

Malvern Wells CofE Primary School

263 Wells Road, Malvern, WR14 4HF

Inspection dates 5–6 February 2014

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.

- Children get a good start to their education. They make good progress in Reception and are well-prepared for when they join Key Stage 1.
- Across the school pupils make good progress and acquire good skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are consistently above average.
- Teaching is good. The development of pupils' listening and speaking skills is a positive feature of many lessons.
- Behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are safe in school.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school.
- School leaders and governors are working effectively to improve pupils' progress and to promote better teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress of more-able pupils in mathematics lags behind their progress in English.
- The spelling and presentation skills of older pupils are not as good as they should be.
- There are not always enough opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical skills appropriately in other subjects.
- Teachers who lead subjects are not yet monitoring and evaluating all aspects of their areas of responsibility rigorously.
- Leaders do not always identify the precise training needs of each member of staff.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or part lessons, and four of the lesson observations were with either the acting headteacher or acting assistant headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils read and looked closely at examples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school development plan, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curricular materials, and data on pupils' progress.
- Meetings were held with governors, a representative of the local authority, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders and pupils.
- The inspector took account of 22 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and also spoke to a number of parents as they brought their children to school.
- Ten staff questionnaires were also examined.

Inspection team

David Evans, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for certain groups such as pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- During the inspection the headteacher was on long-term sick leave and the school is currently led by the acting headteacher and acting assistant headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring there is always a high level of challenge for more-able pupils, particularly in mathematics
 - identifying and addressing the individual training needs of teachers more precisely and systematically
 - providing enhanced opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding practice both in the school and elsewhere.
- Sustain the current focus on improving progress in writing and mathematics by:
 - embedding the initiatives to improve spelling and presentation, especially of older pupils
 - creating appropriate opportunities for pupils to reinforce their writing and numeracy skills across a wider range of subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that teachers who lead subjects monitor and evaluate all aspects of their areas of responsibility rigorously to improve further the achievement of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are close to those expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning, but particularly in their language and communication development.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. The pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to sustain the above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics of the past two years. Pupils use their phonic knowledge (the sounds that letters make) to tackle unfamiliar words with confidence. In 2013 pupils in Year 1 did well in the national screening test in phonics.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 take pleasure in reading and enjoy discussing their books and favourite authors. They are confident readers who are progressing quickly.
- In writing, although pupils make good progress from their starting points, some older pupils make some errors in spelling and they do not always present their work neatly in books. Pupils do not excel in writing because they are not practising their writing skills across different subjects often enough.
- The school recognises that, despite their good standards overall, pupils have too few opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in other subject across the curriculum. However, new approaches, such as an 'online challenge' that requires pupils to solve mathematical problems and puzzles, have meant that standards in mathematics are rising rapidly and pupils' progress has accelerated.
- Pupils' learning in lessons is good. Pupils show good levels of perseverance and resilience when faced with difficult and challenging work. Their positive attitudes to learning help most pupils gain knowledge and skills quickly. All pupils make at least the progress expected nationally, with many doing better than this. However, the more-able pupils tend to reach higher standards in reading than in writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because they are well supported in lessons and in small withdrawal groups by very effective teaching assistants.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding effectively to support eligible pupils. There were no such pupils leaving Year 6 in 2013 but, across the school, the progress of this group is accelerating because of the good quality of the support they receive. Consequently, any gaps in attainment in English and mathematics between eligible pupils and the others in the school are closing.
- Standards in physical education are good due to the effective use of the primary sport funding. In Reception, children make good progress in their physical, and personal and emotional development. In Key Stages 1 and 2 all pupils participate in gymnastics, organised games and physical education lessons.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the school is consistently good. However, no outstanding teaching was

observed during the inspection.

- Pupils develop good relationships with their teachers and teaching assistants. They appreciate the effective support and guidance provided by teachers and other adults.
- All staff show a strong desire to bring further improvement to their teaching and have a good awareness of what needs to improve. They are working together well to improve the teaching of mathematics. Teachers are keen to learn from each other and want to do their best for the pupils.
- The teaching of phonics is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the impact of this initiative is evident throughout the school. Staff build effectively on this good start and this ensures pupils' early language and reading skills develop rapidly.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning skilfully to judge how well pupils understand what they are learning and adjust their teaching accordingly when misconceptions occur.
- Teachers are now using a new tracking system to make more precise assessments of how well pupils are doing and this enables them to plan work that ensures pupils make consistently good progress.
- In most lessons, expectations are high and teachers systematically review pupils' progress to ensure that tasks have sufficient challenge. Good examples of challenging teaching were seen by inspectors in an exciting mystery challenge in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, where pupils were challenged to show how inverse numbers were linked.
- In some lessons more-able pupils are given work that is too easy. They do not have to find out answers for themselves and they do not tackle work at increasing levels of difficulty. This is seen in both English and mathematics lessons and, as a result, these pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well-supported. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support individuals and groups of pupils and they carefully explain the work that has been set to these pupils, giving them confidence to persevere with tasks. For example, in one lesson, a teaching assistant used imaginative games to help pupils develop their phonics knowledge.
- Marking is up to date, encouraging and consistently applied throughout the school. The comments that teachers make on pupils' work often help them to improve their work, though more-able pupils do not always find that the comments are precise enough to help them to complete the more challenging tasks they are set.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They enjoy their work and have positive attitudes to learning. Their good behaviour makes the school a safe, happy and harmonious place for them to be. This judgement is endorsed by parents and staff, with almost all saying that pupils are well-behaved.
- In lessons, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are positive, creating a productive climate for learning across the school. Pupils are clear about what the school expects of them because whole-school strategies for ensuring good behaviour are implemented consistently in all classes.

Good behaviour is the norm.

- Pupils feel safe in school and the school's work to ensure they are safe and secure is good. They understand that bullying can take different forms, including cyber bullying, but say that it is rare. Pupils show respect for each other and, as a result, there are few occasions when they fall out. Any minor disagreements are quickly resolved.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an important strength. From Reception onwards, pupils develop strong values and acquire a wide range of social skills that help them to develop into mature individuals. All staff encourage mutual respect and cooperation between adults and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves, and promote pupils' confidence and self-esteem effectively. Assemblies provide pupils with appropriate opportunities for thoughtful reflection.
- Attendance is above average. The monitoring of attendance is rigorous and the school has high expectations of pupils and their families. Punctuality in the mornings is good.

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher has settled into her new role very quickly. She is highly respected by staff, pupils, parents and the governing body. She demonstrates great drive and energy and has clear ideas about how the school can continue to improve. She evaluates the effectiveness of the school accurately. The acting headteacher is ably supported by the acting assistant headteacher and members of staff, many of whom have responsibilities for leading multiple aspects in the school.
- Leaders, including the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders, have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed effectively. A clear school improvement plan outlines how the school intends to continue to improve and how the impact of the improvements will be checked by leaders, including the governing body.
- Leaders successfully ensure good value for money at the school. Additional grants, including the pupil premium, are spent effectively. For example, a large proportion of pupil premium funding has been used to fund additional hours for learning support assistants to support pupils who require extra help with learning. As a result, these pupils have made improved progress.
- Detailed records of the attainment and progress of individual pupils are now used well to check the progress of pupils and identify those who need additional support. This also enables leaders to check that all pupils have equal access to all the opportunities the school offers. The new tracking system is helping to identify any pupils who may be in danger of underachieving.
- Pupils learn about an appropriate range of topics and subjects, and this is reflected in their great enjoyment of learning. During the inspection, older pupils were clearly very enthused by their topic work on Australia, and demonstrated a good understanding of how life may have been for the Aborigines in the past.
- Leaders ensure that staff look after pupils well and that all reasonable steps are taken to keep pupils safe. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding meet requirements, and staff are appropriately trained.
- There are effective systems in the school to manage teachers' performance. Teachers do not

automatically move up the pay scale each year and each teacher will be set targets to help them to focus on how to improve. However, teachers' individual training needs are not always clearly identified, recorded and addressed.

- Although managers of subjects are monitoring and evaluating aspects of their areas, such as pupils' books, they are not monitoring all aspects of their areas fully, such as teaching and learning. They do not spend enough time observing their colleagues' teaching or observing good practice in other schools. This is limiting the impact they have on pupils' achievement.
- The extra sports funding has been used to broaden the range of sports on offer to pupils as well as using sports coaches to enhance the work of teachers so they become more skilled at leading sports themselves. This is having a positive impact on the attitudes of pupils.
- The local authority has provided the school with very helpful support during the headteacher's absence and made an effective contribution to improvements in teaching and pupils' progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have supported the acting headteacher well during the headteacher's absence. They have a good understanding of the progress that pupils make. They attend training when necessary and have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and of systems for the performance management of staff. Governors know how the pupil premium money is being used and the impact this is having on progress as well as how the sports funding is being used. They provide both support and challenge and governors meet regularly with staff to discuss the school's work. Finances are well-managed. The governing body ensures that arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils and for child protection meet current 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	116902
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	431542

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carolyn Aynsworth
Headteacher	Alison Earp (Acting Head)
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2009
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