

Elmore Green Primary School

Elmore Green Rd, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 2HW

Inspection dates		19–20 March 2014	
Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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 reach high standards and make outstanding progress from their starting points, which are below average.
- Outstanding teaching means that most pupils make rapid progress. Teachers use their excellent knowledge of what pupils already know to plan challenging work for all ability groups.
- Teaching assistants and support staff make an excellent contribution to pupils' progress.
- Thorough marking and feedback to pupils about their learning help pupils to know how well they are doing and how to improve their work.
- Pupils are stimulated by the many interesting experiences they have in school and on trips and visits. As well as aiding their academic progress, these experiences help pupils to develop respect for people of different faiths and cultures.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and feel highly valued by staff.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to stay safe outside it. They know who to ask if they need help. Their behaviour and attitudes make an outstanding contribution to their learning. They concentrate well and are exceptionally committed to their learning.
- The governors, other leaders, and all members of staff share the headteacher's outstanding drive and determination to achieve the best for every child.
- Governors are highly skilled and closely involved in the life of the school. Their thorough checking of pupils' achievement means that they understand the strengths of the school, hold leaders accountable, and plan appropriately for the school to improve further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes and visited 22 lessons. The headteacher and assistant headteachers joined in four of the observations.
- Discussions were held with pupils, parents, the governors, a representative of the local authority, the headteacher and other leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 25 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 30 responses to staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them about their learning, and looked at the work in their books.
- Inspectors checked the school's evaluation of its work, the improvement plan, current achievement information, minutes of governors' meetings, and records of behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lynne Bradbury, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Enid Korn

Additional Inspector

Marianne Phillips

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The pupils are mainly from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority, and those from service families, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Speed up the children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by helping the children to learn more effectively from the activities they choose for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Most children join the Reception class with levels of skill and knowledge below those typical for their age group. They then make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the activities they are set are well matched to their abilities. The school is developing ways of helping children to learn more effectively from the activities they choose for themselves, so that they can reach even higher standards.
- Pupils enter Year 1 with levels of skills and knowledge which are much closer to those expected of their age group. Pupils do well in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and scored well above national expectations in the most recent Year 1 phonics screening check. In the phonics lessons observed in the inspection, all pupils made at least good progress.
- In 2013, pupils in Years 2 and 6 reached standards in English and mathematics in line with national averages. They are now doing significantly better. Pupils currently in Year 6 have made outstanding progress since joining the school. A large proportion demonstrates standards of work in their books across a wide range of subjects which are above those expected for their age group. The school's own tracking information for pupils currently in Years 1 to 6 suggests that most pupils are now making outstanding progress.
- Pupils develop a love of reading, enjoy talking about their books and reach above-average standards. By Year 6 they have a mature understanding of what they read. Pupils across the age and ability range answer questions in well constructed sentences because the school has placed a strong emphasis on improving their speech and communication. As pupils move through the school their writing in all subjects develops rapidly and pupils confidently produce extended pieces of written work on their own. Pupils are also able to develop their mathematics skills well in most subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress because of the well-targeted work during lessons and the high quality, extra support within and outside lessons.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress overall, relative to others in the school, although there are some differences between subjects. In 2013, they were half a term behind their peers in writing, in line with them in reading, and a term ahead in grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematics. The funding is used carefully to offer activities and support which match the needs of eligible pupils, including small-group work and one-to-one tuition.
- The new primary school sport funding has provided high quality training for staff and coaching for pupils across a wide range of sports activities. This is having a positive effect on pupils' physical well-being.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers use their excellent understanding of what pupils already know to plan exciting lessons which appropriately challenge all pupils. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils were stimulated by the very rapid pace of learning. Every pupil began with a high level challenge working with numbers, moved on to number patterns set to music, and then, very quickly, to a more detailed focus on building numbers. This good pace of learning was evident in mathematics and literacy lessons observed across the school, and the pupils' workbooks showed how well this is helping their progress.
- Teachers plan exciting topics and bring them to life through high quality visits, visitors, and other experiences which make pupils enthusiastic and want to learn. For example, visits to the Sikh Gurdwara helped them to understand the culture and faith of some other members of their community.
- Pupils have targets for what they need to do next and teachers help them to use these to

measure their own progress. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning skilfully to add extra challenge during lessons once they see that pupils are ready to move on.

- Staff understand the areas of learning that the school has made a priority. For example, teachers demand that pupils answer all questions in complete and grammatically correct sentences.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do next to make progress because of the very high quality feedback given by teachers and the opportunities they have to respond to marking.
- Teaching assistants and other members of support staff make an outstanding contribution to pupils' progress. Most are well trained and good at asking challenging questions which help pupils think and they share the assessment of pupils with teachers.
- Most parents who met with inspectors, or responded to the Parent View questionnaire, expressed high levels of satisfaction with the teaching in the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They concentrate, persevere and are highly committed to their work. They are very proud of their school and talk with great enthusiasm about their activities.
- There is a strong sense of purpose around the school and in every lesson. The school's vision, 'Working together to be the best we can', is made manifest in the enjoyment pupils and staff share when learning together. For example, in a music lesson preparing for a school show, over 50 Years 5 and 6 pupils with their teachers were completely focused on singing and movement to a very high standard. They were excited, exuberant, and determined to do their very best.
- Pupils thrive in the very happy atmosphere of the school and relationships are respectful and supportive. Staff set very high expectations for themselves and their pupils. They use praise and the celebration of achievement well to motivate and encourage pupils to give of their best.
- During the inspection there was very little need for staff to challenge pupils' behaviour during lessons or in activities around the school. The school's records show that while some pupils have difficulties with behaviour, outstanding behaviour management has nevertheless helped them to make good progress.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils understand different kinds of bullying, but insisted that there is no bullying in school. They said that they know who to ask for help if they need it. Most parents agreed that behaviour in the school is excellent.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school and that they have the opportunity to explore how to stay safe in many situations outside school, including when engaged with new technologies.
- Attendance is improving and is now average. The school operates excellent systems to help any families who have difficulty with their children's attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils talk with great enthusiasm about the clubs and activities after school, and the visits which bring their topics to life.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher wants to develop the school so that it enables every pupil to do their best. This vision is shared by senior leaders, governors and staff.
- Rigorous checking of every aspect of the school's work by the headteacher and governors highlights appropriate areas for development and these are the key priorities in the school's development plan. All judgements about the school's work are informed by the achievement of pupils.
- Pupils' progress is also the basis of the very ambitious targets set for staff. Decisions about

teachers' pay awards are based upon their meeting these targets. An extensive training programme addresses any aspects of lower performance.

- Once priorities have been determined, senior leaders are not afraid to take the decisions necessary to implement them. For example, one of the senior team with expertise in literacy was recently deployed to work with other staff to improve pupils' writing. This has been extremely successful and pupils' writing is improving rapidly across the school.
 - Senior leaders monitor their areas of responsibility carefully and use pupils' work and results as measures of success, targeting training for others or changing policies where necessary.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is promoted across all subjects. High quality assemblies are a prominent focus for this, but it is evident in all aspects of the work of the school. Work in pupils' books confirms their growing understanding of the lives and cultures of people from other groups within Britain.
 - Parents greatly value the work of the school and are highly valued as partners by the school's leaders. Those parents who spoke to inspectors expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the work of the school.
 - Pupils enjoy the very wide range of subjects, topics, clubs and visits offered by the school. Literacy and mathematics are developed across the range of subjects in a way that meets the learning needs and interests of pupils to a very high level. Giving all pupils equal opportunities to succeed is a high priority.
 - The local authority's effective support has been welcomed and greatly appreciated by the school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly skilled and committed to continuous improvement in school and have undertaken extensive training to prepare them for their roles. They have rigorous systems for checking the data which tell the story of the school's success and are actively engaged in all aspects of school life. They set ambitious targets for staff performance and measure success against pupils' achievement, to hold staff accountable. Governors have identified appropriate priorities and built a development plan which is costed, monitored and evaluated. They manage finances well and measure the impact of pupil premium funding carefully. Their work in safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
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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	104153
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	431523
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Lemm
Headteacher	Jane Humphreys
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2009
Telephone number	01922 710162
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