

# Suckley Primary School

Church Lane, Suckley, Worcester, WR6 5DE

**Inspection dates** 30–31 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Outstanding teaching and a lively curriculum ensure that all pupils develop and achieve exceptionally well relative to their starting points.
- Rapid progress throughout the school ensures that standards are usually well above average by the end of Year 6.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium and the most-able pupils make good progress.
- Pupils joining the school in different year groups achieve as well as others because they are given work at the right level from the start.
- Pupils are confident learners and communicators and are very well prepared for their secondary education.
- Behaviour is outstanding and pupils feel very safe in school. They fully understand and support the school's emphasis on core human values.
- The headteacher sets high expectations for teachers to continually improve their teaching, with a clear and strong emphasis on the quality of the pupils' learning.
- Governors have very effectively ensured continuity of high quality provision during the current transition period in leadership and management. Some parents have commented favourably on this.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons, mostly accompanied by the headteacher, and observed a range of other activities, including violin and dance lessons.
- Meetings and discussions were held with staff, groups of pupils and governors. No responses to the Parent View questionnaire were available but the inspector took into account five letters from parents and the views of a number of parents spoken to at the start of the school day.
- The inspector heard pupils read in the classroom and looked at pupils' work in their books. He examined a range of documents including: safeguarding policies and procedures; the school's self-evaluation; lesson plans and records of the progress of past and present pupils.

## Inspection team

Peter Kerr, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much-smaller-than-average primary school in a very rural setting. It takes in pupils from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds.
- Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage and hardly any speak English as an additional language.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils is supported by the pupil premium. In this school the pupil premium is allocated for looked-after pupils and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average. An above average proportion is supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. Most of these pupils have specific or moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication needs or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school part-way through their primary education.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An acting headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed from 1 January 2014 following the departure of the previous headteacher and a class teacher and pending the appointment of a new permanent leadership and management team. An executive headteacher, who is a local leader of education, was also appointed at the same time to oversee the transition period.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the pupils' creative development by including art and music skills more systematically in the planning of topic work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Achievement is outstanding. Records of individual pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work, taken alongside national test results, show that all pupils make exceptionally good progress from their starting points during their time at the school. As a result, overall attainment in English and mathematics is well above average at the end of Year 6.
- Children join Reception with skills typically at or below those expected for their age. They make good progress especially in their personal development, language, communication and mathematical skills. They enter Year 1 with skills still slightly lower than expected.
- The attainment in Key Stage 1 varies from year to year. In 2013 the Year 1 phonics (linking letters and sounds) check results were similar to those of most schools which was an improvement on the previous year. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment, whilst varying from year to year, is broadly average. The overall results in this small school are strongly affected by the significant variations in intake from year to year.
- Learning in lessons is consistently good because pupils understand what they need to do to improve and have all the support they need to do so. High expectations for more-able pupils enable them to make good or better progress each year to reach appropriately high standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make better progress than other pupils in the same year group because of effective individually targeted support. The oldest pupils currently in the school, for example, gained over a term on their peers in each subject over two years to close the attainment gap entirely. Their attainment is now level with other pupils in mathematics and higher in reading and writing. Similar high rates of progress are evidenced for pupil premium pupils in other year-groups.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is checked very carefully and very effective steps taken to ensure that they do at least as well as other pupils relative to their starting points. In nearly all cases this results in the pupils reaching at least the expected attainment level in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Some parents and carers expressed great appreciation of the school's success in this area.
- Pupils who join the school part-way through their primary education make good progress because their attainment levels are determined very quickly and work is set that is not too easy and not too hard.
- Pupils are prepared extremely well for secondary education because of their competence in literacy, numeracy and communication skills. Their attainment is particularly high in reading. Pupils read widely for recreation and for information. They confidently discuss the authors and types of books they enjoy reading.
- Pupils' writing has improved recently because of measures taken to close a gap that had begun to open between reading and writing. It is now of high quality content with accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Pupils learn well in mathematics because they enjoy it. Good examples were seen across the school of pupils collaborating in mathematical activities that made them think hard and explain

their ideas to each other.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **is outstanding**

- Teachers' exemplary planning is based on accurate assessments of the pupils' progress. Skilled presentation of lessons, excellent team work among staff and highly individualised support for pupils ensures that all groups of pupils learn consistently well.
- Teaching in Reception is highly effective in developing children's social skills and supporting them to learn in a formal class situation as well as through play. Staff work very closely with parents and carers, sharing detailed information on the children's development and helping them to further their children's learning at home. The outside area is used exceptionally well to promote enjoyable practical learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils very effectively as they work, providing extra challenge for the quicker learners and good support for those working at lower levels. They observe and listen to pupils carefully and sometimes adjust the lesson to striking effect in response to pupils' suggestions.
- For example, highly effective science teaching was seen in the Year 3 and 4 class when the teacher took into account a pupil's suggestion that a wider straw would move faster along a string than a narrower one. This 'hypothesis' was tested and found to be correct, to the pupils' delight, even though it had not been part of the original lesson plan.
- Consistently good teaching of phonics helps pupils to read and spell well and a good range of books and access to information websites encourages pupils to read widely.
- Teachers give useful feedback, through marking and discussion with pupils, on how to improve the content of their writing and their spelling, punctuation and grammar. Word processing and voice recording are used astutely to motivate reluctant writers, particularly those with specific learning difficulties, and to encourage the most able to write at length.
- Mathematics is taught consistently well so that pupils acquire key knowledge such as multiplication tables but also enjoy open-ended activities that lead to discoveries. For example, a Reception child found out that the order doesn't matter when adding numbers when she was encouraged to change the arrangement of the sums she was doing using magnetic numbers.
- Physical education is taught exceptionally well. Lessons and clubs provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to participate and excel, especially in sports.
- Excellent musical instrument tuition is provided and some lively and tuneful violin playing took place during the inspection. Visiting specialists are also deployed well to broaden the pupils' experiences in art. Opportunities for all pupils to develop art and music skills during regular lessons are more limited.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **are outstanding**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The pupils themselves say that it is. Relationships between pupils and between staff and the children are excellent. The school is a very friendly, welcoming place for pupils and their families.

- The outstanding behaviour and the positive attitudes in lessons ensure that pupils' learning is never interrupted by pupils being distracted.
- Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy taking on responsibilities for example, as school councillors or representing the school on a team. The great majority of pupils have a good attendance record. The school provides good support for those parents and carers who find it difficult to maintain good attendance.
- The pupils have a very mature understanding of the values that the school promotes and a sincere wish to live by them. This greatly enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is reflected in the very positive learning environment in the school.
- Pupils say they thoroughly enjoy school and this is evident in their keenness in lessons. Mathematics was the favourite subject among the pupils spoken to in Year 6. These pupils also said that they enjoyed art, but would like a lot more art lessons.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils and their parents and carers feel that the staff know and value them as individuals and this helps them to feel very safe in school. They have a good knowledge of how to reduce risk to themselves in a range of situations, both within and beyond school, including when using the internet.
- Pupils understand some of the different forms that bullying can take and are confident that members of staff will listen to them and deal quickly with any incidents that arise. They say that bullying is very rare. School records confirm this.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The acting headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He is very effectively supported by the acting deputy headteacher and their work is skilfully overseen by the executive headteacher.
- The headteacher very skilfully checks the quality of teaching. He provides exemplary feedback after observing lessons, accurately identifying teachers' key strengths and skilfully guiding them towards an even sharper focus on the pupils' learning. As a result, teachers are highly motivated and the quality of teaching is clearly improving.
- The headteacher is also an extremely effective figurehead for the school, leading the way in establishing a highly positive set of values, attitudes and beliefs. This is very evident in assemblies in which he communicates directly with the pupils about their lives in practical and engaging ways. For example, an assembly which was ostensibly planned to admire the perseverance of a famous Olympic athlete instead drew the pupils into celebrating the perseverance and success of four individuals who had overcome different obstacles to their learning to produce outstanding work.
- Leaders of subjects and other aspects within the school have supported the changing senior leadership team well to ensure that the outstanding qualities within the school have been maintained. This, together with the impact the new leaders have made in a short time, demonstrate the school's capacity for further improvement.
- The leadership and management team have astutely reviewed the planning of the curriculum and identified areas where opportunities for pupils could be improved. They have already acknowledged, for example, that more needs to be done to promote the development of pupils' artistic talents and skills.

- Together with the governing body, the leadership and management team is successfully keeping the confidence of parents and carers in the school while at the same time planning changes aimed at enriching the pupils' learning and development opportunities even further. A number of parents and carers commented very favourably on this.
- The school works closely with a number of other schools in the area to share expertise among staff and to extend opportunities for pupils, for example through the use of sports facilities. This contributes significantly to maintaining an outstanding curriculum.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are highly effective in their roles. The key strategic decision to provide an extended period for the acting headteacher to run the school with support from an executive headteacher is proving highly effective in securing a smooth transition towards a new leadership and management structure.
  - The governing body makes sure that the process of setting and monitoring of targets for teachers operates effectively so that pay is linked to the performance of staff and their management responsibilities.
  - Governors have an exceptionally clear grasp of the data on individual pupil's progress and use this information well to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed.
  - Governors are very aware of how the pupil premium is spent to support eligible pupils' progress and the impact this has on their attainment.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136983
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	440670

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Diana Holloway
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew Mander
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01886 884283
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