

Whitehall Nursery and Infant School

West Bromwich Road, Walsall, West Midlands, WS1 3HS

Inspection dates 16–17 December 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Early years provision | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 2 they have reached standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are well above average.
- In the excellent Early Years Foundation Stage, children make rapid progress, often from very low starting points. They are taught basic skills very well and enjoy the interesting and imaginative activities.
- All groups of pupils make outstanding progress, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement and successfully challenge them to do the very best they can.
- Teachers very effectively help pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, especially those who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They attend regularly, work hard and want to do well. Their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils said that they feel extremely safe, secure and well looked after.
- The headteacher and senior leaders expect a lot from the teachers. They check the quality of teaching regularly and help teachers to develop their skills.
- Leaders at all levels are ambitious for the school and committed to raising standards for all pupils.
- The school's well-planned curriculum provides exciting lessons and topics which engage pupils' interest.
- A wide range of trips, visitors, clubs, special events and chances to take on responsibilities helps pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Governors know the school well and very effectively hold it to account for its performance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 20 lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also talked to pupils about their work, looked at their books and listened to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers with leadership roles, a group of governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to a small number of parents and carers at the start of the school day. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to provide statistically meaningful feedback, but inspectors looked at the school's own recent survey of parents' and carers' views. They also took account of 13 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors looked at documents including the school's plans for improvement, information about pupils' achievement, records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, and the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe.

Inspection team

Michael Phipps, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

Helen Owen

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized infant school.
- The school provides full-time education for reception-aged children and part-time education for nursery-aged children.
- More than eight out of 10 pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is a much higher proportion than average. The largest groups are of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage, although a number of other minority ethnic groups are represented.
- Two thirds of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is much higher than average.
- Around four out of 10 pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is much higher than average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, around one in ten, is about half the national average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the early years outdoor area to match the high quality of the indoor classrooms, so that it provides equivalent opportunities to enrich children's learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and makes sure all leaders and staff give every pupil an equal chance to reach the highest standards. She has created a very positive, non-discriminatory ethos in which excellent teaching and behaviour can flourish.
- The leadership of teaching is strong. Teachers are set targets based on how well pupils achieve and the school's leaders check the quality of teaching regularly. Any underperformance is tackled robustly and all teachers have excellent opportunities to develop their skills.
- Leaders make regular checks on pupils' progress. If any pupils fall behind, help is quickly provided for them to catch up. Teachers' judgements about pupils' achievement are carefully checked by external moderators to make sure they are accurate.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Plans to improve the school focus on the right areas.
- Many teachers hold management responsibilities. Teachers in charge of subjects make a very positive contribution to the quality of teaching and to pupils' outstanding progress.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. Almost all felt that the school is well led and that their children are making good progress and are taught well. Parents and carers come into school for 'stay and learn' sessions and other events. A large number came during the inspection to see pupils in Year 1 present their nativity play.
- Additional funds from the pupil premium are spent effectively on extra staff to help disadvantaged pupils catch up in literacy and mathematics and to subsidise educational visits. This ensures that disadvantaged pupils make outstanding progress.
- The school provides an exciting and broad range of subjects within which pupils are also able to develop their reading, writing and mathematics. An excellent range of additional activities, trips and clubs enriches the curriculum. Clubs include craft, French, choir and cooking. These experiences help to promote pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils explore what it means to be British as well as the diversity of faiths and cultures in modern Britain. Elections to the Whitehall parliament, for example, give pupils the chance to learn about democracy, representation and responsibility.
- Leaders make excellent use of the primary school sport funding to employ specialist sports coaches to teach high-quality physical education lessons alongside school staff. Pupils have chances to enter local sports competitions and enjoy a wide range of sports clubs. As a result, there is a high level of pupil participation in sports.
- The local authority has provided a light level of support for this school. It has rightly judged that leaders are very well placed to maintain the school's very high standards.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a very clear understanding of the school's performance. They know what the information on pupils' achievement tells them about how well the school is doing in relation to other schools. They effectively challenge the school's leaders to maintain the pace of improvement.
 - Governors know the school well. Many are regular visitors and see the quality of teaching for themselves. They know how good teaching is rewarded, and how any underperformance is tackled.
 - Governors oversee the school's finances very effectively. They know how the school is spending the pupil premium and what the impact of these additional funds is on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
 - Governors make sure that the school meets all statutory requirements, including those related to safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their attitudes to learning are highly positive. They are curious and enjoy learning new things. They cooperate well in class and enjoy answering questions and taking part. They help each other learn by, for example, discussing what they are doing with a partner. Disruption caused by poor pupil behaviour is very rare.
- Pupils behave well around the school at break and lunchtime. They treat visitors, staff and each other with

courtesy and respect. They look after their school well and do not drop litter around the site.

- Pupils told inspectors how much they enjoy school. This is reflected in their attendance, which is rising year on year, and their excellent punctuality to lessons. Pupils are proud of their school and they wear their smart uniforms with pride.
- Parents and carers have no concerns about pupils' behaviour. The very large majority of parents and carers said that the school makes sure that pupils behave well.
- Pupils enjoy the rewards they receive for behaving well and working hard. They like filling in their 'Star Charts' and earning prizes for good work and effort. They told inspectors how excited they are to receive a teddy bear for excellent attendance.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, such as acting as MPs in the Whitehall parliament, acting as play leaders, or helping as fruit or water monitors. They are proud of these roles and take them seriously.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils told inspectors that they feel very safe and well looked after in school. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agreed that their children are happy, feel safe and are well looked after.
- The school site is very safe and secure. Visitors are checked carefully. All staff know and follow very effective policies and practices to keep pupils safe.
- Racism is virtually unknown and no pupils have been excluded from school for many years.
- Pupils told inspectors that they are not aware of any bullying in school, and school records confirm this. Pupils are taught about different types of bullying such as name calling. Pupils said that if a problem were to arise, like pupils falling out with each other, it would soon be sorted out if they told an adult.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are well aware, for example, of the potential dangers posed by strangers and when using the internet. They told inspectors about visitors to school who taught them about road safety.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers always expect high standards of behaviour, effort and achievement from all pupils. Consistent routines make sure that all pupils know what to do and how to behave. As a result there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere across the school.
- There is a constant emphasis in all lessons on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. This supports very effectively the learning of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with weak language skills. It also prepares pupils very well for learning to write fluently and accurately.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are warm, positive and respectful. Teachers praise pupils for their effort and for their contributions to lessons. As a result, pupils are confident learners who enjoy taking part in lessons and they make excellent progress in literacy, reading and mathematics.
- Teachers plan work which closely matches the abilities of different pupils. They regularly check pupils' understanding and progress by asking them questions to make them think. Their responses are used by teachers to see if pupils need more support or more challenge. This makes sure that all pupils learn as well as they can.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very well supported in lessons. Adults work effectively alongside pupils in class, breaking down tasks into smaller steps so they can succeed.
- Pupils know how to improve their work because teachers' marking is consistently helpful and they improve their work in response to it. Pupils are proud of their work and take care to present it neatly.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress throughout the school. As a result, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave school at the end of Year 2 is consistently well above average. Checks made by inspectors of the work in pupils' books confirmed this outstanding progress.
- Pupils are given interesting and imaginative writing tasks in a number of subjects and they have many opportunities to write longer pieces. As a result, pupils' standard of writing is high.
- Pupils do well in mathematics. They enjoy the many practical activities set by their teachers, so they develop their counting skills early. A particular strength is pupils' use of correct mathematical language, which helps both their mathematical understanding and their speaking and listening skills.

- The school is fully committed to making sure that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities have an equal opportunity to succeed and it checks the achievement of all groups carefully. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds, including those of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage, achieve equally well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make the same outstanding progress and achieve just as well as other pupils because the school develops their English in every lesson.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same excellent progress as their peers because their achievement is checked regularly and appropriate, extra help is quickly given.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same outstanding progress as other pupils in school. Gaps between their attainment and that of others in school are narrow. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils were around half a term behind other pupils in the school in reading and writing and less than a term behind in mathematics. When compared to other pupils nationally, in 2014 these pupils reached the same standards in writing and mathematics and were less than half a term behind in reading.
- The most able pupils achieve very well because teachers set them work at just the right level of difficulty to get the best from them. The proportion of pupils reaching the highest levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently above national average figures, often significantly so.
- Pupils are taught to read very effectively and standards of reading are high. Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well, so pupils are confident about reading unfamiliar words. Teachers give pupils books to read which are closely matched to their abilities and assess their reading regularly and accurately. Pupils enjoy reading, both independently and together in class.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skill and knowledge which are very much lower than those typical for their age. Their communication and language skills are particularly low, and many children start school with very little spoken language and no English. From these starting points children make outstanding progress, particularly in their speaking, and they begin to catch up very well. By the end of the Reception Year they are very well prepared for Year 1, but their skills are still below expected levels in some areas, especially in writing.
- Children are taught exceptionally well. Teachers plan interesting and imaginative activities which provide many chances for children to develop their independence. Children benefit from the very effective teaching of key skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Learning in the early years is effectively based on children's individual needs. This means that the school quickly identifies children who have special educational needs and supports them straight away. The most able children are similarly identified and challenged, so that all groups make rapid progress.
- Staff make sure that children very quickly get used to school routines. As a result, they grow in confidence and feel secure and well cared for. Relationships between adults and children are warm and highly supportive. Children quickly get used to taking turns and listening to teachers and to each other. Their behaviour is excellent and they thoroughly enjoy learning.
- The early years provision is very well led and managed. A close check is kept on how well children are learning. Assessments made by adults are frequent and accurate. This information is used by staff, working very effectively as a team, to plan what children should do next.
- Staff are very successful in engaging parents and carers in their children's learning. Parents and carers said that it is easy to talk to teachers at the start and end of each day. Teachers visit all children in their homes before they start school. This helps to build strong relationships between teachers and parents and carers. It makes sure that children get off to a flying start because they already know their teacher.
- During the inspection it was not possible for children to use the early years outdoor area because of building work. The school's leaders have well-developed plans to improve the outdoor area to match the stimulating indoor classrooms so that children can learn as well outside as they do inside.

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

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| Unique reference number | 104163 |
| Local authority | Walsall |
| Inspection number | 448889 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 304 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Tariq Hussain |
| Headteacher | Susan Speed |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18–19 May 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01922 721991 |
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