

Maple Hayes Hall School

Abnalls Lane, Lichfield, WS13 8BL

Inspection dates	10–12 March 2015	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This is a good school

- Leadership and management are good. The proprietors and headteacher have good oversight of teachers' work and pupils' achievements.
- All pupils leave with five or more GCSEs, and a small minority gain these at grades A* to C.
- Teaching is good. There is a coherent approach to teaching literacy that is reinforced well. As a result, pupils' literacy improves quickly.
- Pupils' rapid progress in reading and writing helps them to achieve well in subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy school. Their teachers are supportive, and they receive a good level of attention because they are taught in small classes.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Those with a history of failure become confident learners.
- Safeguarding arrangements are implemented very thoroughly. Pupils feel safe in school.
- There are good links with parents who are pleased with the school's work.
- The headteacher leads by example and ensures that teaching, particularly in literacy, is good throughout the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not quite as strong as it is in English.
- Not all teachers use information about pupils' progress well enough to plan activities that ensure that the less- and more-able pupils make consistently good progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers do not always guide pupils to the next steps in their learning.
- The monitoring of pupils' progress is more systematic in some subjects than others.
- Some leaders and middle managers are not playing a full role in improving teaching and learning.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons. In addition, they carried out learning walks to check on pupils' learning and behaviour.
- A wide range of pupils' work from each key stage was closely examined. Inspectors listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their books.
- Meetings were held with the proprietor, the headteacher, senior leadership team, the coordinator of English and those staff responsible for pupils' welfare and safety. Discussions were held with pupils from Key Stage 3 and 4, and inspectors talked informally to pupils during and between lessons.
- A wide range of school documents were examined to check compliance with the independent school standards. These included the school's evaluation report, monitoring of lessons, appraisal of teachers, financing and safeguarding policies and documentation.
- The views of 65 parents and carers on the Ofsted website Parent View were analysed. Inspectors also spoke with parents joining a session on safeguarding for the youngest pupils.
- Inspectors analysed questionnaires from 23 members of staff.

Inspection team

Kathy Hooper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Deakin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a small school that has a unique strategy for teaching literacy, particularly pupils with dyslexia (difficulties with reading). The approach is the life's work of the proprietor and enables pupils to overcome previous failings in phonics and other practices in reading.
- Almost all pupils have statements of special educational needs and many have additional special needs such as dysgraphia (difficulties with handwriting), dyscalculia (difficulties with numbers) and dyspraxia (difficulties with coordination). Some have needs related to specific speech and language difficulties and Asperger's syndrome.
- There are 87 boys and 26 girls. The pupils are predominantly White British. All have made insufficient progress in previous settings.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils over 16 years of age.
- Almost all the pupils are funded by 13 different local authorities. None of the pupils is supported by extra funding through pupil premium.
- Many pupils have lengthy journeys to and from school because they live in local authorities as far afield as Nottingham, Leicestershire and Shropshire. They travel by train, car, taxi or bus.
- Pupils enter the school at different times of the school year and during different years.
- There is no alternative provision.
- The school does not employ any teaching assistants.
- The proprietor was awarded the British Dyslexia Association's Lifetime Achiever Award in 2014. The school was shortlisted for the TES Special School of the Year in 2012.
- The school was last inspected in December 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the leadership and management by:
 - extending the role of leaders and middle managers so that they all play a full role in continuing to improve teaching and pupils' progress
 - establishing greater consistency in recording and monitoring the progress of pupils across all key stages
 - ensuring that information about pupils' progress is used to inform every teacher's planning.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - the least and most able pupils are challenged appropriately, particularly in mathematics
 - teachers give clearer advice to pupils about their next steps in learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The proprietors have a strong presence in school. Their excellent relationships and high standards are modelled throughout the school, creating an atmosphere where learning and good behaviour flourish. The headteacher has a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses in provision. All the independent school standards are met. The accommodation is suitable and well maintained.
- Teaching is good. Pupils' achievements are at least good and, for some, they are outstanding. Pupils learn to read and write very well, and they have a good grasp of mathematics and show excellent interpersonal skills. Discrimination is not tolerated. Individual rights are respected and every member of the community is equally valued. Pupils are encouraged to be tolerant of the views of others.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. They have good independent careers support and guidance, which they value. All pupils move on to further education and training, generally at levels 2 and 3. Some past pupils have gone on to university after studying A-levels elsewhere.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of individual pupils' progress through termly discussions with class teachers. However, approaches to recording the ongoing progress of pupils, and plans for addressing specific difficulties and strengths, are not as well developed in some subjects as others.
- The headteacher and proprietor are vigilant about ensuring that teaching, particularly of literacy, is equally effective in all lessons. While other leaders and middle managers have clearly identified responsibilities, they are not all fully involved in continuing to improve the quality of teaching and increasing pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is well balanced and covers a good range of subjects. Literacy is taught through the school's unique system that uses pictorial representations of meaningful parts of words. There is a precise pattern to the week that includes the introduction of new words and meanings, handwriting practice and reinforcement of learning followed by testing. There are regular spelling and reading tests. Teachers use this method to reinforce literacy in other subjects across the curriculum. Numeracy is reinforced as appropriate throughout the curriculum, for example using bar graphs in geography. Information and communication technology is used well to reinforce literacy.
- Excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeates the school at all levels. Aspects are included well in day-to-day lessons including personal, social and health education. There is a wide range of clubs that run at lunchtime. The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Issues are discussed in a variety of contexts and included in the personal and social education curriculum.
- There are good relationships with parents and carers who appreciate the blossoming of their children's confidence as a result of their growing success in reading and writing. There are good discussions regarding their children's progress during annual reviews.
- **The governance of the school:**

The proprietors maintain a vigilant but benevolent oversight of the school. The proprietors and headteacher reflect well on ways of improving provision to meet the increasingly complex needs of pupils. They ensure that all the school complies with legislation through systematic monitoring of the independent school standards. Priorities are addressed and agreed; for example, there are plans for supporting the teaching of mathematics through the appointment of new staff.

The proprietors have good day-to-day knowledge of teachers' work. Teachers discuss their work and the progress of pupils in meetings with the headteacher each term. While there is a clear system for rewarding good teaching, it is not linked closely enough to the progress of pupils so it does not necessarily lead to improvements in teaching and learning. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, are rigorously implemented and have a high priority within the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils want to learn and to become successful. Attendance is similar to that of other secondary schools, despite pupils' often challenging journeys to and from school. Parents report much greater enthusiasm for school than was the case when pupils attended their previous schools. Pupils make excellent progress in learning to manage their behaviour.
- Pupils present themselves and their work well, and with pride. They enjoy school because of the great help they receive from teachers within small classes, and their success in learning to read and write well.
- Pupils apply themselves extremely well in class. In those lessons where there is handwriting practice, their concentration is palpable and they work in complete silence. In lessons where there are activities, such as games and competitions to check their understanding, they interact very well with their peers. They discuss their learning in a mature manner.
- Pupils, parents and staff share a keen commitment to learning. The school operates as a close and supportive community where the needs of others are considered and respected. Pupils have high levels of social skills and positive regard for differences, acknowledging the rights of others.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. Year 11 pupils preside over tables of younger pupils at lunchtime. Pupils are elected as house captains and play leaders. Pupils take part in a sports forum and demonstrate weekly fitness challenges in assemblies. An excellent motivational presentation by the head boy was well received by the rest of the school.
- The school makes excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all the literacy lessons where the meanings and derivation of words are discussed. There are lessons in personal and social education, assemblies, residential opportunities, and a wide range of visits and visitors. The merit system makes school rules and standards of behaviour explicit.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Although pupils very often arrive with low levels of confidence due to their previous experiences of failure, they blossom within the orderly and predictable climate that pervades the school. Many have suffered stigma and been the victims of bullying in previous schools and they gain confidence from being with classmates who have similar difficulties. Inspectors found very little evidence of any unkind behaviour or discrimination.
- All the school's policies for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are up-to-date and fully implemented. Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous. Pupils have high levels of understanding about how to keep themselves safe. There is a comprehensive programme of personal and social education and there are regular opportunities to discuss key and current issues, such as internet safety. In addition, a company visits regularly and tailors their dramatic productions, covering aspects of safety, to the ages and experiences of pupils. Parents are invited to take part in some of the activities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers extend and reinforce pupils' literacy well through all lessons. Pupils say that the approachability of teachers, the use of the school's method of teaching literacy, and the small classes are the best things about the school. Pupils' books and their test scores confirm they make good progress. Teachers have a good level of specialist knowledge.
- Pupils enjoy and benefit considerably from the activities the teachers set for them. They have interesting opportunities to develop their communication skills by discussing their learning with their classmates and the teacher. In a Year 10 English lesson, pupils prepared a presentation about a character in *Of Mice and Men*. They were totally engrossed, despite it being a very challenging task. They referred to previous work on describing the characters, listened carefully to their classmates and made thoughtful

contributions to the discussions. As a result, every pupil made good progress.

- Teachers question pupils well to check their knowledge. Pupils' understanding is extended very well when the teacher uses searching questions that challenge pupils to think hard, tailoring their questions to different abilities.
- Regular homework supports pupils' progress well. 'Prep' time at the end of the day ensures that all are able to take advantage of opportunities to reflect on their learning and extend their understanding.
- Teachers check pupils' progress in spelling and reading through weekly testing. They mark pupils' books regularly, giving encouragement and affirmation of good work. Pupils say that teachers help them to improve their work. Sometimes teachers do not identify in pupils' books how they are to make their work better or what they need to learn next.
- The school keeps details of pupils' test scores and there is much day-to-day discussion regarding the progress of individual pupils between staff, and between staff and pupils. However, variations in approaches to recording pupils' progress, particularly where there are gaps in pupils' learning, sometimes results in planning for lessons that does not take full account of what the least and the most able pupils need to learn next. Consequently, there are occasions, particularly in mathematics in Key Stage 4, when all pupils are required to do the same exercise. When this happens some pupils do not make such big strides in learning because the work is either too demanding or too easy.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is good. They enter school with literacy skills that are considerably below average. Their progress throughout the school is good, and often outstanding. At the end of Key Stage 4, all pupils leave with five or more GCSE passes. In 2014, all pupils gained seven or eight passes including English and mathematics. A very small minority of pupils gained five or more GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, at the highest grades. A small minority of pupils make enough progress in overcoming their dyslexia difficulties to rejoin mainstream classes.
- In literacy, pupils are very well supported, within small classes, through the whole school strategy for understanding the structure of words and their meanings. Their developing fluency in literacy supports their learning in other subjects very well.
- Pupils' achievement is good in all subjects. There is little difference in the progress of girls and boys. Pupils achieve well in physical education where they challenge themselves to increase their fitness levels.
- Key Stage 4 pupils sit a GCSE in core science in Year 10. The experience prepares them well for additional science in Year 11 and counts towards the number of passes they receive.
- Pupils' progress is often rapid in Key Stages 2 and 3. Key Stage 2 books show that they quickly learn to write neatly and fluently using a fountain pen. They write well structured sentences and their writing often holds the interest of the reader. In mathematics they understand fractions, negative numbers and they tell the time to five-minute intervals using analogue clocks. They display data using bar graphs and interpret them in mathematics and in geography. The most able pupils in Key Stage 3 write fluently at greater length and their work in mathematics is at a similar level to mainstream peers.
- The most able pupils are well focused on achieving as well as possible. Key Stage 4 pupils skim text to abstract key information and write for a range of audiences. They use appropriate vocabulary to describe their actions. Heavy emphasis on examination preparation and practice ensures that these pupils gain good grades in GCSEs, including English and mathematics, similar to their mainstream peers nationally.
- An increasingly large proportion of pupils have a range of additional difficulties, including those associated with number. Although pupils make good progress in mathematics it is not quite as rapid as it is in English. The least and most able pupils are not always helped to deepen their understanding or increase the fluency with which they use mathematics to solve more difficult problems.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook.

School details

Unique reference number	124488
Inspection number	454252
DfE registration number	860/6022

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Special School
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7–17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietors	Dr Neville Brown, Mrs Brenda Brown
Headteacher	Dr Daryl Brown
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£14,190 – pupils under 13 years £18,975 – pupils over 13 years
Telephone number	01543 264387
Fax number	01543 262022
Email address	office@dyslexia.gb.com

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. 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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

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.

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 reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/user>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

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