group of pupils within the classroom. They take an active role, quickly identifying when pupils lack confidence and gently encouraging them to have a go.
- Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage promotes enjoyment of learning in a lively environment. Children develop their social and language skills through play and make good and sometimes outstanding progress. This is particularly seen in the sessions devoted to language development. Here, for example, repetition and rhyme are used effectively to reinforce children's understanding of new words and to enable them to practise using them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons throughout the school. They are keen to contribute their ideas and show excitement in their learning. During the inspection, teachers skilfully established their high expectations of behaviour with their new groups by praising and rewarding those who behaved well. Pupils are quick to respond to adults' instructions and understand the 'golden rules', including being kind to one another.
- Pupils are tolerant of those with behavioural problems, particularly those with autism, and do not allow themselves to become distracted from their work during occasional disruption. Year 6 pupils told inspectors how much the school had helped them control their behaviour, one

commenting that he used to behave badly but now the school was proud of him.

- Staff, parents and carers and pupils all agree that behaviour has improved and is now good. The new headteacher has established her high expectations for standards of behaviour and will not allow pupils' learning to be disrupted. For this reason exclusion rates are currently above the national average but rigorous record keeping shows that these are declining.
- The wide range of exciting and stimulating playground activities and the spacious outdoor areas provide a wealth of opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in something that interests them. This includes a music area and an outdoor stage where they can sing and dance. This results in pupils being fully occupied and behaving well.
- Pupils told inspectors that the school keeps them safe and that bullying is rare. They say that there is 'silly name-calling' rather than serious incidents and that adults support them well, particularly the learning mentors. They understand the different forms that bullying can take and say that the school takes racist incidents very seriously.
- The family support worker and the wider leadership team provide outstanding support for the many children and their families who face challenging circumstances and make sure that the school is a safe haven for these children.
- Attendance rates have risen and are now above average. This is partly as a result of the unceasing support provided for pupils at risk of low attendance, including making home visits. The breakfast club ensures that all are able to start the day well.

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher has quickly established her high expectations and her vision for the school. The impact can already be seen in dramatically improved achievement and behaviour. All the staff who responded to the questionnaire expressed very positive views about the rapid improvements that have been made, many saying how proud they are to be part of the team.
- Leaders have considerably raised expectations of what constitutes good practice and closely check on all aspects of teaching, providing appropriate, well-matched training and coaching to improve practice. Robust action has been taken to eliminate inadequate teaching and leaders' monitoring shows a clear pattern of improvement across the school, including through very effective analysis of the performance data of each class. However, these improvements are not yet sufficiently secure or sustained, so that there is still some inconsistency, especially in the teaching of writing.
- Teachers and middle leaders are now more closely held to account for the progress in their classes or areas of responsibility. Progress meetings lead to well-focused support for pupils, including individual mentoring, enabling areas of underperformance to be addressed.
- Leaders know the school extremely well and have identified appropriate priorities for development. The introduction of a new mathematics scheme has had a dramatic impact across the school in raising achievement in this subject.
- Leaders' analysis of pupils' progress is extremely thorough, ensuring that the performance of all groups of pupils is checked and that there is equal opportunity for all. They work particularly hard to ensure the inclusion of all and that there is no discrimination.

- The range of subjects provided and the wealth of extra enrichment activities engage pupils well in their learning and make a good contribution to their spiritual, moral social and cultural development and to raising standards. The school is well-resourced to include a 'forest school' area and a fully equipped kitchen where pupils and their parents can learn to cook together. Sporting activities include ice hockey sponsored by a local professional team.
- The local authority provides good support for the school, particularly in developing middle leaders' capacity to promote good teaching and in providing training for governors.
- Leaders' efforts to support and engage parents and carers are outstanding. They have worked hard to raise the expectations of parents of what their children can achieve, including thinking of future careers. They have increased attendance at parents' meetings from zero to 80% by providing extended one-to-one discussions and the provision of progress books. An atmosphere of trust has been created and parents facing challenging circumstances rely on the school for the support that it provides.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors work well to provide appropriate support and challenge for the school's leaders. Their role in supporting families and the community is also a strong feature of their work. Governors have an excellent understanding of performance data, so that they are able to track the school's improvement and compare the school's performance with schools nationally. They know well the school's strengths and areas for development and take an active role. They are fully aware of the spending of the pupil premium, making suggestions as to how it should be spent, and checking its impact on raising the achievement of the pupils it supports. They have made sure that the management of financial resources is effective and that safeguarding procedures and practice meet requirements. They know about how the school manages teachers' performance, including that of the headteacher, and how it rewards good teachers and tackles any underperformance.

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	103681
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	404889

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	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Tait
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Kaminski
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2011
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