

John Gulson Primary School

George Street, Coventry, CV1 4HB

Inspection dates 11–12 March 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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is good school.

- Teaching has improved rapidly and is now typically good and sometimes outstanding. Consequently, pupils are consistently making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Other adults are highly skilled in supporting the learning of individuals and groups of pupils. They make a significant contribution to these pupils' progress.
- Pupils enjoy being at school and feel safe and well looked after. They behave well and have good attitudes to learning.
- The school is good at helping pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. This is because high quality teaching develops children's skills and understanding very effectively and rapidly.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher and the senior leaders' constant drive for improvement have led to better teaching and faster progress. Pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics have also improved.
- The governing body supports the school well and has a good awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. It is rigorous in holding the school to account for pupils' progress so that the school continues to improve.

It is not yet outstanding school because

- Occasionally the work set for pupils does not make them think or work hard enough, particularly that given to the most able.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to further develop their skills in writing at length and across different subjects.
- Standards in Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) have been below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 36 lessons, four of which were seen jointly with the headteacher and 26 with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered the views of 36 staff who completed the staff questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority and school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents including: the school's own information on pupils' current and recent progress; planning of work in different subjects; leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Steve Nelson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Vic Wilkinson	Additional Inspector
Colin Lower	Additional Inspector
Aleksander Szwagrzak	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from minority ethnic heritages: the very large majority speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, who are supported by the pupil premium, is above average. This is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after children by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- A larger than normal proportion of pupils join and leave the school throughout the year.
- Early years provision is part-time in the Nursery and full-time in Reception.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected nationally for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- There have been 20 new teachers appointed since the last inspection.
- The school provides a breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding so that more pupils make rapid progress by:
 - ensuring that pupils including those capable of reaching higher levels are given work that makes them think and work hard
 - making sure that pupils have more opportunities to complete longer pieces of written work and regularly write at length in different subjects
 - building on the improvements to pupils' learning in phonics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The strong ambition of the senior leadership team, driven by the effective headteacher, has brought about rapid improvement in many areas of the school. Staff are all committed to raising pupils' achievement and morale is high. The governing body is rigorous in holding the school to account.
- The drive to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has been successful and they are improving rapidly. Inconsistencies in progress have been ironed out and pupils are making good progress throughout the school. Weak teaching has been eradicated and the quality of teaching is good throughout the school.
- Rigorous management of teachers' performance is helping to improve teachers' skills. Staff are held to account for the progress of pupils in their class. The headteacher and leaders make good use of information from regular checks on teaching, and cross-referencing their observations with work scrutinies, to develop teachers' skills and improve teaching.
- The school has an accurate understanding of how well it is doing and where further improvements are needed. The head teacher and middle leaders systematically monitor the school's progress towards the demanding targets set for pupil achievement. The heads of year ensure highly effective support activities are put in place if any individual or group of pupils fall behind, so that they quickly catch up and perform equally well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the school's clear vision and values and reflected throughout its work. Pupils learn about other religions and cultures through visits to local religious centres and invitations from faith groups, which reflect the multi-cultural community that the school serves. Leaders ensure that any form of discrimination is not tolerated. This prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The subjects taught are well planned and enable pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills when studying interesting and exciting topics such as Viking Attack and Creation Innovation. Pupils enjoy the additional activities provided such as the residential visit to Wales. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length in different subjects.
- The pupil premium grant for disadvantaged pupils is used well. Each pupil is identified, their needs assessed and funds used to give additional support, as required, or assistance for educational visits and events, which is helping them to progress well in their learning.
- The primary sports funding is used effectively to increase teachers' expertise by working with physical education specialists to develop their skills. The school now provides a much wider range of sporting opportunities and inter-school competitions, and pupils' participation in after school clubs such as multi-skills and badminton has increased. As a result, pupils develop healthier lifestyles and better physical well-being.
- The school has drawn on the effective support of the local authority. It has worked well with the school to improve the quality of teaching and contributed effectively to its improvement.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. They ensure that there is safe recruitment and all staff and pupils are kept safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear view of how they will continue to support and develop the school to continue to improve. They have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including in teaching and pupils' achievement. This means they offer effective challenge to the headteacher and other school leaders to maintain the pace of improvement. They oversee the performance management of all staff to ensure that pay rewards are linked to pupil progress, and underperformance is tackled robustly. There have been some changes to the make-up of the governing body with the appointment of a new Chair

and Deputy. The governors bring to their roles a wide set of qualities such as professional skills and a good knowledge of the local community.

- Frequent visits to the school and attachments of individual governors to year groups and subjects make them aware what goes on in the school.
- Governors have worked with the school to create an efficient system for the tracking of pupils' progress. This helps governors and staff make detailed analyses of the school data and ensure that effective action is taken to ensure pupils achieve well.
- Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Their positive attitudes and good behaviour contribute to good learning and achievement. Only occasionally are pupils' attitudes less than good when they are not given work that keeps them concentrating.
- Pupils show high levels of respect for adults, their peers and their environment. They take particular pride in the work in their books and are justly proud of its quality. The breakfast club is well supervised and provides pupils with a welcoming and nourishing start to the day.
- Very thorough records are kept of any incidents of poor behaviour. These show the effectiveness of the school's procedures for improving behaviour. Records of individual incidents reveal a marked reduction in poor behaviour over time.
- The school is effective in dealing with pupils who have behavioural difficulties. Pupils with poor behaviour have led to some fixed-term exclusions. Through the school's support and guidance, the behaviour of these pupils has improved markedly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safety procedures are thorough and kept under regular review. Risk assessments are rigorous and applied thoroughly.
- Pupils act responsibly on the playground, where they are well supervised. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe. The school's 'Lets create a better internet together' promotion this year reinforced pupils' good understanding of using the internet safely. They understand the different types of bullying such as cyber-bullying and name-calling. They say that bullying is rare, and that when it does happen it is dealt with swiftly.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now average. The school has been very successful in its efforts to reduce persistent absence. Work with families has improved the attendance of these pupils dramatically this year.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved rapidly and is now good and sometimes outstanding. This is because the school has appointed some effective new teachers and improved teaching practice across the school. As a result, pupils' progress is rapidly improving.
- Teachers use their subject knowledge well and confidently teach lessons that generally engage, motivate and interest pupils. They use questioning effectively, particularly to challenge pupils to respond in detail and explain their answers.
- Mathematics is taught well. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' mathematical vocabulary. Pupils have good opportunities to apply numeracy skills to solve mathematical problems. For example, in a

Year 2 lesson, pupils made good progress balancing scales using objects of different weights such as rice and pasta and accurately recorded how full the bowl was.

- Teachers ensure that pupils master the basic skills of spelling punctuation and grammar. Pupils use these skills well when writing for different purposes. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils demonstrated good skills and enjoyment in writing a recount of the key features of a ship's diary.
- Good teaching of reading has ensured that pupils can build words effectively and understand what they are reading well. Pupils took pride in demonstrating their reading skills to the inspectors and showed they understood the text effectively.
- Other adults make important contributions to pupils' progress, sometimes teaching small groups and at other times providing support for individuals. For example, they provide effective support for those pupils who join the school throughout the year helping them to settle in quickly and catch up with the others.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and carefully and pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils respond well to teachers' comments and say that they are helped to produce better work.
- Occasionally, the work is not set at the right level of difficulty for pupils. Pupils' learning can slow down because the work is too easy and they are ready for more demanding work, especially for the more able.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's leaders have taken decisive and highly effective action to deal with areas of past underachievement. Detailed school records show that pupils from all ability groups, including those from minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English as an additional language, have made consistently good progress in developing their key skills across the school.
- School data shows that nearly all of the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have made good progress, and increasing numbers very good progress, in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions of Year 6 pupils attaining the nationally expected levels for their age is rising rapidly and are above or close to the national figures.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and higher proportions are exceeding the expected standards for their age this year in reading, writing and mathematics. Occasionally the work for some pupils, especially the more able, is not difficult enough to make them think hard.
- The school has successfully improved pupils' reading skills through daily guided-reading activities. The well-attended weekly parent and children book exchange meetings encourage pupils to read widely and often. A successful focus on the teaching of mathematics has accelerated pupils' progress rapidly in this subject. Pupils have a good knowledge of number facts and enjoy solving practical mathematical problems.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of phonics in the past have hindered pupils' progress. The results of the Year 1 phonics check were below average. Positive steps taken through staff training in phonics and focussed taught groups have resulted in pupils making good progress.
- Standards in the quality of pupils' writing have improved and pupils are making good progress across the school. Pupils write for different purposes and in different styles effectively. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are being developed well. Pupils, however, do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their skills in long pieces of written work.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are also benefitting from decisive early identification of their individual needs and the extra help that is given quickly. As a result, these pupils make rapid progress that is in line with other pupils in the school.

- The highly effective action to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has ensured that they now make good progress and attainment gaps are closing. The attainment of last year's disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 was about half a term ahead of their classmates and over two terms behind all pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils made less progress in reading and writing and more progress in mathematics than their classmates and other pupils nationally.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- This aspect of the school's provision is more effective because all groups of children make outstanding progress from their different starting points. A large majority of children join the school with skills and knowledge typically well below for their age. By the end of Reception all children have made rapid progress from their starting points across all areas of learning and are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Exceptionally strong links with parents help children settle quickly when they enter the early years provision. High expectations and the consistent reinforcement of daily routines in a nurturing environment establish a firm base for children's excellent behaviour. They learn to care for each other and to share when they are playing together.
- Staff use assessment very effectively to check progress and, because the children are so well known, close attention is given to each child's individual needs. As a result, early reading, writing and number skills develop quickly. The school makes particularly effective use of interpreters to rapidly develop the speaking skills of the large numbers of children who speak English as an additional language.
- Outstanding leadership of the early years provision ensures that adults work closely together to ensure that teaching is of a consistently high standard. Staff provide children with a stimulating range of indoor and outdoor learning activities. There is a very good balance between activities that are adult-led and those that are child-initiated.
- The early years team strongly promote children's safety and well-being. Staff provide high levels of supervision and engagement in learning activities. They ensure that all safety and safeguarding arrangements are robustly applied. Consequently all children feel very safe and secure at school.

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	103690
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	453724

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	637
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Howard
Headteacher	Shaukat Hussain
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2013
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