

Highley Community Primary School

Grasmere Drive, Highley, Bridgnorth, WV16 6EH

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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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.

- From a low starting point, all pupils make good progress and achieve well in English and mathematics thanks to good teaching.
- Teachers give pupils extensive opportunities to work in pairs or small teams. As a result, they get on well together and have good collaborative skills.
- Strong teamwork between teachers and skilled extra adults ensures that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are helped to make the same good progress as their classmates.
- Pupils feel safe at school and their standards of behaviour are good. They contribute to making the school a happy place for everyone.
- The headteacher is supported well in improving the school by a highly effective team of senior and subject leaders and the governing body.
- The wide range of learning opportunities contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of teaching requires improvement. Some teachers do not make the best use of assessment information to plan suitably challenging work for differing ability groups, such as the most able pupils.
- Some teachers' marking does not consistently help pupils to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, four of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons, listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, senior and subject leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and talked to parents. The views of the 33 staff who completed questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a number of documents including the school's view of its own performance, the school development plan, monitoring files, records of governors' meetings, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. They also looked at information that the school keeps on pupils' progress and achievement.
- The inspection team also observed pupils at the start of the school day and at break times.

Inspection team

David Evans, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Dennis Brittain

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from a White British background with a very small percentage from a range of minority ethnic heritages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and other groups, is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is above the national average.
- 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?

- Strengthen teaching so it is consistently good or outstanding by ensuring that:
 - marking is always used effectively to help pupils to improve their work
 - all staff make full use of assessment information to provide work that fully challenges pupils of different abilities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills and abilities that are often well below those typical for their age. This is particularly true in communication, language and literacy. As a result of high-quality teaching, a stimulating learning environment and a wide range of exciting activities, children make good progress. Even so, by the time they enter Year 1 a significant number have not reached the levels of attainment expected nationally.
- Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 has resulted in pupils now achieving well. Attainment in English and mathematics is moving increasingly towards levels that compare favourably with other schools. For many pupils, rapid progress has made up for lost ground.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. The results of the national screening check on how well pupils in Year 1 know sounds and the letters they represent (phonics) were below average in 2012. Immediate steps were taken to address the needs of pupils and the 2013 results show that 88% of the current Year 1 pupils have met the required standard, which is above the national average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are keen readers and they use phonic skills well to tackle any unfamiliar words. They say they enjoy reading and they can talk knowledgeably about their favourite books.
- Until 2012, attainment and achievement by the end of Year 6 had been below average in both English and mathematics. Since then the improvements have been particularly striking, and the 2012 Year 6 national test results were above average.
- The unconfirmed results for 2013 show that this very positive trend has continued and by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in mathematics is particularly strong, and the proportion of pupils who exceed expected progress is above the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress whatever their difficulties. This is because good teamwork from the staff who work with them ensures that help and guidance are tailored to their particular needs, offering the right balance of challenge and support to enhance their learning.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. Eligible Year 6 pupils in 2012 were working one term behind their classmates in English and mathematics, but two terms ahead of similar pupils across the country. Data for the current Year 6 show that the gap has closed and those supported by the pupil premium are performing broadly in line with their classmates in English and mathematics. This clearly demonstrates the school's commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils.
- During the inspection, good quality work was seen in writing and in mathematics. In English, pupils write very well in a range of different styles and for different purposes. They use vivid words to record their thoughts, such as writing about myths and legends in Year 6. In mathematics, they are adept at solving problems and are confident to think things out for themselves.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching over time has resulted in good achievement for pupils. A small amount of the

teaching seen during the inspection required improvement and no outstanding teaching was observed.

- The majority of teachers have consistently high expectations which are made explicitly clear to pupils.
- The best learning happens when teachers provide pupils with high levels of challenge and promote their independence and resourcefulness. Adults ask pupils probing questions that deepen their understanding. On these occasions, pupils are keenly engaged in tasks and learning proceeds at a brisk pace.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage pupils to use technical vocabulary confidently and accurately. They reshape lessons effectively according to pupils' understanding, so the momentum of learning is maintained.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively, so most lessons are conducted in a calm and productive manner.
- Training for teachers has been well planned to focus on the development of pupils' skills in English and mathematics, and this has had a significant impact on pupils' standards throughout the school. The training has also involved teaching assistants, who make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They work in close partnership with teachers and are particularly effective at supporting small groups and individual pupils.
- On the odd occasions where the teaching seen was weaker, teachers did not make full use of assessment information to set work for pupils that was demanding enough and pupils did not learn with the speed, commitment and enthusiasm that was typically seen where teaching was good.
- The quality of teachers' marking is variable. Some is good and provides pupils with clear and helpful guidance about what they need to do to improve their work. However, not all teachers' marking is as effective in providing pupils with precise feedback, nor are all the pupils given sufficient time to respond to teachers' advice so they can develop and improve their skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are proud of their school. The large majority are well behaved, polite and helpful to others and to the adults around them. They get on well together and show high levels of tolerance. Behaviour at playtimes is good.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is, and they know that this is not tolerated in school. They are confident that the adults around them will help them should they have any worries. They understand the concerns regarding the use of the internet, and know how to keep themselves safe in a range of circumstances.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and most try hard with their work, especially when they have strong relationships with staff.
- Pupils develop their social skills well when working in pairs and small groups. Many readily discuss their ideas with a partner, although in a minority of lessons some pupils made limited efforts to join in with discussions.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their punctuality is good and attendance levels are above average. Strong links with outside agencies support pupils well, and parents confirm that the pastoral care their children receive is effective.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides calm but quietly determined leadership that has been instrumental in leading the school forward. She has a clear grasp of what works well and what needs further improvement. Improvements have been made through effective evaluation of the school's work, strategic planning supported by governors, and better teaching.
- The headteacher is ably supported by an effective senior leadership team and a skilled and enthusiastic group of subject leaders for English and mathematics. Strong teamwork is a key driver in improving teaching and ensures the school has the capacity to improve further.
- There has been an effective focus on continuing to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in English and mathematics. The good systems to manage teachers' performance have enabled the school to reward staff appropriately for success as well as to address rigorously any issues that arise. The targets set for teachers are linked closely to training activities. If not all targets are met, then teachers are not moved up the salary scale.
- Joint lesson observations with the headteacher during the inspection showed that she recognised good teaching and where further improvement is needed.
- The school has ensured that all pupils now make good progress, illustrating its successful commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination. This has included the successful use of pupil premium funding to ensure that eligible pupils make good progress, but are also enabled to take a full part in the life of the school.
- The curriculum has a strong focus on the development of reading, writing and mathematics, and learning is enhanced by well-planned enrichment activities. For example, pupils are encouraged to write about the European Day of different languages and European traditions, such as Polish celebrations and events. In addition, they research the history of the colourful totem poles which are proudly displayed in the school grounds.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly supported. A positive emphasis on diversity has given pupils a good understanding of cultures beyond the immediate locality, both in the rest of the United Kingdom and abroad. The school provides pupils with a clear moral and social code where they value everyone equally. Their cultural development is promoted well through a range of clubs and visits to places of educational interest. There are strong links with inner-city schools and pupils celebrate a wide range of cultures.
- Senior leaders have clear plans for using the primary sports funding. Sport is already a strong feature of the school's work and leaders already employ the services of a coach who provides various sporting activities throughout the school day. They find that this is capable of promoting pupils' health and well-being.
- The local authority has a good knowledge of the school and provided strong support in the past. As a result of the school's continued improvement, it now provides 'light touch' support.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are knowledgeable and highly committed to further improvements within the school. They are very supportive of the leadership team and offer help and challenge in equal measure. Governors have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching and the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils within the school, including those known to be eligible for pupil premium funding. Governors have used the funding well to provide individual support for pupils, which enables any that fall behind to catch up quickly. They frequently visit the school to observe lessons, interview staff and talk to pupils. They set the headteacher targets to improve the school and contribute to managing staff performance and pay, ensuring that everyone is held to account for pupils' progress. Attending regular and relevant training ensures that governors are well equipped to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. They take an active part in school life, and individual governors are linked to English and mathematics and to year groups. The budget is well managed and governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. For example, they make sure safeguarding arrangements meet all 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	123371
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	429654

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Frost
Headteacher	Marion Jones
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2012
Telephone number	01746 861541
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