

Withymoor Primary School

Gayfield Avenue, Off Turners Lane, Brierley Hill, DY5 2BH

Inspection dates 8–9 April 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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid progress as a result of outstanding provision.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are mostly above average.
- Strong progress continues so that, by the time pupils leave school, they are now performing at levels well above those expected for their ages.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have a clear picture of the levels being reached by their pupils and help pupils do their best.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive excellent support. Well-planned provision and support helps them accelerate their learning over time.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their learning very much. Pupils say that they feel very safe and their parents agree with them.
- The headteacher has this year refined systems that measure pupils' progress accurately so they better help to ensure that all pupils do their best.
- Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, support teachers in developing their expertise. This means that the high quality of teaching has been sustained, as has the attainment of pupils, in this improving school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers implement the school's clear marking policy fully. Sometimes pupils are not sure of how to improve their learning.
- Some aspects of day-to-day safety, such as pedestrian access gates being locked when pupils arrive, mean that safety could be improved.
- Systems intended to identify when pupils are not making rapid enough progress were not effective in 2013, and this resulted in a dip in pupils' performance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, three of them undertaken jointly with the headteacher. Visits were also made to classrooms for shorter periods to check on the use of teaching assistants and the quality of pupils' behaviour. Two school assemblies were attended.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other school leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents were gathered from the 16 responses to the online Parent View survey, together with a questionnaire undertaken by the school in January 2014, and discussions held with parents who came into school.
- The views of pupils were gathered from two meetings and from discussions throughout the inspection.
- Staff opinions were sought through discussions that took place during the inspection.
- Pupils' work was looked at during lesson observations and a more detailed scrutiny of a sample of books from pupils in every class was undertaken. A group of pupils also read to inspectors.
- Inspectors took into account a range of written evidence, including information on the progress of each pupil, teachers' planning and assessment records, the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning and a range of policies and procedures including those for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Tabberer	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Barnfield	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who attract the pupil premium (additional government funds for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, who are in the care of a local authority, or who have a parent in the armed services) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average, while the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There have been changes of teaching staff since the last inspection, including in Year 6 last year.
- There is a pre-school group which is managed by the governing body and formed part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure consistency in the implementation of the school's marking policy, especially in:
 - making sure that pupils understand how to improve work and make progress towards their learning objectives
 - checking that pupils make corrections or improvements in the light of comments made by teachers when they mark pupils' work.
- Make sure that when senior leaders identify the first signs that a class might not be making the expected progress they:
 - ensure that support is given to the class teacher to help them address any emerging issues
 - support pupils through focused activities that last just as long as is necessary to ensure that any gaps in learning are made up.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children first join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are a little below those typical for children of their age. Effective teaching supports strong progress and, when they start Year 1, children are performing at levels above those generally found.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and, at the end of Year 2, pupils are above, and sometimes well above, the levels expected. Their good progress continues through Key Stage 2 and, generally, they reach levels above those generally found by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. Pupils are well prepared for the move to secondary school and have developed wide-ranging skills and understanding.
- In 2013, standards in Year 6 dipped significantly and were well below those usually found. Evidence showed this cohort of pupils had performed at a significantly lower level throughout the school. In addition two experienced teachers due to work with these pupils during Year 6 left at the end of the previous year. Subsequent monitoring did not pick up that these pupils were not making the progress they should until January 2013, and results in the national tests were below average. This weak performance applied only to this particular year group; school data tracking pupils' progress and attainment shows that pupils in the current Year 6 are working at levels above those expected for their age.
- This current group includes a higher proportion who are on track to achieve the highest level in the national tests than is generally found. This represents the level expected of 14-year-olds and the school is ensuring that they are suitably challenged, including developing links with the local secondary school to use their specialist staff and equipment. This is typical of the good level of challenge for the most able throughout the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special education needs make good progress. A significant number of those who have been placed on the special educational needs register make such good progress that their names have been removed. This success allows the school to focus its resources, including the very well-deployed teaching assistants, on those pupils who have the greatest needs.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding well, breaking down the amount allocated to each pupil and monitoring the impact of the provision put into place. Careful tracking shows these pupils make good progress. In many instances, the gap between their performance and that of others has been completely closed, while it is increasingly unusual for the gap to represent more than a term behind in reading, writing and mathematics.
- For the Year 6 cohort in 2013, already identified as not being a typical year group, the pupils benefiting from the pupil premium funding were approximately a year behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reading is a daily focus throughout the school. This starts with extremely effective teaching of phonics (the knowledge of letters and the sounds they make) with the youngest children. In the 2013 Year 1 phonics check, an above-average proportion of pupils attained the expected level. Standards are high and many pupils said how much they enjoy reading every day.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good, with some outstanding practice, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which gets children off to an excellent start. A clear focus on the skills that underpin learning in reading, writing and mathematics, and very careful tracking of individual progress, ensure that children are ready for formal learning when they enter Year 1. There is no inadequate teaching anywhere in the school. As a result, pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who benefit from the pupil premium, are able to make good progress and enjoy their learning.
- Teachers have high expectations which are supported by the half-termly gathering of progress information for every pupil they teach. There is an emphasis on the skills of English and mathematics but the whole range of learning is covered in well-planned lessons. These include opportunities for bringing skills learned in English and mathematics into a range of learning so pupils can see these core subjects being used in other subjects.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are all taught very effectively. Teachers create a very positive atmosphere in their classes and so pupils are quite prepared to have a go, even in situations where they may not be fully confident.
- Teachers and their teaching assistants work together effectively. They plan together so teaching assistants play a full part in stimulating learning across the whole class, while at the same time often enabling effective help to be given to individuals or small groups.
- The drop in Year 6 outcomes in 2013 showed that the school's progress tracking system were not always effective in identifying early enough concerns about pupils' progress. These have been improved, with extra help provided for pupils identified as falling behind.
- Marking of work is done regularly, most of it in line with the school policy. However, sometimes it is not made clear to pupils how their work could be improved. Teachers do not check that pupils make corrections or improvements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school has the highest expectations that start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Here, outcomes in the area of learning that covers behaviour and developing social skills are far above those found nationally.
- Throughout the school pupils are committed to learning and, whatever the lesson, they enjoy their work and show strong commitment to being successful, irrespective of ability. They form extremely strong relationships with adults in school, and a mutual respect and liking is clear. A strong rapport in lessons helps pupils to develop their confidence and a strong sense of the importance of getting on with others.
- Parents as well as pupils are extremely positive about standards of behaviour and understand how this links with the strong progress that pupils make as they move through the school. Some pupils join the Early Years Foundation Stage with extremely challenging behaviour. The firm and consistent application of the behaviour policy means that over time they become able to take responsibility for their own behaviour and develop far more positive attitudes. They therefore become much more effective learners.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. However, it is not outstanding

because pedestrian access gates are not always open early enough as people start to arrive at school, so they have to walk in the roadway. The headteacher is taking steps to address this issue.

- Pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They understand the dangers of misuse of the internet and of social networking sites. Parents who spoke to inspectors were grateful that the school had organised a parents' workshop around e-safety.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in its different forms but say that, because everyone gets on so well together, it is not a problem in the school.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance, often in conjunction with other local schools, and it is now above average. This reflects pupils' enjoyment of coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has built a structure of senior and subject leadership where members accept clear areas of responsibility for which they are held accountable, focused on ensuring that staff and pupils fulfil their potential. This includes the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is well run. Throughout the school, all staff give leaders their full support.
- The process of school self-evaluation is detailed and allows leaders to set appropriate priorities for improvement. The rigour of this underlies the relentless improvement that existed prior to 2013, and which has now been restored.
- The special educational needs coordinator provides staff with excellent support. Along with other leaders, the coordinator has identified that the need to time limit the extra help given to pupils who are identified as falling behind, so that it can be withdrawn as soon as the pupils catch up with their classmates.
- School leaders acknowledge that, while changes caused by the departure of two key teachers were at the heart of this dip in performance in 2013, the monitoring processes in place at that time were not sufficiently robust. Steps have been taken to ensure that there can be no repetition. School information on the current Year 6 pupils shows that the drop in standards in 2013 was specific to one year group and that current pupils are on track to attain above-average standards.
- Teachers have clear annual performance objectives which are aimed at meeting the identified priorities for whole-school development while helping each individual to develop their professional expertise.
- Teachers fully understand the direct link between their performance and pay. Those on the upper pay scale willingly accept additional whole-school responsibilities in return.
- Pupils get tremendous enjoyment from their studies because they find the range of subjects and topics interesting. Because work is well planned, taking into account the wide range of abilities found in the school, everyone is able to learn and make good progress, including those who are eligible for the pupil premium. This reflects the strong commitment to creating equality of opportunity for all.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective. It is reflected in

the extremely positive ways in which pupils get on together in an atmosphere free from discrimination, as well as cultural opportunities such as regular visits to a range of places of worship that reflect the major religions found locally.

- The additional funding that has been made available for sports development is being used well. In particular, it part funds a specialist teacher who works alongside other staff to help them develop their expertise. Its positive impact includes increasing opportunities to participate in a range of sports and physical activities, including sports coaching at lunchtime, which is popular.
- Links with parents are extremely strong. Parents say how much they value the workshops provided which help them to support their children's learning. Recent examples include e-safety and how phonics helps children to develop reading.
- Links with other agencies are equally effective, often supporting pupils and their families. The local authority provides support only as needed to what it rightly sees as a very effective school. Their help has included a programme of training and support for new governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A good range of skills, including those in the fields of education and finance, enables the governing body to do its job very effectively. It carries out all its legal responsibilities, including those for safeguarding. Specific governors have direct links with subject leaders and report to the governing body, providing direct evidence of what goes on in classrooms and its effectiveness. They know how to interpret the figures that provide details of the school's performance, so they understand the issues around the 2013 Year 6 results. This also helps them compare the performance of their school with that of others. Finances are monitored effectively and the chair of the finance committee works closely with the business manager to gain a clear overview. Governors know how additional funding such as the pupil premium is spent and also understand the impact it is having in raising standards in English and mathematics for eligible pupils. The governing body sets challenging annual objectives for the headteacher. It understands the links between teachers' performance and their pay, having adopted a pay policy fully in line with legal requirements. Governors understand the process for dealing with inadequate teaching.

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	103809
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	440445

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather Hughes
Headteacher	Gillian Harper
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2011
Telephone number	01384 818530
Fax number	01384 818531
Email address	info@withymoor.dudley.sch.uk

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