

Bearwood Primary School

Bearwood Road, Smethwick, B66 4HB

Inspection dates 27–28 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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

- All groups of pupils make good progress from their below-average starting points. They reach standards that are in line with those seen nationally.
- In writing and mathematics, more than half of the pupils in Year 6 made better progress than that expected nationally.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make strong progress due to consistently good and often outstanding teaching.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is typically good. Its improvement is managed well by the school's leadership team and governors.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and provide high-quality support for pupils of all abilities.
- Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are recognised at an early stage and they are supported well.
- Those pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well by the school and make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. This has a very positive effect on the progress they make.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and relationships across the school are excellent.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher and her team has ensured improvements in teaching and achievement since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure that pupils' achievement can be improved further.
- Some subject and year group leaders are new to their posts and are still developing their roles in monitoring teaching and learning.
- In some lessons, the work planned for the most-able pupils is not challenging enough as it is too similar to that for other pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons, including the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and group reading. All classes were seen and two observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Groups of pupils were heard reading.
- An inspector talked with a group of pupils about life in the school.
- Further discussions were held with governors, senior leaders, and subject leaders responsible for English, mathematics, the Early Years Foundation Stage and special educational needs. A meeting was held with phase leaders, a representative of the local authority and a number of parents as they brought their children into school.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including pupils' work in Years 2 and 6, systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, minutes from meetings of the governing body, the school improvement plan, and records relating to the quality of teaching and safeguarding.
- Completed questionnaires were received from 35 members of staff and analysed. There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire Parent View to be considered.

Inspection team

Gavin Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Wendy Hanrahan	Additional Inspector
Douglas Folan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very high, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The largest groups of have their family backgrounds in Pakistan and India.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding (those eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed forces) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils leaving or joining the school other than at normal times is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in a Nursery class, with children coming for either mornings or afternoons, and two Reception classes taught in a large shared area.
- Since the last inspection seven new teachers have joined the school, of which have been employed using the pupil premium funding.
- The governing body manages a breakfast and after-school club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to raise achievement further by:
 - completing the work on the coaching of teachers across the school
 - ensuring that all teachers have opportunities to see outstanding teaching.
- Ensure that all teachers more consistently plan and provide challenging work for the most-able pupils by:
 - involving phase and subject leaders further in checking that this happens in their year groups and subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and experiences that are below those typical for their age. This is especially the case for children's language development. Teachers provide excellent support and, as a result, children make good progress through the Nursery and Reception Years. They start school with slightly higher mathematical skills. These are again promoted well by staff and, by the end of Reception, about a third of children are working at levels that are above those expected for their age.
- All staff work very effectively to promote language in order that children can take advantage of the wide range of activities on offer. All children very soon begin to make choices about their learning. They quickly learn to plan how they are going to challenge themselves, get on with their tasks, then assemble later to review what they have done. The school builds on this particularly well throughout the school.
- The large proportion of children for whom English is an additional language make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. By the time they reach Year 2, their progress is faster than that of similar pupils in other schools.
- Pupils in Year 1 scored above the national average in the 2013 screening check in phonics (letters and sounds). Pupils make good use of these skills in their day-to-day reading.
- By the end of Year 2, the national tests and work in pupils' books show that attainment is broadly average, with reading and writing slightly higher than mathematics. Work in class confirms that, in the current Year 2, all groups of pupils are making equally good progress.
- Achievement in literacy and numeracy are promoted very effectively in the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils have benefited from what the school calls daily 'basic skills' lessons. The impact of this is that not only are pupils writing using better grammar, spelling and handwriting but also, in the new tests for these skills, they achieve above the national average.
- Standards in mathematics are broadly average, although the proportion of most-able pupils reaching Level 6 is above the national average. The impact of a new and rigorous approach to teaching reading is beginning to raise pupils' ability not only to read but also to infer, talk about characters and comprehend at a higher level.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well by both teachers and their skilled assistants. This support ensures that they make good progress in their learning.
- The gap between pupils supported by pupil premium funding and other pupils has virtually disappeared. In some areas, such as writing, these pupils are making better progress than their classmates. In Year 6 in 2013, eligible pupils were a term behind their classmates in mathematics and around six months behind them in reading, but they were a little ahead of them in writing.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language build on their earlier successes, with some making outstanding progress by the end of Year 6. Many of this group join the school other than the usual times. A group of pupils explaining how they used their tablet computers exemplified the significant progress they had made in learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is now typically good, with an increasing proportion of outstanding teaching. Evidence from pupils' work confirms that this is helping pupils to make increasingly good and sometimes excellent progress.
- Good routines in the Early Years Foundation Stage are quickly established. As a result, children are ready to learn and well aware of what is expected of them. This ensures that no time is wasted and children quickly settle to activities of their own choice or those directed by adults.
- Across the school, teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking and help them to make judgements about what they are learning.
- Teaching assistants are very effective. They demonstrate first-class skills in working with individuals or much larger groups. Teaching by assistants and the class teacher was very effective in a Year 6 English lesson in which all three adults made direct inputs into the lesson making use of their own particular skills. This was particularly well planned and helped all groups of pupils to make rapid progress in their learning.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally in a wide range of lessons and through visits to such places as the local synagogue.
- Pupils' books contain comments made by their teachers, providing good guidance on how to improve their work. In many cases, pupils write responses to the comments, showing that they understand and will try to implement them.
- Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave and work in class. Because of excellent relationships, the management of behaviour is often discreet and very effective.
- The school has chosen to group pupils by ability for mathematics in the top part of the school. This policy is proving to be effective, with a good proportion of pupils reaching above the nationally expected levels last year and currently in their daily work.
- The scrutiny of pupils' books shows that, from time to time, the work given to the most-able pupils is not more challenging than that given to other pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Sometimes when teaching is outstanding, so is their behaviour.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about school and enjoy their learning. They are actively involved in evaluating their own learning from a very early age, and they progress to evaluating the work of their classmates.
- Pupils are well motivated. They listen carefully to adults and are keen to get on with their work. In a Year 6 English lesson, pupils discussed their previous learning with a partner, sharing ideas and checking each other's progress.
- Where single isolated incidents of poor behaviour occur, they are well managed by staff.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. As a result, pupils themselves say they

feel very safe in school. This is supported in the school's own questionnaire to parents and carers. Pupils are well informed about internet safety.

- Pupils socialise with each other well and work together very effectively. They understand different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is very rare in school and expressed their confidence that staff would deal effectively with any such occurrences.
- Older pupils take on a range of responsibilities at break and other times, and look after younger ones with care and consideration.
- Attendance is above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The school has dealt well with a number of staff changes since the last inspection. The headteacher has now gathered an effective team of leaders and managers who share her ambition and seek to put this into effect throughout the school.
- The school's monitoring of its own work is both extensive and accurate. This is put into effect by leaders looking at various aspects of the school's work, including through 'learning walks' (brief visits to a series of classes), scrutinising books and checking planning. This has led to the accurate picture of the school and the ability to plan well for the future.
- The headteacher has established a rigorous process for checking and improving the quality of teaching. As a result, the quality has improved since the last inspection. The work of the other senior leaders in coaching teachers has begun and has been particularly effective in improving the quality of teaching. However, as yet, not all teachers have had the opportunity to observe outstanding teaching at first hand.
- Some subject leaders and leaders who oversee particular year groups are, in some cases, quite new to their posts. They are supported well by the school. They all have opportunities to check the quality of work in their subjects across the school, although some do not yet have regular opportunities to check the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Half termly meetings between class teachers and leaders ensure that teachers are accountable for the progress made by their pupils. Any possible underachievement is identified at a very early stage so that extra support can be promptly organised.
- The curriculum has been developed well to meet pupils' needs and interests. Themes and topics enable pupils to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy in many different contexts. Pupils visit a small wooded area close to the school, with two well-trained specialist teachers, in order to develop their personal skills and relationships in the outdoors.
- The headteacher and staff are at great pains to develop their positive relationships with parents and carers further. These include meetings about learning and opportunities for parents to work alongside their own children. The teacher responsible for home/school liaison is much respected by parents and has been key to many developments. The school now has advanced plans for a community room to support this work further.
- Pupil premium funding has been used mainly to provide additional teachers and trained assistants to support pupils in their own classes. This has been very effective in closing the gap in pupils' attainment.

- The primary school sport funding is used to support staff as they work alongside a professional sports teacher in order to gain skills and expertise. As a result of this funding, pupils have more opportunities to take part in activities through clubs and competitive sport. Throughout, they are gaining an understanding of how physical activity can enhance their health.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Many nationalities and cultures live and work together in harmony. Pupils take on responsibilities in the school council or in helping other pupils at play times.
- The local authority has provided the school with support in identifying and responding to areas for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an accurate picture of the school's many strengths and of its areas for development. This is gained through visits, meetings, analysing data and receiving reports from the headteacher. They bring their wide range of skills to bear on this material, enabling them to challenge and also support the headteacher in her quest for further improvement. They are well informed about the impact of pupil premium funding and the funding for sport
 - Governors have comprehensive information and a clear understanding of teachers' performance and know how this relates to increases in pay. Breakfast and after-school clubs are managed successfully by the governing body and give many children a good start and end to each school day. The governing body ensures that the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory 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	103933
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	431129

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	492
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara Baber
Headteacher	Deborah Haywood
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2012
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