

Lightwoods Primary School

Castle Road East, Oldbury, B68 9BG

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects including English and mathematics, and many make outstanding progress in writing.
- Children get a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' personal, social and academic development is enhanced through the broad and rich range of learning experiences provided by the school, both in the classroom and through the many clubs, activities, visits and residential trips.
- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Teachers possess good subject knowledge and plan lessons skilfully and creatively to engage pupils' interests. As a result, pupils learn well and make good progress.
- Pupils' work is assessed exceedingly well. Teachers mark with precision and include comments to show pupils how to improve their work, particularly in writing. Pupils assess their own work and that of their peers with a good level of understanding.
- Behaviour is outstanding around the school and in the classroom. Pupils have a thirst for knowledge and demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is above average and pupils feel safe.
- Governors and the senior leadership team have directly and effectively tackled a drop in standards in Year 2 last year through well-considered targets used to manage staff performance. As a result, teaching is improving outcomes for these pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Given their starting points, too few pupils make better than expected progress in reading and mathematics for the school to be outstanding at this stage.
- Leaders are monitoring the progress of all groups more tightly so intervention is timely and targeted to secure better than expected progress. However, these strategies have not been checked thoroughly for effectiveness, especially for pupils eligible for the pupil premium.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons. Four of these observations were completed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed breaks, lunchtimes and attended registration and assembly.
- Discussions were held with parents, pupils, staff, governors, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and a representative from the local authority.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- A wide range of documents was examined, including samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress, the school's development plan and self-evaluation summary, reports from the local authority, records of any poor behaviour, and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and observed shorter sessions where pupils were receiving support in small groups, including the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is significantly higher, at around 60%, than the national average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is average.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium in this school. This is additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school works in partnership with Sandwell Local Authority and provides support to other local schools. It is in the second year of being a Teaching School. The headteacher is a National Leader of Education and the school has a Key Stage 2 Writing Moderator.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure more pupils make accelerated progress, particularly in reading and mathematics in Key Stage 2, through:
 - developing pupils' higher order skills in reading and comprehension so they interrogate texts by scanning and skimming for information more effectively
 - providing more challenging work for middle ability pupils in mathematics, especially girls.
- Ensure that senior leaders and governors rigorously check the progress of different groups, to ensure that:
 - more pupils from each group make better than expected progress
 - pupils eligible for the pupil premium achieve as well as possible.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school with skills and abilities broadly typical for their age. Good provision, including skilful teaching, prepares children well for entry to Year 1. Generally, they leave the Reception class with skills and abilities that are average or higher.
- Teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 1. A drop in attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2013 across all subjects has been tackled effectively by senior leaders. Current Year 2 pupils are on track to attain higher standards by the end of the year. School information shows that all groups of pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good progress and some are making outstanding progress as a result of consistently good teaching.
- Past data show that attainment at the end of Year 6 is usually above national averages. In the end of Key Stage 2 assessments taken by Year 6 pupils in 2013, pupils did particularly well in writing and the spelling and grammar test. They did not, however, perform as well in reading because some pupils found it difficult to skim and scan text quickly to extract key information. Pupils currently in the school are making better progress in reading but too few pupils are making rapid progress in comprehension skills.
- In the mathematics tests in 2013, a few more-able pupils did not make better than expected progress, though the overall results were reasonably good. While senior leaders are working successfully on extending more-able pupils in mathematics, school data indicate that too few girls and middle ability pupils make better than expected progress.
- School information shows that pupils in Key Stage 2 are now making good progress, and some are making outstanding progress. The current Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve higher standards and better progress than in 2013.
- In 2013, pupils' exceptionally good grasp of phonics enabled the vast majority to achieve the required standard in the national phonics check in Year 1.
- More-able pupils make good progress overall and their progress in writing is particularly strong.
- Until recently, the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has been slower than that of other pupils. This group of pupils are now making good progress in line with others.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make at least good progress and many make outstanding progress. The White British pupils make similar progress.
- The pupil premium is used well to support individual pupils through one-to-one tuition and support for behaviour. Because the number of pupils is so small, it is not possible to comment on their progress and attainment by the end of Year 6 without potentially identifying individuals.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Teachers teach with authority because they possess good subject knowledge and skilfully plan lessons that appeal to pupils' interests. They are mindful of the different abilities of pupils, and set work at different levels of difficulty so

that it is not too easy or too hard for most pupils.

- Teachers and teaching assistants successfully work together to plan support in class so that it is effective. Teaching assistants also take pupils in small groups to give them more intensive or individual tuition.
- In the Reception class and in Key Stage 1, phonics is taught well. Consistently good teaching supports pupils' exceptional progress in early reading.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have consistently high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Pupils' progress is monitored each term so that those requiring additional support are identified and provided for through well-planned individual tuition and small group support such as 'pitpals'. These strategies are proving effective in closing gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils and in ensuring that they gain skills and knowledge appropriate to their age.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and develop skills quickly across a wide range of subjects because classrooms are exciting places to learn in. For instance, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher made links with pupils' learning in geography by creating a river scene in the classroom which was then used as stimulus for poetry writing. Pupils used high quality language in their poems, such as: 'The sharp rocks are embedded in the crystal water.'
- In a Year 2 literacy lesson, the classroom was transformed into a wizard's room with magic dust, spectacles and magnifying glasses. The teacher used examples of a poem to promote initial discussion, and pupils set the learning objectives and decided the success criteria for the lesson. They worked with high levels of engagement, creativity and enjoyment.
- Teachers are highly skilled in using questioning to check pupils' learning during the lesson. They listen carefully to pupils and probe their understanding to see where gaps in learning might be. Pupils are eager to participate in lessons, they respond to questions thoughtfully, demonstrating a good level of understanding and recall.
- Writing is taught exceptionally well. Pupils have opportunities across all subjects to write at length and sharpen their writing skills. This leads to better than expected progress. Initiatives like the 'royal writer' encourage pupils to write well and have their good effort acknowledged publicly on the 'royal notice board'. The teaching of reading is not as effective as the teaching of writing because comprehension skills are not always taught skilfully enough to enable pupils to develop deeper understanding of the texts they read.
- Class work and homework are marked regularly. The marking in literacy books is outstanding. The relevant comments help pupils to understand how they can improve their work. Pupils are required to follow up on these comments. Further checking by the teacher ensures that pupils make gains in their learning as a result of this. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own progress and that of others. They do this sensitively making accurate use of the points for success. This is building self-confidence and deepening pupils' understanding of the subject.
- Classroom management skills are highly effective. Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. This helps to promote a very positive environment that is calm, purposeful and harmonious. Adults working in the school model the school's expectations and values.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is outstanding. Pupils have a thirst for knowledge, and a love of learning. Pupils are very caring, unreservedly polite and respectful to all members of the school community. From the early years, pupils are welcoming and confidently speak to visitors about themselves and their work. In the small group discussions with inspectors pupils politely listened to one another and took turns to speak. In lessons, pupils listen to teachers and follow instructions quickly and sensibly.
- Pupils possess strong collaborative and communication skills. In a Year 6 lesson on team building, pupils demonstrated good listening skills and worked with empathy, consideration and creativity in mixed groups to create shapes quickly and accurately using all of the team.
- Pupils take a great deal of pride in the school. The school values each pupil and the contribution that they make. Through the house system, school council, learning buddies, class monitors, playground buddies and librarians' duties, pupils develop leadership skills and take on responsibility. They value these opportunities and take them seriously.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils feel safe and happy in school. Older pupils happily play with younger pupils. One pupil caringly told inspectors that older pupils are responsible for holding the hand of a younger child on the walk to the church and ensuring that younger children walk farthest away from the traffic. Pupils understand how to keep themselves and others safe in different situations. They are aware of internet and road safety.
- Pupils understand right and wrong. They possess good awareness of different types of bullying, including racist, physical and homophobic bullying. Bullying is rare in the school. Pupils are confident that teachers will deal with bullying. Adults encourage pupils to resolve conflict by themselves wherever possible to build confidence and communication.
- Behaviour management is highly skilled and consistently good. The very good procedures followed allow staff to record and report unacceptable behaviour. The rewards system supports high quality behaviour from pupils, who enjoy the competition of collecting house points and receiving awards in assembly.
- Pupils who sometimes show challenging behaviour are supported well in acquiring self-management techniques. Close partnership between school, external agencies and parents support children and their families to develop good coping strategies and help to transform behaviour.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils enthusiastically and unanimously expressed their enjoyment of school. The pupil premium is used well to promote good attendance among eligible pupils.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection in 2011, the school has made good progress with the key issues identified in the last report. Leaders at all levels communicate their high expectations.
- Teaching is consistently good or better due to regular and accurate monitoring by senior leaders and the local authority. Teachers receive constructive feedback focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Staff share teaching approaches and resources, and there is an ongoing dialogue about teaching.

- The local authority has worked closely with school leaders and governors to strengthen middle leadership and improve teaching. The school leads the moderation of Key Stage 2 Writing in the local authority and it is an effective teaching school, working with the range of schools to improve teaching and learning.
- Pupils have a broad and rich range of subjects in the classroom, and good exposure to the 'forest school' and sporting, artistic, cultural, social and residential visits in this country and abroad. The school promotes outstanding spiritual, moral, cultural and social development for all of its pupils. The international aspect of the curriculum is important to the school's work of creating global citizens. Each year the school celebrates an international week and it has good links with schools in Germany, Finland and India. Pupils speak with excitement of trips abroad.
- The sports funding provided to primary schools is used wisely. Expert coaching has been purchased from specialist providers and this is widening pupils' experience of sport through archery, gymnastics, dance, games and team building activities. Teachers are required to attend some of these sessions in order to learn from the coach to improve physical education teaching.
- Good quality support and guidance are helping to close achievement gaps so that the school's equality policy supports the achievement of all groups of pupils.
- Pupil premium funding has been used well to support eligible pupils, for example by employing additional staff to provide one-to-one and small-group tuition in English and mathematics, and providing additional support for those with dyslexia and low self-esteem, and those with social and emotional difficulties. Consequently, these pupils have made good progress. However, the school has not evaluated in detail the effectiveness of different strategies to identify the ones that are having the most impact.
- The school welcomes parents at any time. Teachers view parents as partners in learning. Each class has a rota for inviting parents to assembly and parents are invited to a range of learning activity mornings including sewing, model making and 'irresistible learning weeks'. Some training in phonics has taken place and the school is planning to provide more.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- The school knows its strengths and what it needs to do to improve. Senior leaders and governors have not always focused closely on the progress of different groups, in particular to check if enough pupils in all groups make more than expected progress. The school is beginning to do so now, though it has not yet made this level of analysis a routine part of its monitoring and evaluation work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well organised and committed to their role. They have high expectations for the school and are very proud of its teaching school status. Governors bring a good range of professional skills to the governing body. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and provide good challenge and support to the school. They are familiar with its international links, curriculum, quality of teaching and learning and behaviour and safety. While governors know how the pupil premium funding is spent, they are less knowledgeable about the impact it is having on the eligible pupils. Good financial management means that staff and other resources are deployed efficiently. The process of managing staff performance, including that of the headteacher, is understood and carried out well. Pay progression is linked to pupils' results and good teaching.

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	103947
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	440506

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gaynor Darby
Headteacher	Elaine Bowen
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2011
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