

St Oswald's CofE Primary School

Sion Avenue, Kidderminster, DY10 2YL

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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.

- From their starting points, pupils make good progress as they move through the school, especially in reading. As a result, achievement is good and there is particularly good improvement in attainment at the end of the Reception Year and Year 2.
- Children get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The vibrant and well-equipped classrooms provide lots of opportunities for children to further develop their early skills.
- Teaching is usually good. Lessons are well planned and build on pupils' previous learning. All pupils are well supported.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. They are polite and respectful to all adults and each other.
- The headteacher, ably supported by his senior leadership team, has brought about clear and measurable improvements since the previous inspection. Achievement is now higher, teaching has improved and attendance is rising.
- The governors are highly effective and have a detailed knowledge and understanding of how well St Oswald's is doing compared to other schools. They have contributed well to improvements in teaching and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching particularly in writing and mathematics. This prevents some pupils from reaching even higher levels, especially the most able in Key Stage 2. On occasion, basic errors and misconceptions are missed and not rectified.
- Pupils are not always given the chance to act on the advice given when teachers mark their books.
- Some subject leaders are new to their posts and, as a result, are not yet fully trained and effective in their roles.
- Appraisal targets set for teachers are not always measureable or precise enough. This prevents teaching from improving even more rapidly.
- Attendance, though improving, is still below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They saw 16 part-lessons, four of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) together with other survey information collected by the school. They also spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school.
- Questionnaires from 25 staff were received and their views taken into account.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils at break time, lunchtime and around school.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and looked at the work in their books.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports following lesson observations, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julian Souter

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in single year group classes. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is one class for Nursery children and another for Reception children.
- Most pupils are White British and almost all pupils speak English at home as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible to receive free school meals, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average but the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The on-site breakfast club is managed by the school and was visited as part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching and thereby accelerate pupils' progress rates further, particularly in writing and mathematics, by making sure that:
 - the most able pupils are quickly moved on to harder work in lessons, where appropriate, especially in Key Stage 2
 - all adults consistently pick up and address common errors and misconceptions as they occur in lessons, so that these are ironed out as early as possible
 - pupils are given the opportunity to act on and respond to the feedback given by teachers in their books.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - further developing the roles of subject leaders, especially those new to their post, so that they contribute even more effectively to raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching in their areas
 - setting precise, measureable and challenging pupil progress targets for teachers based on the assessment information held by leaders.
- Raise the level of attendance so that it is at least similar to the national average by continuing to work with the small number of parents who do not yet see the importance of their children attending regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good.

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage either in the Nursery or the Reception year. Their skills and knowledge are below those expected for their age. They make good progress from their individual starting points because adults plan a wide range of exciting and worthwhile activities both indoors and outdoors which develop their early skills. As a result, standards are rising. Checks made of teachers' records show that currently, the proportion of children working at a good level of development is similar to the national average.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is good for all groups and standards are rising. The school's own information and work in pupils' books shows that pupils in Year 2 are on track to reach levels of attainment that are in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This attainment is higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Based on test results carried out during the inspection, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels has also risen in all subjects, particularly in reading.
- Progress is also good across Key Stage 2 and the proportion of pupils making expected and better than expected progress by the end of Year 6 is close to national figures. While school records and work in pupils' books show that current Year 6 have made good progress, attainment levels in 2014 are predicted to be below the national average in all subjects. This is because the starting points in Key Stage 2 of this year group were low. Additionally, there has been a high rate of movement of pupils in and out of the school that has affected the overall attainment of the year group which has a smaller number of pupils than usual.
- Children get off to a good start in reading and make good progress because letters and sounds are taught well from the outset. In 2013, an average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 reading check from very low starting points. Pupils make good progress in reading in Key Stage 2 and enjoy reading. Progress in writing and mathematics is also good but not yet as consistently strong as reading. School leaders are aware of this and are continuing to provide training for teachers to address these areas.
- Higher ability pupils usually progress well. This is because their love of learning is fostered well in all classes. The numbers reaching the higher levels in Key Stage 2 is not yet, however, in line with national figures as in some lessons, pupils are not moved on quickly enough to harder work.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The school successfully helps pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning and as a result, they achieve or get close to the standards expected for their age by the time they leave the school. Additional teaching and extra help are provided for pupils and this is very effective in helping them keep up with their classmates. This demonstrates the school's commitment to providing equality of opportunity.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding well to provide additional support in literacy and numeracy, to improve attendance, and to subsidise trips and clubs for those who are known to be eligible. Pupils eligible for this support make good progress overall along with others in the school. Year 6 pupils eligible for free school meals in 2013 were approximately three terms behind others in reading and mathematics and just over a term behind in writing. Across the school, the gaps in attainment are closing quickly as a result of improved teaching.
- As a result of the school's use of the primary sports funding, there have been increased pupil numbers participating in competitive sports. Pupils now have a good understanding of the

benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated and the vast majority of teaching is now good. Pupils are given interesting and appropriate activities which help them to make good progress.
- There are many strengths in teaching and where it is most effective, teachers build on pupils' prior learning and extend their current skills and knowledge well. Teachers tell pupils what they are going to learn at the outset and give clear instructions so that pupils know precisely what they have to do. Work is normally set at different levels so that the difficulty is right for pupils of varying abilities. On occasion, however, the most able pupils are not moved on quickly enough to more difficult work and, as a result, do not always reach the levels of which they are capable, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers and support staff check on pupils' progress throughout the lesson and provide additional support as needed. However, they do not always systematically pick up common errors or misconceptions as they occur in each lesson, especially in writing. For example, a few children in the Reception class are still unable to write their letters properly and some pupils in Year 6 are unsure when to use 'their' or 'there' correctly in a sentence.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and pupils achieve well in lessons which are active and allow them to apply the knowledge they have been taught. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were learning to spell words with similar sounds in. The teacher modelled and sounded the words out extremely clearly and then pupils went to find pictures around the room which contained the spelling patterns being taught. All pupils were engrossed and eager to locate the pictures and write down the correct spelling.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because teachers plan a wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors, which develop their early skills. They ask probing questions to check children's understanding and extend their thinking. Adults guide and skilfully interact with children and expertly build on their interests. As a result, children are well engaged in activities and develop the ability to work on their own and make choices for themselves. Nursery and Reception classrooms are very vibrant and exciting places with different areas set up which capture and develop children's imaginations.
- Good support is available for pupils in all classes. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and work effectively with class teachers. They provide good support for individuals or small groups within the classroom and they run additional sessions outside the classroom for those who are in danger of falling behind. Displays in classrooms also provide additional prompts and guidance to re-enforce learning in English and mathematics for pupils.
- Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to work together in pairs or small groups. Pupils discuss and share their ideas well on these occasions. They know what levels they are working at and which targets they are focusing on.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and provide guidance to help pupils improve their work further. However, they do not always check that pupils have acted upon the advice given. This means that pupils do not always benefit and learn from the marking.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good.

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and want to do well. They work hard during lessons and are keen to discuss their work. The most exciting lessons increase their love of learning and this has a stronger impact on their progress.
- Pupils are well behaved at all times during the day, including break times and lunchtimes. They are polite and well-mannered to each other and to adults. Teachers manage behaviour well in lessons and incidents of disruption are uncommon. Leaders have taken determined action to deal with unacceptable behaviour and, while the number of fixed-term exclusions in the school is above the national average, records show that these relate to very few pupils and incidents are reducing. Pupils themselves say behaviour is good.
- Pupils have a good level of understanding about the different types of bullying. They do not feel that bullying is an issue in their school but say they know who to talk to if they feel upset and that any such issues are dealt with swiftly. Parents also feel that behaviour is good and that the school deals appropriately with any incidents that happen.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe at school and parents who expressed their views support this. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and are aware of potential dangers. Swimming lessons are funded by the school for pupils in Year 2 as leaders are determined that pupils will be safe in water.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have time to think about different issues and know the difference between right and wrong. They have a secure understanding and appreciation of other cultures and beliefs. They treat each other and all adults with respect and work well together in lessons.
- Breakfast club is well organised and is a valuable resource for parents. Pupils who attend behave well and enjoy the activities offered. They are given a healthy breakfast which prepares them well for the lessons ahead. As one pupil put it, 'it gives me time to think and prepare for my day'.
- Attendance is below average but improving. This is as a result of successful actions taken by leaders and the effective use of the pupil premium to employ an attendance officer. The numbers of pupils who are persistently absent is also reducing as more pupils now enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- At the time of the previous inspection, the headteacher had been in post for only a few weeks. Since then, he has galvanised the staff and together they have created a calm, welcoming and purposeful climate for learning. Staff morale is high and pupils enjoy lessons and have positive attitudes to school. As a result, achievement, teaching and attendance have all improved.
- Senior leaders know their school well and their evaluations are accurate. Areas for development are identified and actions taken lead to measureable improvement, for example improved attendance and more effective approaches to teaching reading and writing. Good support and additional training is also provided for teachers in order to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge needed to accelerate pupils' progress.

- Senior leaders carefully track the progress that all groups of pupils are making by collecting information. They carry out a range of checks on teaching, but some leaders are relatively new to their posts and, as a result, it is too early for them to have had an impact on improving the quality of teaching in their subject areas.
- Annual targets are set for all teachers and these are linked to teachers' pay. The management of teachers' performance is carried out systematically and targets are reviewed mid year. However, the targets relating to pupils' progress are not precise enough or sufficiently measurable to improve teaching even more quickly. Generic statements, such as 'to make appropriate progress' are too vague.
- Literacy, numeracy and computing skills are well developed in other subject areas. A variety of clubs, visits and visitors also provide memorable experiences for pupils, including a residential visit to an outdoor centre in Key Stage 2.
- Leaders are using the new primary school sport funding effectively to buy equipment, fund swimming lessons, and be part of a local sports partnership. Although this funding has only been received recently and further activities are planned, already to date staff have improved their confidence and skill in teaching physical education.
- The local authority has provided good support since the previous inspection by holding regular review meetings with all leaders and keeping a watchful eye on the school's data on pupils' achievement. A full review of the school was conducted in February 2014 which gave leaders pointers for further improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are proud to be involved with the school and recognise the improvements made. As one governor put it 'the school has taken wings and is beginning to fly'. They provide a good balance of challenge and support to senior leaders. They have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement as they are involved in looking at pupils' work and visit classrooms regularly. They are highly skilled in analysing school data and know how well the school is doing in comparison with other similar schools, including how the pupil premium is used and its impact.
 - Governors set targets for the headteacher and are aware of how teachers' performance is managed. Pay increases are only awarded where there is evidence that pupils make good progress. Governors take part in regular training and their range of skills and expertise mean that they fulfil their statutory duties well, for example in relation to finance and safeguarding. As a result, current safeguarding arrangements meet 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	135058
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	442586

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Britton-Voss
Headteacher	Joel Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2012
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