

Whitnash Primary School

Langley Road, Whitnash, Leamington Spa, CV31 2EX

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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. Select

- Achievement has consistently risen since 2011 and by the time pupils leave Year 6 they are above the national average.
- Good and improving teaching allows all groups of pupils, including those with disabilities or who have special educational needs, to make good progress in English and mathematics and achieve well.
- Teachers provide interesting and engaging lessons which are motivating and encouraging pupils to learn. This has been a key feature in improving attainment in both English and mathematics to an above average level.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to stay healthy and safe. Behaviour is good and pupils say that if any issues arise they are dealt with effectively.
- The school fosters pupils' personal and social skills successfully and engenders high levels of self-confidence and their positive attitudes to learning. This is especially so in the nurture provision the school provides.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The senior leadership team have a strong focus on improving teaching and high expectations for raising pupils' achievement are shared by all staff and governors.
- Good leadership, management and governance make sure the school is constantly improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress of more able learners is sometimes hampered because they are not given enough opportunities to work independently.
- Systems to collect information about pupils' progress are not easily manageable and accessible to all staff.
- Achievement in writing is not as strong as it is in reading and mathematics because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write extended pieces of writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed all teachers teaching at least twice. A total of 14 lessons were observed, four of which were joint observations carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils read and observed lessons on the teaching of reading and letters and the sounds they make (phonics).
- Discussions were held with school leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a group of pupils. The inspectors also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team examined a range of school documentation covering safeguarding, the management of staff performance, records of behaviour and safety, attendance, checks on pupils' attainment and progress and school improvement planning.
- The inspectors took account of 46 parental responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the six responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Ronald Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Field

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average- size primary school which has varying numbers of pupils in each year group. Pupils are taught in seven classes: a Reception class, and one class per year group up to year six.
- The proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school at times other than the normal starting points is above average. In some year groups this has been well above average.
- There is a much larger than average proportion of pupils entitled to support from the pupil premium (which provides extra funding to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from other groups such as children in the care of the local authority).
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average, but the proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average as is the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs for emotional, behavioural and social difficulties.
- There is a private pre-school provision on the school site, but this did not form part of the inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise teaching and achievement to outstanding by ensuring that all teachers
 - provide greater opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces of writing
 - develop the full potential of more able pupils by giving them more opportunities to work alone.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that the information available about pupils' progress is readily available to staff and easy to use.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement has improved rapidly since the last inspection. Current school information and 2013 national test results show all groups of pupils make at least good progress, from their individual starting points. This has led to attainment in both English and mathematics that is above average at the end of Year 6. This makes sure that all pupils are well prepared for their future education and lives.
- Children enter the Reception Year, with skills and abilities that are well below that normally expected for their age, but make good progress to enter Year 1 with standards which are typical for their age.
- The good progress in the Reception Year is down to good teaching, which makes sure that all children settle quickly and their individual needs are fully met. Lessons are planned well and adapted to take account of the learning taking place, as well as being fun and interesting.
- Pupils' good progress continues across the school and the proportions of pupils who make and exceed their expected progress compare favourably with the national averages in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs all make good progress throughout the school from their very low individual starting points. School information shows that they leave the school approximately six months behind their peers in school in both mathematics and English.
- The school is firmly committed to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils, and extra support where required. This is clearly shown by the work of the nurture provision where work, which complements the work done in lessons, is expertly targeted to meet individual needs and delivered by skilled adults,. This reflects the inclusive nature of this school and the positive attitude, 'that all can do well.'
- A clear and concerted drive to improve progress in mathematics has been successful and this is now the strongest subject. Part of this success is due to lessons being fun and engaging. This was shown in a Year 3 lesson where pupils were outdoors exploring addition and subtraction, the answers to which formed clues to part of completing a secret mission. This fully engaged all the pupils who were totally engrossed in their learning throughout.
- Standards in English have risen rapidly since 2011, but still vary a little due to writing not being as strong. This is due primarily to teachers not giving pupils enough opportunities to write and complete extended pieces of writing.
- The progress of those pupils who benefit from pupil premium funding is at least good in both English and mathematics, and is similar to that of all other pupils. This makes sure there is no gap in attainment between these pupils and their peers in both English and mathematics.
- A programme to support the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has rapidly improved pupils' progress in reading and increasingly so in writing. Some children in the Reception Year were able to correct words and sentences and all enjoyed mark making and writing. Pupils across the whole school enjoy reading and school information shows their attainment is above average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2.

- The achievement of more able pupils is rising rapidly in line with their peers, but they are still not yet all reaching the levels of which they are capable. This is due to the fact that teachers do not provide enough opportunities for them to work independently and stretch themselves fully.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good, with some that is outstanding. It has improved substantially since the last inspection and is the main reason for pupils' good and improving achievement.
- School leaders have high expectations of the teachers and pupils and check teachers' performance regularly. Together, leaders and teachers share a common belief that all pupils deserve a good education regardless of their background and/or disabilities and are seeking to continually improve teaching and achievement. Pupils say that the teachers 'provide fun education.'
- Lesson planning is effective and staff modify their lessons to take account of the learning pupils make during lessons. Lessons and tasks are generally designed well to meet the needs of all pupils, but more able pupils are not always given enough opportunities to work on their own so that they reach their potential.
- All pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those in receipt of pupil premium, are focused on their learning, keen to work together and are eager to succeed. This results in classrooms full of pupils who work hard and have a positive attitude towards their learning.
- In the best lessons, teachers expect pupils to be able to think and learn by themselves. In a Year 3 literacy lesson pupils were studying question marks. The theme was again around completing a secret mission. This motivated the pupils and resulted in them being fully engaged in small groups and individually and so made excellent progress. However, this approach is inconsistent across the school and especially for the more able pupils.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and suggest the next steps they need to take in order to improve their work. Pupils use this information to improve their work. However, teachers need to challenge the more able pupils more by providing opportunities for them to work independently.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Work is precisely planned to reflect the backgrounds of the children and the local environment. The themes chosen in the Reception class are all based around the children's own interests and this provides extra motivation to learn. The good choice of reading materials also stimulates the children. For example, the story of 'Aliens Love Underpants' encouraged the pupils to explore the story in a wide range of activities.
- Almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire said that teaching is good.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough regular opportunities to write at length by themselves. This is preventing some pupils reaching the higher levels in writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in school. They generally have good attitudes to learning in lessons, however, when tasks are not sufficiently interesting pupils' concentration drops. There has been only one exclusion in the past year.
- Pupils are able to learn because the school is a safe and caring environment. This is helping them to make good progress.
- Teachers and other adults in school manage the behaviour of pupils well, even those who have significant behavioural needs. The nurture provision is a key aspect of this and the staff who work in this area support both the pupils and staff in developing good behaviour across the school.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe both in school and out of school. They feel that all the adults in the school care for them. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils stated that the school gives them advice about being aware of the dangers of strangers and even how on how to cross the road safely.
- Pupils have a good understanding about all types of bullying such as racial and homophobic, and they know who to speak to should it happen, which is rare.
- Pupils are keen to come to school. Attendance has risen sharply and is above average.
- Parents and carers, and staff agree that pupils behave well in school and are well looked after.

The leadership and management are good

- Since her appointment in 2012 the headteacher has created a clear plan for the school's development. She has created a new management team, alongside which she has accurately identified areas for improvement and acted upon them. The headteacher has made sure that leaders and managers at all levels are well trained and able to carry out their roles effectively. This has resulted in improvements in the school, for example, strategies to improve achievement in mathematics are proving effective. Strategies to improve English have also been effective. Nevertheless, leaders are not complacent and recognise that further action is necessary to make sure that progress in both English and mathematics continue to improve.
- Systems are in place to check the progress of individual pupils, and do provide information on which senior leaders and managers build improvements. However, these systems are a little cumbersome and are not easily accessible to all staff. This also results in some confusing information, which can cause problems when information is required quickly. The headteacher and governors have recognised this and are taking appropriate action.
- Pupil premium funding has been used effectively to provide individual support for pupils and for partly funding the nurture provision. The result of which has been that these pupils make at least good progress.
- The new government sports funding has been used to provide specialist physical education provision and break and after school sports provision. Discussion with pupils clearly shows that this is having a positive effect on attitudes to physical activity.
- The school greatly values the help, advice and support given by the local authority which have all contributed to the improvements made by the school.

- Monitoring of teaching is regular and shortcomings are being quickly resolved, resulting in rapidly rising achievement. Targets to help teachers improve are closely related to pupils' achievement and teachers' pay.
- Equality of opportunity is a key element of this school, which places a high value on all individual pupils. It does not tolerate discrimination of any type and makes sure that all pupils have equal access to all the subjects taught.
- The range of subjects taught is effective in meeting pupils' needs and it promotes the development of pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual awareness well. Pupils' personal development and awareness of the wider world is good and pupils have a good understanding of the multi-cultural and multi-religious world in which they live.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies and practices meet current statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school. Governors are clear about how well pupils are progressing and are aware of the results pupils attain in national tests and how they compare with other schools. They monitor the quality of teaching to check the effectiveness of teaching and hold all staff to account through the performance management procedures and link this closely to their pay progression. Governors understand the areas that the school needs to develop and are fully involved with leaders to see through the plans for improvement. Governors have a clear understanding of how the pupil premium is allocated and its successful impact on improving levels of pupil attainment. They are also fully aware of how the sports funding has been spent and the level of enjoyment this has brought to the pupils. The governing body makes sure the school meets its statutory safeguarding requirements and is highly supportive of everyone in school. Governors provide both support and challenge to school leaders. The governing body benefit from regular training opportunities to improve their effectiveness.

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	125560
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	428892

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Jones
Headteacher	Deborah Fulford
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2012
Telephone number	01926 426773
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