

Gig Mill Primary School

The Broadway, Norton, Stourbridge, DY8 3HL

Inspection dates 11–12 September 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.

- Gig Mill is a caring school. Providing pupils with the best education is at the heart of everything the headteacher, staff and governors aim to do.
- As a result of their actions, teaching is consistently good across all year groups and pupils achieve well.
- The school has excellent procedures for when children first start school, which are highly valued and praised by parents.
- All pupils make good progress in a range of subjects including reading and mathematics.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. The pupils enjoy school and are proud to be a member of Gig Mill Primary.
- More-able pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Autistic pupils who attend the 'Base Camp' make excellent progress because of the outstanding teaching and curriculum.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding make better progress than similar pupils nationally.
- Pupils say, and parents agree, that they feel safe in school.
- The rich curriculum helps children to enjoy their learning and achieve well.
- The governing body has a clear vision and is actively involved in the school. Its members rigorously check the school's work and performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress of pupils, especially boys, in writing is below that of reading and mathematics.
- Progress in spelling, punctuation and grammar requires improvement.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is not sufficiently effective to help pupils use their knowledge to spell correctly.
- The poor attendance and punctuality of a very small number of pupils is proving hard to tackle.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons taught by 18 teachers, including one lesson seen jointly with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher. In addition, they made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The inspectors looked at past and current information about pupils' progress and their work in books and on display. They heard a number of pupils read in lessons.
- The inspectors met with small groups of pupils to talk about their learning and to find out what they thought about the school. Inspectors also met with subject and year leaders, two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed a range of documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, records of behavioural incidents, and the school's information about what is going well, its improvement planning and governing body minutes.
- The inspectors talked to parents informally at the start of the day and took account of 40 responses on 'Parent View', two letters and two e-mails from parents.
- The inspectors took note of 18 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Caroline Pardy, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Terence Payne	Additional Inspector
Georgina Beasley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Gig Mill Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- Since the last inspection the school has developed specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This 'Base Camp' caters for eight pupils who have autism. They are taught with the rest of their year group for mathematics.
- The number of pupils who join and leave partway through their primary school education is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards (the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress).
- The current headteacher is retiring at the end of the autumn term and the governing body has appointed a new headteacher to start in January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of phonics so that pupils use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to help them always spell correctly.
- Improve achievement in writing by making sure that pupils, especially boys, have the time in lessons to make improvements to their spelling, punctuation and handwriting in response to teachers' marking.
- Improve the punctuality and attendance of pupils and accurately record lateness.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well due to consistently good teaching and the effective support by other adults; as a result pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 6 in most years.
- Pupils' exercise books show that they make good progress over time in every class, and many of the pupils produce a large quantity of work that is neatly presented.
- The achievement of pupils in Nursery and Reception is good. Most pupils reach expected levels of attainment and some exceed them. Children's personal and social development is supported well. They become independent and confident and learn the value of working together sensibly.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least expected progress and a good number exceed this. The progress of pupils with a statement is good, especially for those pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in the 'Base Camp'. This is because the schools records show that typically the pupils enter the school lacking in confidence and reluctant to communicate with others. In a short time they gain confidence and begin to use language accurately to express their needs and wants and the barrier they had in working with their peers are quickly reduced. This was seen during the inspection where pupils in the base camp were playing with their peer mentors from Year 6.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to use many different styles of writing, for example letters and stories. However, achievement in writing is not as good as in reading and mathematics for all pupils, particularly some of the less-able boys.
- The achievement of more-able pupils is good with the majority exceeding expected progress in many subjects including English and mathematics. The school has an arrangement with a local secondary school for a small number of more-able pupils to be taught mathematics with Year 7 pupils. This challenges the pupils to make outstanding progress.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has increased since 2011 making it above the national average. There are some variations in attainment owing to the movement of pupils in and out of the school. Pupils' work shows good progress because the number of pupils making and exceeding expected progress is average in reading and above average in both writing and mathematics. The gap in attainment between boys and girls is closing as a result of the introduction of a programme of support for girls where small groups of girls receive extra tuition.
- Pupils' reading standards support good learning in other subjects. However, they do not always use their knowledge of letters and sounds to spell correctly. There are some weaknesses in punctuation and grammar as well as spelling because they are not always encouraged to take enough time to correct their mistakes.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make better progress than this group nationally and it is improving in line with other pupils in the school. Individual support and guidance for these pupils is helping to improve their attainment, in English and mathematics. School records show that the attainment gap between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils is closing, especially in English.
- The school uses its sports funding to provide a wide range of sporting activities, both in physical

education lessons and after school. It employs specialist swimming instructors and all pupils have swimming lessons. Pupils say they enjoy these lessons, participation is high and pupils leave the school able to swim.

The quality of teaching is good

- Fundamental to the good rate of learning are the positive relationships between pupils and staff. Teachers 'teach from the heart' and show a passion for teaching. They plan lessons that build on what pupils know and can do and that meet the needs of the different groups of learners well. Pupils feel confident to ask and answer questions even when they find the task difficult.
- Teaching in the 'Base Camp' for autistic pupils is good, as teachers plan lessons that meet the individual needs of the pupils to help them achieve well. There are regular discussions with parents and pupils in order to review their learning and talk about the next steps.
- Teachers successfully use a range of activities and resources such as role play, drama and talk partners to engage pupils in their learning. Questioning is used effectively by the majority of teachers to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers give pupils good feedback about their learning and so they know how well they are doing. However, they do not always give them enough time to check that they have made the necessary improvements in their next piece of work, especially to spelling, punctuation and handwriting.
- Adults who work alongside teachers in lessons support pupils' learning well. They ask questions to guide pupils' thinking, but also encourage them to think for themselves in order to extend their learning.
- When teaching is occasionally outstanding, teachers show that they have very high expectations for what pupils can achieve and provide challenging activities that develop their understanding of the subject. They constantly check pupils' learning and make tasks more difficult if necessary to move learning forward at a rapid pace. For example, in a mathematics lesson the pupils who could add simple algebra went on to adding problems where numbers were in brackets.
- The teaching in Nursery and Reception classes is good. Teachers plan activities and games that develop pupils' personal development and physical development extremely well, and listening and speaking skills well. However, teachers do not always reinforce their teaching of phonics by planning activities that use the letter sounds being learnt in other activities during the day.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive; they are attentive and keen to learn in lessons. They work diligently and are keen to please their teachers. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and are proud of their school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils are respectful towards one another and adults, for example holding doors open for someone if they reach it first and saying 'thank you'. There have been no exclusions in the last two years.
- In the playground pupils play well together, sharing toys and equipment and inviting others to

join them. They show self-control and are aware of the impact of their behaviour on one another. Year 6 girls make friends with pupils from the 'Base Camp' to enable them to join in with school playtimes as part of the school's 'buddy' programme.

- Pupils say they feel safe in school, and parents who responded to Parent View or spoke to inspectors unanimously agree. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, both in school and in the wider community, and are aware of the need to keep safe when using the internet.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying, and are confident to tell a teacher if they have a concern.
- The school is aware that the attendance and punctuality of pupils is an area that it needs to improve. Staff are working with a very small number of families and with the local authority, on reducing persistent absence or lateness. Some families are hard to reach and improvement in a few cases is proving difficult. The school inaccurately records pupils who are late; after the close of registers (9.30am), it shows these to be absent.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because some pupils do not take sufficient pride and care with their work and because attendance still needs to improve.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's vision for the school is understood and acted upon by all. Staff morale is high and they enjoy working at Gig Mill School. The results of the staff survey were all positive.
- The headteacher and leadership team are aware of the strengths and areas of development for the school and have clearly identified the priorities that will bring about further improvement. Since the last inspection the school is more rigorous in measuring the impact of its actions, and its own view of its performance is accurate.
- Teaching is good and improving. Rigorous performance management procedures include clear improvement targets for staff which are supported by an effective training programme. The in-school and local authority support provided for newly qualified teachers is effective in helping them to plan good lessons.
- The curriculum is rich and links the learning across subjects together. Music, geography, history, Spanish, French, science and sport provide opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities and trips, including a residential visit. The curriculum for the pupils in the 'Base Camp' allows them to develop self-confidence, social and emotional skills as well as promoting academic achievement.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve achievement, and make sure that all staff have a good understanding of all subjects. Year leaders monitor the progress of pupils and make sure that support is relevant to their learning needs so that they make good progress. The school makes sure that pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and that discrimination is not tolerated.
- Good leadership in the Nursery and Reception makes sure that children have a rich and varied

curriculum that makes learning interesting and fun.

- Parents commented favourably about the arrangements for children to join the Nursery. The school works well with parents and encourages them to get involved with their children's learning.
- Strong leadership for learning in the 'Base Camp' means that pupils do well. Pupils' progress is monitored closely so that they receive the support they require to make good progress.
- The leadership of the special educational needs is good. There are clear procedures in place to track pupils' progress and improve the rigour and accuracy of assessment. Pupils' achievement is monitored well and programmes adjusted quickly when needed. However, opportunities for greater parent and teacher involvement when reviewing individual learning plans for pupils are sometimes missed.
- The local authority provides 'light-touch' support. It has helped the school to implement the new national assessment framework in Nursery and Reception, and is supporting improvements to writing.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear vision for the school and drive it forward. They have been active in supporting the initiatives introduced to raise achievement. They are frequently in school, especially as there is a governor attached to each year group, and pupils commented on how much they like being able to talk to a governor. The governing body is well organised and trained. It is active in the long-term planning for the school, including the appointment of the next headteacher. The governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and data about the school's performance. They make sure that all national requirements regarding safeguarding are met. Governors know about the quality of teaching and how underperformance is tackled, and make sure that only good teaching is rewarded financially.

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	103822
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	427079

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	504
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet West
Headteacher	Philip Raybould
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2008
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