

# Briar Hill Infant School

Coppice Road, Whitnash, Leamington Spa, CV31 2JF

## Inspection dates

26–27 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Achievement is outstanding in all subjects. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above the national averages. Increasing numbers of pupils reach standards which are higher than those expected for their age.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well because teaching is consistently at least good and much is outstanding.
- All groups of pupils make outstanding progress because of the high-quality and well-timed support they receive from their teachers and other adults.
- Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave exceptionally well and feel safe. They show interest and concern for one another, where they live and the wider world.
- Teachers and other adults have a strong team approach, work effectively together and show that they have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Parents are very positive about the school and praise the staff's commitment to their children.
- Pupils have many memorable learning experiences and opportunities which prepare them well for the future.
- The school's leaders frequently check the quality of teaching and learning. They have an accurate view of strengths and areas to be developed further, and are constantly striving to improve the quality of teaching and ensure that standards continue to rise.
- The school provides high-quality training and support for its staff, resulting in continuing high levels of achievement.
- The acting headteacher works closely with a strong team of governors who are very knowledgeable and fully involved in the school. They have very clear ideas about what they need to do further to improve their performance.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons, including four seen jointly with the acting headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and observed a number of groups receiving additional support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- Meetings were held with pupils, a range of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the school improvement partner and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 80 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View), along with the school's own feedback from parents and two letters received during the inspection. They also met with parents and carers informally during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress, safeguarding documents, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and bullying. They also met with pupils and talked with them about their views of the school.

## Inspection team

Elaine Long, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David West	Additional Inspector
Renee Robinson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Briar Hill Infant School is an average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority, for whom the school receives additional funding from the government (the pupil premium), is below average.
- About two thirds of the pupils are White British, and one third come from Indian and other minority ethnic groups. Just over a quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language, though few are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is average.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in all year groups so that standards rise even further.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Most children start in Reception with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. They make outstanding progress because of outstanding teaching where they are given many exciting learning experiences which really enthuse them. The Reception staff keep a very careful check on what the children can and cannot do, and ensure that they provide work which challenges them and moves them to the next level quickly. An above-average proportion of children reach a good level of development by the end of Reception and enter Year 1 as confident learners.
- Reading is taught very well. The teaching of phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) in Reception and Key Stage 1 is extremely thorough and helps pupils to develop a really good ability to read new words. In the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2013, the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level was above average. Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 have been well above the national average for the last five years.
- Standards in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have also been well above national averages over many years. Increasing numbers of pupils exceed the level expected for their age, and the school's current data show they are on track to achieve high standards again this year.
- All groups of pupils make at least good progress, and many pupils make outstanding progress because of the high-quality teaching and well-matched support they are given. The school is very skilled in making sure that every pupil receives the type of support they need in order to learn quickly. Their progress is closely followed and any underachievement is quickly addressed.
- More-able pupils achieve very high standards. In Year 1, they are five terms ahead in reading, four terms in mathematics and three in writing. In Year 2, they are three terms ahead in reading and writing and five terms in mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well by teachers and well-trained teaching assistants. This results in good or better progress for most pupils. The special educational needs coordinator knows the pupils individually and uses a wide range of support and resources to help them.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make progress at similar rates to other pupils.
- In 2013, the small number of Year 2 pupils supported by pupil premium reached higher standards than similar pupils nationally, and were just over two terms behind other pupils in reading and writing and less than two terms behind in mathematics. The funding is used to provide specific one-to-one or focused group support in literacy or mathematics, and to support pupils who lack confidence in their own abilities. These individual sessions are leading to pupils believing they can do well. The school's information on eligible pupils currently in Year 2 shows that they are all making outstanding progress, particularly in mathematics.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is often outstanding. Staff work well together to provide children with an exciting range of opportunities through which they learn very effectively. High expectations and close tracking of children's progress, with a strong focus on speaking and listening, result in rapid progress. Children are happy, concentrate well, try hard

and are becoming increasingly confident learners. Their relationships with one another are purposeful and constructive. Journals, which are shared with parents, provide clear evidence that they are learning and developing extremely well.

- In all year groups, teachers show that they have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve. Lessons are exciting and move quickly. Pupils are taught the skills which help them to learn and which prepare them extremely well for their future. Teachers ask pupils searching and challenging questions. They are always checking to see if the pupils have understood, and when they have, they move them on quickly to the next step.
- Well-trained teaching assistants support pupils extremely well and are very skilful at asking searching questions to develop their understanding, and then allowing them to work on their own. For example, in a lesson where pupils were asked to write a description of Goldilocks, the pupils, using masks and acting out events narrated by the assistant, became highly confident about what they had been asked to do and achieved well.
- Teachers know precisely what pupils have already learned and understood. This enables them to provide lessons where pupils are involved in their learning immediately, where they thrive and are able to do the best. Initial tasks are stimulating and engaging. Pupils know what they are learning and why, and they are given opportunities to apply what they have learned to new situations in order to deepen their understanding.
- Lessons often provide pupils with excellent opportunities to investigate and solve problems. In a mathematics lesson for more-able pupils, for example, the lesson began with a problem which they were asked to solve with a partner. Pupils were asked to find the right codes for keys to unlock the number bond padlocks. They were asked to work together and come up with their own strategies. They sprang into action and worked very quickly and effectively, thinking hard and encouraging one another to find solutions. All pupils made outstanding progress, really enjoyed the lesson and achieved high standards.
- High-quality marking is undertaken regularly and consistently. Teachers give pupils clear ideas about how to improve their work and why. Pupils are encouraged to review their work regularly and understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so. Pupils are proud of their work, and the presentation of their books is of a high standard and provides clear evidence of improvement.
- Classrooms are well resourced and spaces are used creatively to support pupils' learning. Pupils know where to find prompts, reminders and resources to support them as they are working. This helps them to develop pride in their work and encourages them to use their initiative.

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

- Pupils have outstanding attitudes to their learning. Children in the Reception class settle quickly and display a strong sense of enquiry and wonder. Pupils in all year groups are confident learners who want to do well and appreciate the help they are given. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive.
- In lessons, pupils are engrossed in their work. They support one another well in group work, taking it in turns to make contributions. When working without direct help from adults, they do not give up when the work becomes more difficult; they try harder, determined to do their best. They are very positive about their learning, as are their parents and carers, who are delighted with the experiences their children have and the progress they are making at the school.

- Attendance is above average because children enjoy coming to school. There is a friendly, purposeful atmosphere as the day begins. Pupils arrive promptly and show by their enthusiasm they are keen to learn.
- The behaviour of pupils around the school is exemplary. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous. They feel a part of the school and are proud to belong to it. They are given opportunities to take part in decision-making and they enjoy this. They are given many opportunities to take on additional responsibilities, for example, as school councillors, eco councillors and playground buddies. Pupils know how important their roles are and when their ideas and suggestions are taken on board they are proud of the differences they make.
- The school's effective response to pupils' emotional needs has a significant impact on their behaviour. Instances of bad behaviour are extremely rare. There have been no exclusions over many years.
- Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They enjoy belonging to a school where everyone gets along with one another, understanding and respecting one another's differences. They know that the way they conduct themselves and the positive attitudes that they show contribute enormously to this powerful sense of community and their academic success.
- Throughout lessons and assemblies, pupils are given the skills they need to manage everyday risks for themselves. For example, they know how to use the internet safely, and they are aware of the dangers associated with the road, fire and talking to strangers. They are clear who to go to in the school if they feel worried or upset. All parents and carers who responded to Parent View, or the school's own questionnaire, strongly agreed that children feel safe and are happy at school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Adults take a strong stance against bullying. In lessons and assemblies, the school teaches them about different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Pupils know what to do if they are bullied because they are given clear guidance. They report that bullying is rare and would be dealt with well were any to occur. They feel the school is a friendly and supportive place where they feel safe, and parents strongly support this view too.
- Parents enjoy being invited into the school, whether it is to work alongside children in class, or to watch plays, concerts or assemblies. They talk about their children being happy, becoming more confident and well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## **The leadership and management**

## **are outstanding**

- The high standards pupils achieve in all subjects are the result of strong leadership and teamwork. The acting headteacher's ongoing drive to improve teaching and raise achievement further is fully supported by the staff. There is a common sense of purpose and morale is high.
- Leaders' regular lesson observations, followed by detailed feedback to teachers and a successful programme of training, have meant that all teaching is at least good and an increasing proportion is outstanding. The acting headteacher manages the performance of staff very well.
- The acting headteacher and senior leaders use rigorous systems to track and monitor the progress of pupils. Subject leaders also track and review the performance of pupils with individual teachers regularly and ensure that additional support is provided quickly for pupils

who might need extra help in their learning. Senior leaders have ensured that areas which need improvement are quickly addressed. Recent training in mathematics, for example, is having a real impact, and standards have risen even further this year.

- The exciting curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to explore and learn about the world. Pupils are taught the skills which will help them learn and find answers for themselves; they respond well to this way of working and enjoy the challenges.
- Pupils enjoy the ways in which learning in one subject is linked to learning in other subjects, and they excel when they are given opportunities to choose the ways in which they work. They use computers very confidently to extend their learning and understanding. Pupils say that trips to Warwick Castle and Warwick Arts Centre give them experiences they might not otherwise have had.
- High-quality displays throughout the school encourage pupils to enquire about the world they live in and their role in it. Displays of pupils' work show them that it is valued, and this encourages them to strive for excellence. Classrooms are bright and well organised, and there are many helpful prompts to aid pupils' learning.
- The school has a wealth of partnerships within the local, national and global communities, and these excellent links have a very positive impact on all members of the school. Effective links with local junior schools ensure that transition to Key Stage 2 runs smoothly and pupils settle quickly. International links with Malawi and India give the pupils a real insight into the lives and cultures of others.
- The school is using the primary sports funding to encourage children to have a more active lifestyle and eat more healthily. The funding has also been used to help teachers develop their skills in teaching physical education. This is already showing impact as the staff are more confident, and pupils' participation in lunch and after-school clubs is increasing. A wide range of new clubs has been introduced, such as golf and archery, and growing numbers of pupils are giving them a try and really enjoying them.
- The local authority's involvement in the school has been one of light-touch support. It has confidence in the governors, the leadership and its capacity to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and have been involved in deciding on which areas of development the school now needs to focus. They meet regularly with the acting headteacher to check what she is doing to improve the school and make sure that things are moving in the right direction. Governors make regular visits to the school, meet with staff and have a full programme of monitoring visits throughout the year. They know what the data on pupils' progress are telling them and make sure that the funds available through the pupil premium have been used well to improve the achievement of targeted pupils. They receive regular reports on how teaching is improving and they ensure that teachers' pay will only be increased if pupils make good progress. Governors have benefited from good training and they ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding.

## 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>	125563
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	431529

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	268
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Hawke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bryony Meek (acting headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 March 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01926 422834
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