

Banners Gate Primary School

Coppice View Road, Sutton Coldfield, B73 6UE

Inspection dates 13–14 January 2015

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.

- Children get a good start to school life in the Nursery and Reception classes. Well-planned activities help them develop their skills so that they make good progress.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, standards at the end of both key stages are improving.
- Teachers ask pupils searching questions to check their understanding so that they can build successfully on what they know. Teachers make sure the work is at the right level for pupils of all abilities to achieve well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make especially good progress. They are well supported and their achievement is carefully tracked.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is good. They are polite and helpful to adults and each other. Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as when using the internet.
- The headteacher has ensured that the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. She and her senior leaders regularly check how well pupils are doing to make sure no groups are falling behind.
- The governors are very supportive. They ask challenging questions to make sure that senior leaders continually improve teaching and achievement.
- Governors have greatly improved their role since the previous inspection. Their systems for checking how well the school is doing are now rigorous.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Despite good progress, standards in writing are still not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- The guidance teachers give to pupils on how they can improve their work is not always helpful.
- Some new leaders have not yet fully developed the skills they need to fulfil their role.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 20 lessons or parts of lessons, four of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other staff, three groups of pupils and five members of the governing body.
- Informal discussions were held with parents.
- The inspectors took account of the 34 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the school's own questionnaires, individual communications from parents and the 38 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed a range of documentation, including: the school's checks on its performance; its analysis and tracking of pupils' progress; records of behaviour and safety; school improvement plans; records relating to classroom observations and the management of staff performance; safeguarding arrangements; and records of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors also looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and checked information on attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marianne Baker	Additional Inspector
Phil Unsworth	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than an average-sized primary school.
- Pupils currently in Year 6 are the last group who attended a separate infant school prior to the amalgamation and formation of the current primary school.
- Children in the early years start in a Nursery class where they can attend either part-time or full-time. Although this varies from year to year, most move into one of the full-time Reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they are five years old.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- At just under 21%, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is higher than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils (those supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is above average at over 43%.
- The school has had a large number of changes in staffing since the last inspection. The deputy headteacher left in December 2014. An acting assistant headteacher was appointed in January 2015 to work alongside the current assistant headteacher. Both have recently taken on additional roles as mathematics and literacy leaders.
- The school works closely with other local schools and the Boldmere Teaching School Alliance, whose headteacher is a National Leader in Education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to raise standards, particularly in writing, by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to practise their literacy skills in different subjects
 - ensuring that all teachers give pupils helpful guidance on how to improve their work in all subjects.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - new leaders quickly develop the skills they need to drive improvement in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The drive and commitment of the headteacher have led to improvements in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection and higher standards throughout the school, including in the early years classes. Her strong leadership is evident in the way she has addressed challenging situations, such as managing changes to staffing, to ensure a good level of education for pupils in the school.
- The headteacher and senior leaders rigorously check how well pupils are doing. They hold regular meetings with teachers to make sure that any pupils in danger of falling behind are quickly identified and helped to keep up. Some leaders, however, are new to the role and have not yet developed the knowledge of the school and skills they need to play a full part in driving improvements.
- The appraisal system, which links teachers' pay to the progress of pupils in their class, ensures that all teachers understand the high expectations of them. Teachers told inspectors that while the system is challenging, they are well supported by senior staff and get the training and support they need to help them meet their targets.
- Teachers who are new to their post receive good support from more experienced senior and middle leaders. Leaders work alongside colleagues to help them improve their techniques. This supports less experienced staff in developing the skills they need to sustain continued improvement in pupils' achievement and make accurate assessments of their progress.
- The headteacher and senior leaders identified inaccuracies in assessment of how well pupils were achieving. They have introduced new systems to ensure accuracy throughout the school. As a result, assessments since September 2014 reflect the level of work that is evident in pupils' books.
- The school has formed strong partnerships with other local schools so that staff can share expertise and develop their skills. It also enables pupils to work with, or compete against, those from other schools. The local authority has provided good support by providing training courses and by linking the school with a local Teaching School Alliance for additional high-quality support.
- Lessons are interesting and exciting. Topics studied help pupils develop an awareness of other cultures as well as issues in their own local environment. For example, when studying India, Year 2 pupils sampled Indian food and learnt about different spices used in cooking. Older pupils have attended meetings at the city council offices where they tabled questions for council members. At the invitation of the parliamentary Speaker's Office, pupils have designed a flag to depict their local area. Such activities prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- As a result of well-spent primary school sports funding, pupils are very enthusiastic about physical education and the range of sports clubs on offer. The money pays for a specialist sports coach to teach lessons and run after-school and lunch-time clubs. The school is also part of a local sports partnership. This has encouraged more participation in competitive sports and pupils can sample new activities such as canoeing.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. While some is used to make sure that no pupil misses out on activities for financial reasons, much of the funding supports academic achievement. Additional adults provide high quality one-to-one or small group support for eligible pupils to help them catch up with their peers.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developed well through the curriculum and the wide range of experiences on offer. For example, social skills are developed through activities with the local community association, providing teas for elderly residents, and participation in Rotary and Princes Trust activities. The school choir sings at local and city-wide events. The school ensures equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination effectively. It makes sure that all groups of pupils achieve well and are able to participate fully in school life, regardless of background or ability.

- Despite a small number of negative responses to Parent View, most parents, including those spoken to during the inspection, were very positive about the school. The school's own questionnaire conducted in October 2014 elicited 177 responses, the vast majority of which were positive about all aspects of school life.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors have made considerable changes to the way they work since the previous inspection. They have reduced the size of the governing body and ensured that its work is closely focused on the school's agreed priorities for improvement. Under the dynamic leadership of the Chair and Vice Chair, governors have developed robust systems to check the school's performance. All governors are fully involved and form a strong team.
- Governors visit the school regularly, ask searching questions and use school data effectively to make sure leaders are raising standards. They ensure that the appraisal system only rewards teachers whose pupils achieve well, and know that it is contributing to the good quality of teaching.
- Governors manage the school's finances well. They track how the pupil premium is supporting disadvantaged pupils and make sure that it is helping them keep up with their peers. Governors know that the sports funding has improved pupils' skills. Through discussions with pupils, governors appreciate that it had increased their enthusiasm and engagement.
- Governors make sure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet national requirements. All staff are checked to ensure their suitability for working with children.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite to adults and to each other. Movement about the school is calm and purposeful. Pupils automatically hold the doors open. Spontaneous thanks and apologies, as appropriate, reflect the school's focus on good manners and respect for others.
- Pupils take roles of responsibility seriously. The school council told inspectors how their views are taken into consideration. For example, council members consulted their classmates on their views of the school dinners. As a result of their findings, the menus were changed and dinner improved. Other pupils act as class ambassadors to help welcome visitors.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection felt most pupils behave well. They said that the behaviour system of sanctions and rewards works well, but appreciated that some pupils find good behaviour difficult. Pupils showed a mature tolerance of these pupils and said that teachers rarely let inappropriate behaviour disrupt their lessons.
- Teachers manage the challenging behaviour from a few pupils very well. The school works closely with parents and offers a wide range of support to help these pupils settle into school life.
- Pupils are extremely positive about their learning. They say that the teachers help them understand how they can improve their work. One pupil said lessons are enjoyable because 'all the teachers have a sense of humour'.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The site is secure and pupils say they feel safe because they know all the doors are 'fob-protected' so that only staff can move from one part of the school to the other. Pupils told inspectors that they were confident they could go to an adult if they had a problem and they would be listened to.
- Teachers and other adults contribute to the caring, nurturing environment that prompts pupils to say that they feel safe in school. Pupils respond well to the excellent role models of adults who treat them with respect and courtesy, and mirror this in their behaviour to each other.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare. They understand how different types of bullying can affect people's

lives. Pupils told inspectors that staff quickly deal with any problems and always sort them out.

- Pupils know what constitutes dangerous situations, such as playing near busy roads. Year 6 pupils discussed how useful a skateboard area in the park would be, as they appreciate the danger of using their skateboards on the road. Other pupils told inspectors how they could stay safe when using the internet and understood why precautions are necessary.
- The school has worked closely with parents to make sure their children attend regularly. As a result, attendance has improved and is now in line with attendance nationally.

The quality of teaching

is good

- In lessons, teachers ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding. For example, they ask 'How do you know?' and 'How did you work that out?' to encourage pupils to explain clearly what they have learnt. Teachers then use this firm base of understanding to move pupils on rapidly to the next stage of learning.
- Work is well planned to make sure pupils of different abilities are challenged. For example, in Year 5, while some pupils used the internet to research the facilities offered by one hotel, other pupils were making comparisons between venues and reaching conclusions about their suitability for different events.
- The most-able pupils make good progress because teachers build effectively on what they already know. Tasks are designed to make sure they learn new information and skills without having to go over the same work again.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. They are well supported by additional adults in the classroom. The adults are well briefed by the class teachers so that they are clear about the learning that needs to take place. On occasions pupils have additional help in small groups or individually as needed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make particularly good progress. Their needs are quickly identified and appropriate support provided. The special educational needs coordinator checks regularly to make sure that the help is effective as the pupils' needs change.
- Mathematics is taught well. The school has recently changed the way it teaches the subject and pupils say they enjoy the new system. The progress pupils make is accelerating and achievement is improving.
- Improvements since the previous inspection in the way reading is taught have resulted in rapidly rising standards. Children in the early years classes start to learn the sounds letters make and how to use them in their reading and writing. This knowledge is developed through Key Stage 1. During the inspection inspectors noted that pupils used these skills well to read unfamiliar words. By Year 2 most pupils read fluently and confidently.
- Writing is generally taught well and pupils make good progress. However, while pupils learn writing skills in literacy lessons, they do not have enough opportunities to practise these skills in other subjects.
- Some teachers give very helpful guidance to pupils as to how they can improve their work, especially in literacy and numeracy, and pupils act on the advice. However, the guidance is not consistently effective in all classes and subjects.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- School data and work in books show that pupils make good progress in all year groups. From below-average starting points at the beginning of Key Stage 1, the rapid progress pupils make means that standards are broadly average by the end of the key stage. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 rose considerably in 2014.
- Test results overall were broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014. This suggested that pupils

had not made enough progress since they left Key Stage 1. However, the data were affected by some inaccurate assessments, and the current work in books and school data show that progress had accelerated during the key stage and pupils were achieving well by the time they left the school. Standards in mathematics dipped in 2014, but have now risen again.

- The results of the 2014 national screening check on how well Year 1 pupils understand phonics (the sounds letters represent) were above average. This shows a rising trend over three years as result of changes in the way reading is taught.
- Disadvantaged pupils make at least as much progress as their peers and some make more. In 2014, eligible pupils attained higher than other pupils in the school in mathematics, but were two terms behind in reading, writing and punctuation, grammar and spelling. In relation to other pupils nationally, they were a year behind in mathematics and reading, and a term and a half behind in writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling. They made more progress in mathematics but less progress in reading and writing. While many disadvantaged pupils start in Key Stage 1 well behind other pupils, school data show that the gaps narrow as they move through Key Stage 2.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. More pupils currently in the school are working at higher levels than in previous years.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs often make even better progress, and achieve well. They are well supported in lessons, in small groups or on a one-to-one basis as appropriate to their specific needs.

The early years provision

is good

- Early years staff make sure that their classes provide a safe, vibrant and exciting environment which supports children's learning. As a result, children are happy and confident, behave well and enjoy coming to school.
- The staff plan and design activities well to develop all skills, but especially literacy and numeracy as these skills are generally weaker than those typical for their age. Disadvantaged pupils start with some skills well below those of other pupils. However, the good progress children make strengthens skills and narrows any gaps. Children leave the Reception classes with skills much closer to those typical for their age. The proportion who achieved a good level of development in 2014 was just below that nationally, but represented an improvement on previous years.
- Under the good leadership of the early years leader, teaching is good and children's progress is rigorously tracked. The resulting information is used to plan activities which build on previous learning and experiences. Adults talk to children about their learning, developing their language and checking understanding. They model good social skills, such as how to hold a conversation during snack time, and children respond well.
- Good communication with parents means that they feel well informed about their children's learning. Close liaison with Key Stage 1 teachers ensures a smooth transition from the Reception classes and children's positive attitudes to learning mean that they are well prepared for the move to Year 1.

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	136815
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	453763

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	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracy Cattell
Headteacher	Fleur Greaves
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2013
Telephone number	0121 464 7355
Fax number	None
Email address	enquiry@bannersgate.bham.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

