

# Four Oaks Primary School

Edge Hill Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, B74 4PA

**Inspection dates** 5–6 March 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.

- Pupils make rapid progress across the school and leave with attainment that is well above the national average. Their achievement is outstanding and they are very well-prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding because teachers use their knowledge of pupils well to plan work that consistently challenges them. Teachers have high expectations of pupils.
- The achievement of more-able pupils is a particular strength with an increasing proportion achieving the higher levels.
- Pupils enjoy learning a wide range of skills across many subjects, developing a thirst for knowledge and understanding. This is enhanced by the many extra-curricular activities the school offers them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary, both in classrooms and around the school. Pupils are polite and courteous. Any issues are promptly dealt with and resolved and so pupils feel safe.
- Senior leaders and managers have been determined to make the school as good as it can possibly be and their commitment is shared by both staff and the governing body.
- The governing body fulfils its role well. Governors have a clear understanding of the achievement of pupils and both support and rigorously challenge the school to continue improving.
- There are excellent links with other schools in the area, including 'The Four Oaks Learning Trust' that supports the monitoring and development of teaching in the school.
- Relationships with parents are strong. All who have recorded their opinions on 'Parent View' would recommend the school to other parents.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 18 lessons taught by 15 different teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority. Two lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher and two with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at planning documents, monitoring records, data on pupils’ progress and attainment, and pupils’ work.
- The inspectors took account of the 79 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire) and talked to some parents at the beginning of the school day in reaching inspection judgements about the school.

## Inspection team

David Shears, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Suha Ahmad

Additional Inspector

Enid Korn

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Four Oaks Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or from service families, is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A nursery, playgroup and before- and after-school provision operate on the same site. All these are managed externally and are subject to separate inspection.

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

- Ensure all marking is clear and precise so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them and how they are meant to respond.
- Refine the way senior leaders present and analyse information about the progress of different groups of pupils to enable them to identify and respond to any emerging trends in achievement even more quickly.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. Positive relationships are quickly built with parents, which mean that children settle quickly into school routines and begin to make rapid progress in their learning. For example, on one occasion where children were involved in a variety of activities, they were making outstanding progress in learning to write instructions for baking bread and exploring how to weigh objects accurately using non-standard measurements.
- The excellent links between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 mean that pupils can build well on their previous learning so that by the time they end Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Pupils readily explore topics and work out the best ways of solving problems for themselves and this is enabling rapid progress to be made. For example, when pupils were learning about measuring, they were given a variety of measuring implements such as rulers and had to decide which would be the most appropriate in measuring themselves.
- Reading standards are very good. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is effective, demonstrated by the above average results in the phonics screening check in Year 1. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make outstanding progress in reading, just as they do in writing and mathematics, so that when they leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment is significantly above average. Pupils were seen to be making excellent progress in writing the opening of a story, because they were systematically encouraged to improve their work by using a thesaurus to find and use more exciting vocabulary.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups make the same outstanding progress as their classmates. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress. Those who have specific learning difficulties progress well because they benefit from well-designed teaching and carefully focused support from able teaching assistants, who ensure these pupils have positive attitudes to their work and always try their best.
- The school challenges more-able pupils very effectively so that they make rapid progress in their learning and greater proportions are reaching the higher levels.
- There is still a gap between the attainment of pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium funding and other pupils in the school. In 2012 these pupils were working two terms behind in reading, three terms in mathematics and four terms behind in writing. However, this represents a rapid closing of the gap from 2011, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The sports funding is being used well by using sports coaches to further develop pupils' skills, particularly in gymnastics, cross country running and cricket. Staff have also received training in the teaching of gymnastics and dance.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Pupils are making excellent progress because teaching is highly effective. Pupils are regularly assessed and this information is used very well by teachers to plan work that builds on their previous learning. All staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils are encouraged to work together in their learning and this helps them to explore their

thinking together.

- All staff, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, question pupils carefully to check their understanding, and to make sure they are really having to think hard and can explain their reasoning. This is particularly noticeable in mathematics, where pupils have to explain how they worked out answers to problems. This means that all pupils, and especially more-able pupils, are challenged systematically and appropriately.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They use creative and interesting activities that interest and engage pupils well. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to learning are highly positive and they enjoy what they do. The school's coverage of a wide variety of topics and themes enriches pupils' learning and adds to their enthusiasm and enjoyment. There is a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs that enhance their experiences of school and most pupils actively participate in these. All this, alongside the regular assemblies used to ensure pupils reflect together, enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively.
- There are very good relationships between staff and pupils, which result in a positive atmosphere in all classes. Pupils work well together, sharing their learning, but are equally able to work by themselves. Pupils speak well of the homework that they are given and are very proud of the folders in which they keep their work.
- Pupils' books show that their learning over time is outstanding. Work is always marked carefully with pupils frequently given encouraging comments to motivate them, and pupils are told what they need to do to improve. However, these development points are not always wholly clear to pupils, who do not always know precisely how they are meant to respond; this limits their effectiveness slightly. The school has already identified this as an area for improvement and are already trialling different ways to make marking and feedback more effective.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and are eager to learn. Their attitudes to the learning are always very good. They listen well and are careful to respond to the direction of teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils behave very well around the school and on the playground. Older pupils act as excellent role models for younger pupils and take on responsibilities such as being 'play leaders', leading sessions that support pupils' exercise and well-being and helping to run some extra-curricular activities. For example pupils were seen to lead an art session during the lunch time where pupils were enjoying making their names out of clay.
- Behaviour logs show there have been very few recorded incidents, confirming inspectors' view that excellent behaviour is typical in this school. Parents and staff all agree. Pupils are proud both of their school and that they are members of it.
- The few pupils who find good behaviour difficult are given targeted support and as a result their behaviour improves rapidly. The school's welcoming nature means that all pupils are accepted and valued as individuals. The school ensures that there are equal opportunities for all and checks carefully to make sure that there is no discrimination.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying and say that it is a rare occurrence in school. They know that any issues that may arise are quickly addressed and so they feel very safe.

- Attendance continues to be above the national average and exclusions are very rare. There are very few instances of pupils being late for school and both these and absences are rigorously monitored and followed up.

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

- Senior leaders and governors have a united vision for the school and have high expectations of both staff and pupils. Their commitment to school improvement is shared by all staff, creating a highly positive ethos in which all are valued and supported so that they achieve the best that they can be.
- Middle leaders, which include leaders of subjects and particular areas such as assessment and special educational needs, are enthusiastic about their roles and enjoy developing their areas of expertise. The school has developed very effective links with other schools, such as 'The Four Oaks Learning Trust'. These links enable staff to moderate pupils' work together and give each other mutual support in developing subjects further.
- The quality of teaching is also moderated across the cluster of schools and this ensures that teachers are given clear goals for improvement and access to good quality professional development. The appraisal of teachers takes into account observations of their teaching, the quality of work that pupils produce and information about pupils' progress.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils are checked regularly to make sure that they are all achieving well. Pupils identified as not making outstanding progress are discussed and measures are put in place to enable this to happen. However, while the progress of individual pupils is carefully considered and quickly addressed, the analysis of the progress and attainment of particular groups is not precise enough to enable the school to respond as quickly it does to individuals, in the event that differences in achievement had begun to emerge.
- There are very positive links with parents who speak very highly of the school. All who have given their opinions through 'Parent View' feel that their child is safe and happy, that they make good progress, that behaviour is good and that the school is well led and managed.
- The local authority rightly has a positive view of the school, recognising that its effective links with other local schools has enabled it to continue to flourish. This is reflected in the level of support it provides.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors bring a range of expertise to the governing body to enable it to be highly effective in its twin roles of supporting the school and challenging it to continue improving. They are able to identify positive aspects of the school while recognising areas that need further development. Governors have a positive working relationship with staff.
  - Members of the governing body have a clear understanding of how the school is performing, compared to other schools nationally and are well-informed by the school of the current progress of its pupils. They also have a clear understanding of how well teachers are performing and are able to relate this to staff pay.
  - The governing body oversees the extra money that is provided by the government such as pupil premium funding and sports funding and know how it is being used. While they have a good understanding of the impact of the pupil premium funding, the full impact of the sports funding has yet to be identified.
  - Governors make sure safeguarding arrangements 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131920
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	440636

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Hibbert
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Sutton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 July 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 675 4040
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