

Welsh House Farm Community School and Special Needs Resources Base

Welsh House Farm Road, Quinton, Birmingham, B32 2NG

Inspection dates 5–6 December 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.

- From typically low starting points, all groups of pupils achieve well.
- Pupils who have been at Welsh House Farm for all of their education reach nationally expected standards by Year 6, and an increasing number exceed this level. The many pupils who join in later year groups quickly settle and make good progress.
- Pupils are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards rose in the national tests at Year 6 in 2013.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, the pupils in the resource base and the high numbers known to be eligible for free school meals all do well because the school takes exceptionally good care of individuals, particularly those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable.
- Almost all teaching is at least good, and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 6 and the resource base are particularly well taught.
- Pupils are happy and proud of their school. They feel safe, behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- The driving force behind the school's improvement has been the good leadership of the headteacher, who is strongly supported by a knowledgeable and highly involved governing body which has challenged leaders rigorously.
- Pupils have many memorable and vibrant learning opportunities, including a wide variety of visits and visitors to the school, which contribute very well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching to ensure all pupils' progress is rapid and sustained across all year groups, particularly in mathematics.
- Some subject and key stage leaders are new to their roles and have not been fully involved in checking the quality of teaching or pupils' attainment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons involving nine teachers and one assembly; two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors held discussions with school leaders, staff, governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils' progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and samples of pupils' work. They heard groups of pupils reading and spoke with others about behaviour and safety arrangements at the school.
- As part of Enterprise Day, the normal timetable was suspended with all pupils working on enterprise activities for part of each day. The inspectors observed literacy and mathematics teaching and phonics sessions. They also looked at pupils' workbooks to inform the judgements on the quality of teaching and progress in English and mathematics over time.
- Account was taken of the four responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own parent survey and the views expressed by those parents and carers who spoke with inspectors at the start of the school day. Consideration was also given to the 26 responses from staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Michael Bartleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sa'ad Khaldi

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups, the largest of which are from Black African and Caribbean heritage. Around one pupil in three comes from a White British background.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This caters for 13 pupils who have cognition and learning difficulties.
- Around one pupil in ten is disabled or has special educational needs supported through school action. This is average. Around one pupil in five is supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, which is well above average.
- Around four in five pupils are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from a family with a parent in the armed forces), which is well above average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of one full-time Reception class and one Nursery class with morning and afternoon sessions. Some children attend the Nursery class full-time.
- A high proportion of pupils start at the school after the Early Years Foundation Stage, and they often join partway through the school year. In 2013 only 7 pupils in the Year 6 class had attended the school throughout Key Stage 2.
- The governing body manages a before-school club daily.
- A new leadership structure was initiated in September 2013 with leaders taking responsibility for Key Stage 1, upper and lower Key Stage 2, English and mathematics.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding so all pupils make rapid and sustained progress, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan activities which have the right level of difficulty and pitch the questions they ask in lessons to challenge different ability groups so learning moves at a rapid pace
 - activities develop older pupils' confidence and independence so that they are able to complete all tasks successfully.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by further developing the role of subject and key stage leaders to assist the headteacher in checking school developments, pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in language and communication. They get off to a good start, are well taught and make good progress, although attainment is still below average levels when they start Year 1.
- By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics is average, and an increasing number of pupils attain the higher Level 5. Overall pupils make good progress, given their often low starting points.
- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in all subjects and particularly in writing, which has improved as a result of better teaching and increased opportunities to write at length. School data and the work seen in lessons and pupils' books show that standards are set to rise again in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2014.
- In 2013, Year 6 girls did less well than boys in reading and particularly in mathematics. The school has responded by closely monitoring the progress made by girls in this subject. Current data show that this is not an issue in other year groups.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics, although good overall, is slower than in reading and writing. Some older pupils do not have a secure understanding of basic calculations or lack confidence and independence. Not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels in their work because some tasks in lessons do not move their learning on quickly enough.
- Pupils in the resource base make good progress overall, and outstanding progress in their social and personal skills, because their needs are extremely well provided for.
- The school has worked effectively to improve the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make). Results in the national phonic screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2013 were below average, in part due to the high number of pupils who joined the school during the year with limited reading skills. Attainment in reading continues to improve. It is currently below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make accelerated progress to reach levels above their counterparts nationally.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional teachers and teaching assistants, and to fund curriculum enrichment opportunities. The attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium in English and mathematics in 2013 was above that of other pupils in the school by, on average, about four terms. Eligible pupils currently in the school are making even better progress than other groups.
- Pupils appreciate the new teaching arrangements for physical education, funded by the government. The school has used the funding to arrange for coaching and to increase participation in after-school sports, which the headteacher plans to monitor regularly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good and there are elements of outstanding practice, particularly in the resource base, in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Year 6, where pupils' next steps in learning are extremely well planned for. In Year 6, ongoing discussions between the teacher and the pupils during writing activities enable all pupils to make rapid gains in their writing standards.
- Teachers show that they have high expectations for pupils' work and behaviour. Reading, writing, mathematics and increasingly phonics are taught effectively. In the better lessons, relationships are strong, teachers question pupils effectively to assess and extend pupils' understanding, and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning.
- Good links are made with previous work and other subjects. Pupils are motivated by the tasks in hand and they have good opportunities to discuss and share their ideas with each other. As a result, learning is fun and all groups of pupils make good progress. This was seen during the inspection in a Year 2 class when pupils developed a good understanding of 'profit and loss' following their Enterprise Day activities.
- Where teaching is less strong, teachers underestimate what pupils can achieve and do not ask probing questions to extend pupils' thinking. This means that some of the tasks are too easy or too hard, so learning does not move forward quickly, particularly in mathematics.
- The high number of pupils supported by the pupil premium receive well-managed help which is enabling them to achieve better than other pupils. The focus on individual needs also ensures that disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those from minority ethnic groups and those who have recently joined the school are supported effectively and progress well.
- Teaching is good in the Reception and Nursery classes, where adults provide interesting activities which engage children. They intervene at appropriate points to enhance children's learning and regularly assess and record their progress in the learning journals. Correct use of language and vocabulary are promoted effectively through all activities, both indoors and outside, so that children make rapid gains in their communication skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and show clear values of respect and tolerance to each other. The good relationships between all groups of pupils and adults contribute to the sense of belonging in the school.
- The school's culture of 'caught being good' promotes a positive learning environment. School records confirm that pupils' behaviour is good on a daily basis and is improving over time, although it is not yet exemplary, particularly in less formal situations. They like the rewards they get for good behaviour and work. Pupils readily take on responsibilities as prefects, councillors and monitors. The few pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour are supported well.
- Concern for pupils' welfare is a strength of the school. Staff use their excellent working relationships with outside agencies to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Parents and carers said that all staff go the extra mile to ensure that all pupils are able to access high-quality learning and enrichment activities.
- Attendance is average and continuing to improve, which reflects the effective work of the family

workers and the programme of support for individuals and their families.

- Parents and carers say their children are safe and well cared for. This view is reflected in the confidence expressed by pupils that they are safe at school and that any bullying is dealt with effectively. Pupils have a good knowledge of all forms of bullying, for example cyber-bullying.
- Pupils are helped to develop a range of strategies so they are able to manage everyday risks for themselves, such as those associated with the internet, drugs and road safety.

The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership by the headteacher has been central to the school's improvement since the previous inspection. With effective support from governors and other staff, she has successfully raised expectations and ensured that standards are continuing to rise.
- The headteacher understands the needs of the local community and has established a school environment which parents, pupils and staff welcome and value.
- The accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses by the headteacher and governing body, combined with the record of improvement, shows that leaders have a strong capacity to improve the school further. The headteacher has managed developments and staff changes well so there is a common sense of purpose and staff morale is high.
- Regular lesson observations, followed by detailed feedback to teachers and a successful programme of training, have ensured that most teaching is good, with an increasing proportion that is outstanding. Leaders use pupil progress data to inform their discussions with staff and to set teachers specific targets for improvement. The performance of teachers is managed effectively.
- The support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including the high number with a statement of special educational needs, is managed outstandingly well by the two special needs coordinators and the manager of the resource base. All these pupils make good progress because the programmes of work are tailored precisely to their individual needs.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well. There are no recorded incidents of harassment.
- Leaders, including those who have been appointed recently to lead subjects and key stages, are very focused on improving the life chances of all pupils and removing any barriers to learning for all pupils whatever their circumstances.
- The pupil premium money is used to improve the attainment and progress of eligible pupils to give all children equal opportunities to succeed.
- The curriculum is interesting and is enhanced by visits, visitors and assemblies; this supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Visits, including residential visits and sessions with the Royal Ballet, opportunities to develop music, singing, sporting activities and themed days add further enrichment.
- 'Light touch' support from the local authority provides assistance for school leaders and

governors. The school works effectively with a range of others in the local area to share teachers' training and to check the accuracy of assessments. This has helped leaders to evaluate the school's performance accurately and to develop a clear strategy to improve the school further.

- Leadership and management are not outstanding because initiatives to improve pupils' mathematical skills have not yet been translated into higher attainment and some new subject and key stage leaders are not yet fulfilling their roles effectively.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors use their skills, knowledge and experience to support, monitor and challenge senior leaders effectively. They are fully involved in setting performance targets for the headteacher as well as monitoring the effectiveness of targets set for teachers to raise the achievement of pupils. They understand the school's performance information well and check how decisions will have an impact on pupils' learning and achievement. Governors visit the school regularly so that they are well informed about the quality of teaching. They ensure that teaching effectiveness relates to pay and promotions. Governors monitor the school's finances carefully and check regularly that the pupil premium funding is having the expected impact. Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively, ensuring, for example, that procedures for safeguarding pupils fully meet 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	103295
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	427125

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	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Freeman and Simon Jay
Headteacher	Caroline Cowan
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2010
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