

Hazel Slade Community Primary School

Cannock Wood Street, Hazel Slade, Cannock, WS12 0PN

Inspection dates

14–15 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership and management are good, teachers' performance is managed well and the pace of improvement is gathering momentum.
- Taking their lead from the very clear direction set by the headteacher, all leaders and managers are now fulfilling their roles well.
- Governance is much improved. The governing body keeps a very close check on how well pupils are doing. It challenges the school robustly to improve teaching so that pupils can do even better.
- The quality of teaching is good. Consequently, pupils make good progress and achieve well over time.
- Reception children are prepared well for their work in Year 1 because provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good.
- Pupils are proud to be at this school and they value it highly. They report that the school is a very safe place where they are looked after well. Their parents agree.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils very much enjoy learning. They are enthusiastic learners who want to do well.
- The school does much to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Thus, pupils are reflective and caring, accepting of others and eager to take on responsibility.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to help pupils make even more rapid progress over time.
- Writing skills are not marked as well in other subjects as they are in literacy.
- The assessment of pupils' learning in subjects other than English and mathematics is underdeveloped.
- Statements about how the school will measure progress towards its stated priorities are not sufficiently linked to raising pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons. Seven of the visits took place jointly with the headteacher.
- Play and lunchtimes were observed and the inspector held discussions with pupils, governors, staff and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 29 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and also gained parents' views by speaking to some parents as they brought their children to school.
- The eight responses to the questionnaires for staff were also considered.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including information about pupils' progress and attendance, the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation document, and records and policies about safeguarding and the quality of teaching.
- The inspector also examined the work in pupils' books, including some from last year, sampled sessions where pupils were being taught phonics (the sounds that letters make) and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It provides full time education for Reception-aged children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Eleven per cent of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported at school action, and nine-and-a-half per cent of pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. Both proportions are above the national averages.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average. This funding is for children in local authority care and those previously known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A private nursery, which also offers before and after school clubs two days a week, operates on the school site. It is inspected separately.
- In October this year, the school started its own daily breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding and pupils can make even more rapid progress by:
 - making sure that pupils are encouraged to use their writing skills equally well at all times, and that teachers mark those skills equally well, wherever they are used.
 - as the new curriculum settles in, finding manageable ways to assess and record pupils' progress in all subjects.
- In planning for further improvement, sharpen the statements about how the school will measure progress towards its priorities by linking them more precisely to improving the rate of pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- A climate of high expectations and a determination to take pupils' learning to an even higher level is evident in all of the school's work. It comes directly from the headteacher's strong leadership of teaching and the robust monitoring of teachers' performance. Well-targeted training has also improved teaching, and given leaders and managers at different levels the skills they need to perform their roles well.
- All staff understand the links between the school's accurate self-evaluation, the priorities that arise out of it, and the objectives set as part of the management of their performance. When planning for improvement, however, the statements showing the intended impact of the priorities set are not linked precisely enough to improvements in pupils' progress.
- The leadership of English and mathematics is strong. As a result, standards have risen and the school is clear about what it needs to do to improve them further. Leaders have ensured that opportunities for pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills are built into all subjects. They have not given the same attention to ensuring that teachers remind pupils to use the skills they learn in literacy lessons in all of their writing.
- The new curriculum is planned well to provide pupils with many exciting learning opportunities that also promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are taught to be reflective and caring, to treat others equally and with respect. They also learn about different faiths and cultures in Britain and abroad, and the importance of avoiding any sort of discrimination.
- Subject leaders are already beginning to monitor the implementation of their subjects within the new curriculum by checking the work in pupils' books. They have yet to set up the systems to assess progress in their subjects. A good range of visits and visitors, clubs and other activities, including sports and the arts, enriches pupils' learning and gives them experiences they might not otherwise have.
- The provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Staff help children to settle well and they liaise closely with parents to ensure the children's health, safety and well-being.
- The good management of the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs means that the new statutory requirements are being given due attention. The school identifies pupils who need support at an early stage to help close gaps in their learning as quickly as possible.
- The primary schools sports funding is being used extremely well to increase the range of sports available to pupils, to provide additional coaching, and to train staff to teach physical education more effectively. All of this is making sure the improved provision is sustainable.
- The school has analysed the impact of the primary sports funding exceptionally well. Its analysis shows, for example, that, due to extra swimming time, the proportion of pupils in Years 5 and 6 who can swim the statutory 25 metres has risen from 12 to 45 per cent. It also shows that participation in extra-curricular sporting activities has risen by over ten percent in the past year.
- The school uses the pupil premium grant well to improve provision for disadvantaged pupils. Last year, it added to the £33,300 allocated, to improve attendance, and to employ and train additional staff so that pupils could be taught in smaller groups to increase their progress. It also used the funding to subsidise school visits and, more recently, to start its own breakfast club. As a result of all of this, attendance has improved and gaps are closing between eligible pupils and other pupils in school and pupils nationally.
- Although the local authority is keeping a watchful eye on the school, the intense support it provided following the previous inspection is being rapidly withdrawn. This is because the school has improved significantly and is now showing that it has the capacity to improve further with minimal support. In its drive for improvement, the school has also formed strong links with other schools, for example, to ensure assessments are accurate and pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

- Safeguarding requirements, including for child protection, meet current requirements. The school's heightened awareness of the issues faced by some of its pupils ensures that all pupils are looked after well and help and support is sought for pupils and their families when the need arises.
- The school involves parents well in their children's learning. Workshops, open days and weekly newsletters ensure that parents are kept up to date and are supported in helping their children to learn. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and what it does for their children.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and about the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
 - Visits to school, discussions with staff and pupils, and the monthly meetings of the 'Getting to Good' group ensure that they have an in-depth understanding of data about pupils' progress. They interrogate the data well so that they have a good understanding of the performance of different groups of pupils. They use the information to challenge the school to do even better. Governors also fine-tune their skills by using their own good range of expertise and attending training to keep themselves up-to-date with everything they need to know and do.
 - The governing body supports the headteacher well in making decisions about pay based on information about teachers' performance. They meet with leaders and monitor the impact of their work on teaching and learning so that they can do so from a position of knowledge. They also meet with pupils and parents so that they can take the view of all stakeholders into account.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils understand that by behaving well, following instructions, helping each other and showing good attitudes to learning, they can learn faster. The school has marked success with pupils who join it with behavioural difficulties. Its inclusive nature ensures these pupils receive good support, settle quickly and make good progress.
- Pupils say that they 'learn a lot' because 'learning is fun' and they are taught 'in all different ways' so that 'everybody can make good progress'. They present their work well and make good use of marking comments, checklists and discussions with staff to improve it.
- Pupils are polite and respectful, ready and willing to help others. They say their teachers are 'the best' because they are 'polite, very supportive' and 'will listen and help with problems in or out of school'. Nevertheless, they do admit that, although it only happens occasionally, behaviour slips if they become bored or get annoyed when others try to stop them concentrating.
- Pupils take responsibility well. They understand how they can help the school to get even better, for example, through the work of school council. They value the importance placed on their various roles by having to apply for them, or be voted into them, thereby gaining an early understanding of how democracy works.
- Lunchtimes and playtimes are happy social occasions. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying and that, because it is a small school, everyone knows everyone else and they all get on well. They understand the different forms bullying can take and appreciate the workshops that make sure they know what to do if they know of or experience any. They are proud of their ability to deal with the occasional falling out without always having to refer to an adult.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are taught about the benefits and dangers associated with using computers, the internet and mobile phones. They feel very safe in school and they know how to keep themselves safe.

- Attendance has improved and is now above average. The school follows up all absences to ensure that pupils are safe and well-looked after and, where relevant, it liaises with external agencies to do so.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work rate and behaviour. They deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding with probing questions, opportunities for research and the development of enquiry skills all of which rouse pupils' curiosity and spur them on to want to find out more.
- Pupils' progress and their overall achievement are improving rapidly because their work is planned well to meet their different levels of ability. It is also quickly adjusted during and between lessons in response to how well they are learning. This ensures that the most-able pupils have suitably demanding work, while pupils who might be struggling have their work broken down further to help them learn better.
- Some excellent progress was noted in the work of pupils in Years 5 and 6. Here, pupils are successfully taught to recognise the point at which their work is becoming easier, check that it is accurate, and move immediately onto harder work. The pupils' attitudes and their determination to increase the pace of their learning as they do this are commendable.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills are all taught well. Speaking and listening skills are also given due emphasis from an early age as the school strives to extend the limited range of vocabulary with which some pupils start school.
- Pupils are keen to show how they respond to the guidance given in marking by doing corrections to improve their work. However, while the writing they do in literacy lessons is marked well, the same attention is not given to marking writing that occurs in other subjects. As a result, spelling, grammar and punctuation errors corrected in literacy often go unchecked elsewhere.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with levels of attainment below those typical for their age, and particularly so in literacy, number and communication. They leave school in Year 6 having reached at least the national average.
- The upward trend in attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 continued in 2014. Consequently, the results of the national tests and assessments for pupils in Year 6 rose to above the national average for 2013, the last year for which published data are available. This was the case overall, and in each of reading, writing and mathematics. These improved outcomes represent at least good progress and, over time, good achievement, despite, because of the small numbers, variations in the make-up of each year group.
- The increased proportions of pupils reaching higher-than-expected levels in Year 2 and 6 in 2014 show that the school is now providing well for its most-able pupils. This was evident, too, in lessons and in the work in pupils' books. The additional challenges, particularly for pupils in Years 5 and 6, take their learning to a much higher level as, for example, they do work usually associated with pupils in Year 7.
- The results of the Year 1 screening check in phonics rose to above average in 2014. Pupils use their phonics skills well to help them read new words. Nevertheless, for some younger pupils, fluency in reading is sometimes compromised by their inability to remember words they have already read, or the constant sounding out of words they already know.
- Much is in place to improve pupils' vocabulary and their speaking and listening skills in order to help their writing. Pupils' writing in literacy is much improved. By Year 6, it is presented well, engages the reader and shows good attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation skills, all of which rose significantly between 2013 and 2014.
- Pupils also write in different styles for different purposes in other subjects but they do not apply the skills

they learn in literacy to that writing and therefore it is often at a lower level.

- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in mathematics. They know their multiplication tables and, by Year 6, can apply that knowledge well as, for example, they find equivalent fractions and use addition to check subtraction, multiplication to check division and vice versa. They also use these skills well to solve mathematical problems, and to collect and interpret data in different subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make good progress. Their learning is broken down into the smaller steps they need to understand it and achieve well. Training for teaching and support staff is making sure that different sorts of needs are better understood and catered for.
- Throughout the school, disadvantaged pupils make at least the same good progress as all other pupils. However, the numbers of pupils in Year 6 in 2013 and again in 2014 are too small to be able to make an accurate comparison of their attainment with that of other pupils in the school, or pupils nationally.
- Pupils are thoroughly enjoying the increased range of sporting activities made available to them through the primary sports funding initiative. They talk enthusiastically about the range of activities and how more and more pupils are taking up what is on offer. They also enjoy competing in teams and against other schools and understand the importance of taking regular exercise to keep themselves fit and healthy.

The early years provision

is good

- Good teaching, overseen by good leadership and management, ensure that children make good progress in their Reception year. The proportion reaching a good level of development matched the national average in 2014, although literacy skills, especially writing, remained a weakness for many children. Boys do less well than girls, but much is in place to help them catch up.
- Staff move quickly to identify disabled children and those who have special educational needs and, in consultation with parents and external agencies, strive to get the pupils the additional support they need as soon as possible. Staff also note children who are most able and extend their learning accordingly.
- All activities have a clear learning purpose and children's learning is planned well. Particular attention is paid to extending the children's limited vocabulary and encouraging good speaking and listening skills. The indoor and outdoor environments are used well and there is a good balance between activities that are directed by an adult and those that children can select for themselves.
- Most staff are skilled at questioning children and building on their responses in order to encourage and improve their communication skills. This does not always happen when children are learning outside, however, resulting in missed opportunities to record and extend learning as it happens. Other than this, children's progress is assessed and recorded well, and learning is adjusted in response to what children say and do.
- Staff liaise closely with parents to ensure that all learning is taken into account. Parents are encouraged to celebrate and record learning that occurs at home and to share it with school so that staff can build on it. They are also supported well in helping their children to learn at home.
- Children work and play in a safe, secure learning environment. They enjoy coming to school, settle quickly and behave well. Good emphasis is placed on promoting their safety and their physical and emotional well-being.

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	124069
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	449033

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christie Jones
Headteacher	Louise Brealey
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2012
Telephone number	01543 512215
Email address	office@hazelslade.staffs.sch.uk

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