

# Caslon Primary Community School

Beeches View Avenue, Halesowen, B63 2ES

**Inspection dates** 16–17 April 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- The high calibre headteacher and deputy headteacher lead and manage the school well. Together with other senior leaders and governors, they have greatly improved pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- Actions taken by school leaders, including governors, have led to the development of a strong staff team and much improved teaching in a short period of time.
- Governors have greatly improved their ability to challenge senior leaders. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years because teamwork is good and well-planned activities develop children's enthusiasm for learning.
- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. It is now consistently good across the school and, as a result, attainment is rising.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is outstanding because pupils in danger of falling behind are supported exceptionally well.
- Teaching is good across all year groups and subjects.
- Pupils' judgements of how well they are doing are very accurate.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They know they are part of a very caring community where they are safe and secure. By the time they leave, most pupils have developed mature attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils from all backgrounds and cultures work and play together very well.
- The school's innovative curriculum makes pupils eager to learn and supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. It promotes British values, such as tolerance, well and prepares pupils effectively for life in modern Britain.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teaching is outstanding because teachers sometimes do not demand enough of their most-able pupils.
- The quality of presentation of work varies too much and shows careless mistakes.
- Too few pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 because, until recently, they lacked the skills needed to reach these levels.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, seven of which were shared with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at their work in a wide variety of books and talked to them about their learning.
- Too few parents responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for results to be analysed. Inspectors looked at the school’s own parental questionnaires and also spoke informally to parents and carers.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan, policies and information about pupils’ progress and attainment. They scrutinised records of how the school sets targets for teachers to improve their work, and looked at child protection and safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Kath Campbell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Tim Hughes

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Nursery attend part time, and in the Reception class they attend full time.
- Over a half of pupils are White British. An above average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of these being Yemeni.
- An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium funding is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- Breakfast and after-school clubs are provided for pupils before and after school during term time.
- A higher than usual number of pupils join and leave the school at other than the normal times throughout the school year.
- In recent years, the school has experienced several changes of staffing, most notably at headteacher and deputy headteacher level. The current headteacher took up her acting headteacher post in September 2014 and her permanent headteacher post in January 2015.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Beecher Bear Day Care provision is situated on the school site. It is not overseen by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 by making sure that all teachers:
  - have the highest expectations of what the most-able pupils can achieve so that these pupils do not waste time doing work that is too easy for them
  - develop pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills more systematically so that pupils can build on these and go on to gain the more advanced skills they need to reach higher levels.
  - insist that pupils' written work is well presented, with no basic spelling mistakes.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully steered the school through a period of staffing changes. They have had a positive impact in a very short space of time by raising pupils' achievement and improving adults' performance. They have established a good climate for learning in which pupils behave well and are keen to learn, and teaching is good. Senior leaders provide excellent role models for others to follow. Staff morale is high and all teachers have good opportunities to develop their professional skills.
- Senior leaders complement each other's skills well and are reflective in their work. They monitor the school's performance relentlessly and have taken decisive action to eliminate weak teaching. Underperformance is robustly tackled and teachers are set challenging targets for improvement. As a result, teaching is now consistently good. Teachers are fully accountable for the standards their pupils achieve.
- Subject leaders lead their subjects well and have a good grasp of whether pupils are doing well enough in their subjects. The coordination of special educational needs is good. This is reflected in the good progress disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make from their different starting points. The leadership of early years is also strong, as seen in the good achievement of the school's youngest children.
- The school's evaluation of its own work is accurate and the outcomes inform priorities in the school improvement plan well.
- The school successfully ensures that every pupil has an equal opportunity to achieve well. There is no discrimination and relationships are strong.
- The school has prepared well for the changes to the national curriculum. The school is developing new ways of checking pupils' progress in different subjects to reflect the changes in assessment practice nationally. The activities pupils are offered, for example in a topic on the First World War, are often imaginative and stimulating, and are carefully linked so that they help pupils develop the stronger skills in literacy and numeracy that they need. Educational visits, for example to music-making activities at Birmingham Symphony Hall, are rich and rewarding. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds benefit greatly from the exciting range of creative arts activities on offer. The school's generous outdoor areas, including the Forest School, allow it to promote pupils' knowledge of the wider world in which they live. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' good personal development.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils learn about different cultures and the need to understand and to be tolerant of others in lessons and assemblies. They develop a good understanding of other key British values and concepts, such as democracy, by becoming ambassadors for the school. These pupils play an effective role in helping other pupils to be well prepared for life in modern British society.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is used effectively. Pupils appreciate the wider range of sporting activities on offer. Specialist sports coaches have improved teachers' own expertise. This has resulted in an increase in pupils' involvement and success in competitive sport; this year, the football team reached the final of a competition for the first time.
- The school has used the pupil premium funding very well to provide effective one-to-one and small group support for disadvantaged pupils. The impact of this can be seen in the outstanding progress of these pupils and in the narrowing of the gaps between the attainment of these pupils and others, both in the school and nationally.
- Links between home and school have been strengthened. Parents express very positive views about the

school and take a far greater part in their children's learning than in the past.

- Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, meet current government requirements.
- The local authority has supported the school well through its regular reviews of its performance and by providing training. These have helped to improve key aspects of leadership, for example, the effectiveness of governance.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The recently restructured governing body has a much better grasp of what is working well and what needs improvement. It now plays an effective role in monitoring the achievement of pupils. Governors work closely with staff to ensure that the school maintains its drive to raise attainment. As a result of the good training they have received, governors now have a good understanding of the data on pupils' performance and are better equipped than in the past to challenge leaders about the school's performance.
  - Governors support the headteacher in making sure that only teaching that enables pupils to make good progress is rewarded and that underperformance is tackled robustly. They know how well the additional funds are used and take great care to ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding its pupils fully meet statutory requirements.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to their good personal development. Pupils are proud of their school, want to do well and are attentive in lessons. The school successfully encourages pupils to take responsibility for improving their own learning.
- Behaviour in lessons, in the playground and around school is good. Effective mentoring and weekly nurture sessions have a positive impact on the behaviour of the school's most vulnerable pupils, including those who have difficulty managing their emotions and behaviour. Older pupils look after and care about younger ones and take responsibilities very seriously.
- Children in the early years quickly learn good social skills because staff focus very successfully on developing these skills right from the start.
- There is a strong sense of community within the school because staff and pupils get along well together. The breakfast club provides an enjoyable start to the day for many pupils. Celebration assemblies show the school at its best because pupils enjoy celebrating the success of others.
- Pupils in all year groups are confident that others will listen courteously to their views and suggestions. They particularly enjoy discussing their work in pairs or small groups.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very strong and add greatly to pupils' enjoyment. In most lessons, pupils are totally absorbed in their work and want to do their best. However, not all pupils take as much pride as they should in the way they present their work.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents recognise that the school keeps their children safe. The school site is secure and staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment.
- School records show that incidents of racism or bullying are rare. Pupils are well informed about different kinds of bullying. In discussion, they insist that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils know that, if they have concerns, they will be listened to and that the problem will be swiftly acted upon.

- Pupils show a good knowledge of how to stay safe. They recognise potential dangers, including when using computers and the internet.
- Attendance is currently average. The school has effective procedures for following up absence and many rewards for good attendance. The deputy headteacher and learning mentor provide effective support for any families who struggle to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Better teaching is at the heart of this school's improvement. Teaching is now consistently good in all year groups and in all subjects. Throughout the early years, staff seize on every opportunity to develop children's language skills effectively. Teachers in other parts of the school are developing current pupils' literacy, reading and mathematical skills well.
- Reading is taught well. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has been strengthened. As a result, an increasing number of the pupils are currently on track to meet the nationally expected levels in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2015.
- The teaching of writing is good because teachers and teaching assistants focus on making sure that pupils receive exactly the right level of support they need to succeed. Younger pupils quickly develop the confidence to write unaided and older pupils, both boys and girls, choose vocabulary well, particularly when writing poems.
- As a result of the good quality training teachers have received, mathematics is taught well. Teachers have far greater confidence in their ability to deepen pupils' understanding and to show them the importance of mathematics in everyday life. They have developed good subject knowledge and this enables them to provide well-planned opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills to practical, problem-solving activities.
- Staff are particularly good at helping pupils to evaluate and improve their work. Pupils enjoy what they are doing but, occasionally, the most-able pupils spend too much time on work that is too easy. The progress of pupils who were most affected by weaker teaching in the past sometimes slows because they lack the basic literacy and numeracy skills they need to make faster progress.
- Teachers question pupils carefully to check what they know and understand. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher and other adults who support learning provided pupils with clear guidance that helped them to develop their estimating skills. Through very skilful questioning, all adults were able to move individual pupils on to the next level of challenge at every stage of the lesson. As a result, pupils of all abilities made rapid progress.
- Pupils who need extra help, especially disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning English, make good progress because they are supported by programmes that have been specifically designed to meet their needs. This helps these pupils to make as much progress as others.
- The quality of marking has improved. Pupils respond to their teachers' comments because they know they will be followed up. However, not all pupils present their work well or spell simple words correctly. Some teachers do not insist on accurate spellings or good presentation.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement is good because senior leaders focus relentlessly on accelerating progress. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age in early language, literacy and numeracy. Despite making good progress in the early years, these weaknesses mean that not all children achieve a good level of development by the time they enter Year 1.

- The achievement of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is good. Pupils who arrive in the school with little English make rapid progress once they have enough English to access the full curriculum. A good example of this can be seen in the very rapid progress of Yemeni pupils, who sometimes arrive at different times throughout the school year.
- In the Year 1 reading check in 2014, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was below the national average. Current pupils have far greater confidence in their use their phonics (letters and the sounds they make) than was the case in the past, and can use these skills accurately to work out unfamiliar words because they are now being taught well. Reading has a high profile across the school and pupils of all ages enjoy books. Older pupils talk with maturity about their favourite authors. As a result, attainment in reading is rising.
- School data show that attainment in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 was close to the national average in 2014 and attainment in mathematics was above average. The good standards achieved in mathematics resulted from greater teacher confidence in this subject, their high expectations and the very focused support they provide for individual pupils.
- In 2014, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below average in mathematics and writing and above average in reading. The school's focus on improving attainment in reading was particularly effective in this year group because these pupils received high quality teaching in their final year. Pupils of all backgrounds now made good progress throughout Key Stage 2, albeit from a low base. However, the proportion that reached the highest standards in 2014 was well below average in mathematics and writing because many older pupils lacked basic mathematical skills. Not enough pupils were confident writers. Some pupils who joined the school late did not have time to take full advantage of the good education it provided, especially in Year 6.
- Current data show a rise in attainment in all subjects in both key stages, although not enough pupils are on track to reach the higher levels. This is because some pupils are still making up lost ground caused by weak teaching of literacy and numeracy in the past.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported very well by staff. Teachers provide effective individual and small group support and this enables these pupils to make good progress throughout the school.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is frequently outstanding. In 2014, test results show that disadvantaged pupils were one term ahead of other school pupils in reading and writing and three terms ahead in mathematics. When compared to pupils nationally they were a term ahead in reading and a term behind in writing and mathematics. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils making or exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. Current school data show a further narrowing of the gaps between these pupils and their school peers in all subjects, not just in Year 6 but throughout the school.
- The most-able pupils achieve well when the work they are set is appropriately demanding, as it frequently is. The school has rightly focused its attention on increasing their competence in English and mathematics. It has established informal links with other schools, such as Windsor High School, so that it can provide an extra level of challenge for these pupils and ensure that their skills become more advanced. However, on some occasions, when the work is not demanding enough, these pupils do not give of their best and produce work that is not of a high enough standard.

### **The early years provision**

**is good**

- Almost all groups of children, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well in the early years because teaching is consistently good. Occasionally, however, activities are not challenging enough for the most-able children.
- The leadership and management of the early years are good. Leaders have an accurate view of how well children are doing, monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and provision carefully, and know

what needs to be improved further.

- Teachers and other adults who support children have high expectations of how children should behave and learn. As a result, children behave well and develop very positive attitudes towards learning that set firm foundations for their future development. They are well-prepared for their learning in Key Stage 1.
- Routines are well established and children from all backgrounds learn to help each other, share and wait their turn. Safeguarding requirements are fully met and children are very safe and feel secure. Relationships are very strong and children thoroughly enjoy their learning.
- Children who arrive at different times throughout the school year receive exactly the right level of one-to-one support they need to help them settle quickly into school life.
- One of the strengths of teaching in the early years is the way in which all staff take every opportunity to talk with individual children. Children quickly gain the confidence to chat about their learning and what they like most about their work.
- Teachers and support staff check and record children's progress systematically. The children's 'learning journeys' provide valuable information about each child's progress and fully reflect their good achievement.
- Links with the on-site Beecher Bear Day Care provision are very strong and make a major contribution to children's good progress in all areas of learning. Day care staff plan and work alongside the early years' staff and this has resulted in greater continuity in the development of children's skills.
- Parents are made to feel very welcome. During the inspection, some Yemeni parents were seen working alongside their children, encouraging them to become involved in their child's education right from the start. Parents appreciate the high level of support that is given to children and families in most need.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103801
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	462578

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephanie Sellers & Moammer Nasser
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Brass
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818875
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