

Wyken Croft Primary School

Wyken Croft, Wyken, Coventry, CV2 3AA

Inspection dates 22–23 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Under the effective leadership of the headteacher, the school has successfully emerged from a period of significant leadership and staffing disruption, made more complicated by the construction of a new school building and the demolition of the old.
- Senior leaders and governors, many new to their roles, have worked hard and to good effect to develop an effective and improving school.
- Teaching is now consistently good throughout the school. This ensures that learning is consistently good across year groups.
- Pupils in all year groups and all classes are making at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most marking gives pupils good guidance on what to do to improve.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, and their parents agree. This is one reason why attendance is generally a little above average.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and their behaviour is exemplary. In consequence, pupils are insistent that any form of bullying is very rare. The school is thus a very calm learning environment.
- Within the early years provision, resources are attractive and teaching is effective. This ensures that children get off to a positive start to their education and are well prepared for Year 1 when the time comes.
- The school tracks pupils' progress accurately and often. As a consequence, those at risk of falling behind are spotted very quickly. Well-organised support quickly helps them to catch up.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have many opportunities to take on responsibility, and they conform consistently to the school's rules, because they can see sense in them.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make sure that the work they set in lessons provides enough challenge for pupils, particularly those who are most-able.
- The school does not make the best use of pupils' reading records to build links between school and home to reinforce reading skills.
- Some teachers do not follow the school's marking policy. This marking is ineffective because it does not help pupils to improve their work.
- Subject leaders, many new to their roles, are not yet contributing enough to securing school improvement. They do not check on the amount of learning taking place in lessons frequently enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 42 lessons, six of which were seen jointly with senior staff.
- They looked at the work in many pupils' books and listened to pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 reading.
- The inspectors spoke with parents, teachers, senior and subject leaders, and governors. They held formal and informal meetings with pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 49 responses to the staff questionnaire, and 22 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View). They also considered the written responses by 231 parents to a questionnaire for parents, using exactly the questions on Parent View, completed in March 2015.
- Inspectors looked at the school's records relating to: the safeguarding of pupils; their behaviour and attendance; governing body meetings; the monitoring of teaching and learning; and the progress made by past pupils and those currently in the school.

Inspection team

Terry McDermott, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Patrick Finegan	Additional Inspector
Sakhawat Ali	Additional Inspector
Lucy Maughan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Wyken Croft is much larger than the average-sized primary school and growing.
- Years 1 to 6 each have 90 pupils, organised into three classes. The full-time Reception Year has 120 pupils organised into four classes. Going forward, this will be the usual number in a Year group.
- The school operates morning and afternoon half-time Nursery classes.
- About 50% of children joining the Reception classes do so from other external settings.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those children who are looked after by the local authority)
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average. The very large majority of pupils speak English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school moved into a brand new building in November 2014. The adjacent old building was demolished thereafter. Clearance of the site and landscaping is not yet complete.
- The school became part of a soft federation with Charter Primary School in September 2013, and became a hard federation, The Phoenix Federation, in January 2013.
- The school governors also oversee the operation of a five day per week before- and after-school club, and holiday club (the Phoenix Club) which caters for around 70 pupils before school, around 100 pupils after school, and up to 70 children daily during school holidays except Christmas.
- The Phoenix Nursery, a large pre-school setting, is supervised by the school's governors, offering 52 morning and afternoon part-time places for children aged two to four years. This provision is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement further by:
 - ensuring that the most-able pupils in each class are set work which is not too easy and stretches all of them to think hard
 - making sure that all teachers consistently adopt the school's policy on the marking of pupils' work
 - making full use of pupils' reading records to build effective links between school and home in order to build pupils' reading and comprehension skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of subject leaders throughout the school by checking more frequently on the amount of learning taking place in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the governing body have worked tirelessly to overcome significant leadership and staffing difficulties over the past three years. These were exacerbated by a number of issues relating to the construction of the new school building.
- As a consequence, leaders and governors have built a new, vibrant and aspirational team whose morale is high and which is focussed on increasing learning and building an exciting future for the school. This has led to more consistently good teaching, and much accelerated pupils' achievement.
- Good leadership and management of teaching and learning by senior leaders has ensured that once these difficulties were resolved, the rate of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics in all Year groups immediately and consistently accelerated.
- Recently appointed deputy headteachers have made significant improvements to the way: the school measures and tracks the progress pupils are making; arranges support for those pupils who need extra help; and shares best practice in teaching. This has led to much improved consistency in teaching since the last inspection.
- Middle leaders, the majority appointed very recently, are knowledgeable, and committed to securing improvements in learning for all pupils. However, they are not yet fully effective in monitoring the quality of learning taking place in the subjects for which they are individually responsible.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate because it is based solidly on pupils' progress and achievement. Leaders have a clear and accurate picture, much improved since the last inspection, of where remaining improvements are needed. For example, the decline in standards and progress in mathematics in Year 6 in 2014 was correctly predicted and a new subject leader was swiftly recruited, though too late to recover a situation based on weak learning over some years.
- The curriculum is good; it is broad and well balanced. It has a clear focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. These skills are extended in all year groups through topic based work which gives pupils the opportunity to apply, practise and polish what they have already learned through research and reporting. In addition, pupils experience a wide range of musical, sporting, creative and cultural activities. These bring depth to their understanding of the world around them, underpin their very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and are reflected in their continued excellent attitudes to learning in lessons.
- The school's new and impressive facilities have allowed governors continue to provide extensive breakfast, after-school and holiday time clubs (The Phoenix Club). These are very well organised, well attended and well led. The breakfast- and after-school clubs provide both a good start, and an extended and purposeful finish to the day for those who attend.
- The school's 'Five Stages' (the school's code of conduct) underlines to pupils its expectations of excellence in personal behaviour, respect for others and tolerance of difference. It operates throughout the school from Nursery to Year 6. In a very positive manner, it strengthens the school's successful approach to eliminating discrimination and intolerance. When set alongside pupils' willingness to take on responsibilities, for example as elected school councillors, playground leaders, or classroom monitors, it ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils' well-being are met well. The required staff training is up to date. Several staff are trained in first aid. Several senior staff and governors are trained in the safe recruiting of staff. The school's administrative and procedural arrangements have been tightened and improved since the last inspection.
- The school makes good use of its pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils. The school's detailed tracking indicates that disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than their classmates in

almost all Year groups throughout the school. This is because of the targeted support they receive.

- The school make effective use of the primary school sports funding. The school has high participation rates in a range of competitive sports and dance activities. Specialist teachers and external coaches help teachers to plan and execute physical education lessons which are enjoyable and rapidly build pupils' skills.
- The school's very positive links with its federated partner school have brought an 'extra pair of eyes' to finding solutions to difficult problems, and have assisted in building its capacity to improve further.
- The local authority recently allocated an experienced school improvement professional to act as a sounding board. This is proving effective in guiding the school forward after emerging from its difficulties.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors carry out their responsibilities and duties conscientiously and well. They have supported the head teacher strongly in addressing leadership and staffing issues, not least through their own objective self-assessment. They have challenged the headteacher to improve the quality and consistency of teaching, and ensured funds were subsequently available to train teachers and teaching assistants. They are able to check that only good performance in the classroom is rewarded, because they have a very good understanding of what the school's performance data means.
 - They oversee the school's use of its additional funding for sport and for disadvantaged pupils with same rigour. They check closely that all pupils in this large school get an equally good deal, and that any possibility of discrimination is tackled vigorously.
 - They are a very active group and give significant amounts of their time to ensure that the school continues to move forward.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. They maintain a strong focus on learning, and take pride in presenting their work neatly in their books. They arrive promptly at lessons, listen intently, and answer questions with maturity. They take turns to speak, and do not interrupt each other. Their excellent attitudes are now enabling them to make accelerated and rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school.
- They are unfailingly polite, attentive and very well behaved. They are respectful to each other and to adults. They respect the school's rules because they understand clearly that these are for their own safety and to make school a good learning experience for all. This underpins the very calm, well ordered, and disciplined atmosphere in this large school. No pupil has been excluded for several years.
- They can be trusted to carry out tasks without direct supervision. For example: in Year 6 physical education, they plan and conduct their own warm up routines, using prior knowledge to adopt correct and safe positions; in Year 2 golf lessons, they practice striking through the ball as they have taught; in the dining room, they eat sociably together. All of these things combine to ensure that progress is now good and is accelerating noticeably.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the different types of bullying, and are aware of how to stay safe when using modern electronic media. They know what to do if difficult situations arise, though they say these are very rare events, and are confident the teachers will look after them and that the school is a safe and secure place.
- The school records, following some small amendments during the inspection, are now rigorous, and

confirm that racist or homophobic name-calling is very rare. Pupils respect each other's different faiths and cultures.

- Pupils, parents and adults in the school confirm that the school is a safe and happy place.
- Attendance fell to average during the school's difficulties, but is now recovering to its previous above average position.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good throughout the school, particularly in Years 5 and 6 and in the early years, because teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave very well and work hard, which they do. This is ensuring that pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good.
- Relationships between pupils and adults, and between the pupils themselves, are excellent, and provide solid foundations for learning in reading, writing and mathematics which are now at least consistently good across the school. The school's monitoring of learning in lessons, its tracking data, and the inspection evidence, show this clearly.
- The teaching of reading is good. In the early years, teachers and other adults are well trained in the teaching of phonics (how the sounds in words are represented by different letters), and phonics sessions are short, sharp and well planned. In Key Stage 1, teachers concentrate on building pupils' comprehension skills. Pupils in the current Year 6 have good levels of comprehension, can confidently pick out the key factors in a text, and many are able to identify hidden meaning. The school's records show that these pupils have already reached standards well in advance of those reached in 2014 from a very similar start point at the beginning of Year 3.
- The reading records of pupils of a wide range of abilities in this Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 are not used effectively to coordinate work being done in school and at home. Though pupils can borrow books from classrooms and from the school library, pupils' own reading records show that few checks are made on either the fluency of their reading or their understanding of the text. In some cases, this leads to slower progress than ought to be the case.
- The teaching of writing is consistently good throughout the school. From the early years through to Year 6, children have many opportunities to discuss and share their ideas. Teachers insist on pupils using precise vocabulary when answering questions in sentences, and then require them to do the same when writing their ideas down. As a result, pupils learn quickly how to express their knowledge and explain their reasons.
- The teaching of mathematics has dramatically improved over the last two terms, because the school identified very quickly the dip in the national tests in 2014. The work in pupils' books shows that learning in mathematics is now based firmly on understanding mathematical processes and relentlessly applying and practising these through solving complex word based problems, or undertaking investigations. Pupils report that they like this way of working because it builds their confidence 'to do all this hard stuff'.
- Most teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, often spotting quickly when pupils need extra help. They are most effective when they know what they are supposed to be doing because they have been well guided by the teacher.
- Most of the marking in pupils' books is helping pupils significantly to extend their learning. This often generates thoughtful, articulate responses which clearly demonstrate deeper understanding. However, some marking is much less effective, particularly when teachers do not follow the school's easy to understand marking policy about frequency, and guidance to help pupils.
- Teachers do not always set work which is as challenging as it should be, particularly for the most-able pupils. Sometimes, at the beginning of lessons, teachers go over work that most pupils in the class already know. This causes learning to be slower than it might be because it does not extend their thinking or

strengthen their skills.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school's Nursery with knowledge and understanding below that which is typical for their age; there are particular weaknesses in communication and language, and in writing. They make good progress in Nursery because resources and teaching are good.
- Because teaching is good in the Reception classes, a broadly average proportion of children reach a good level of development in almost all of the early learning goals by the end of the Year. They are appropriately prepared to enter Year 1.
- When they move to the Reception classes, these children are joined by an equal number of children from a range of other settings, who have not had the same breadth of good quality experiences they have had. Throughout Nursery and Reception, children make good progress. However, because of the influx of children with knowledge and skills lower than is typically found, standards at the end of Reception are lower than would be expected. Thus only an average number of children reach a good level of development, despite having made good progress
- Pupils leave Key Stage 1 with standards around the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been the case for some years. Good teaching consolidates prior learning, deepening pupils' understanding and knowledge, and acting as a springboard for good progress in Key Stage 2. This good work was partly undone in Key Stage 2 in recent years due the school's leadership and staffing difficulties. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2014, the overall level of attainment reached by pupils was broadly average. Pupils were about a term ahead of the national average in writing, broadly at the national average in reading, and about a term behind the national average in mathematics. These pupils did not achieve well enough.
- Resolute and strong action taken in the recent past by the school's leaders, has ensured that achievement throughout the school is now good. Work seen in many pupils' books, and information in the school's tracking system, indicates that almost all pupils are making nationally expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 6, as in other year groups, around about one third of pupils are now exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress for all pupils in the current Year 6 has been rapid since September 2014 in mathematics and reading and good in writing. The school's tracking suggests that disadvantaged pupils in this group are making marginally better progress than their peers in reading and mathematics, and distinctly better progress in writing, largely because of the specifically targeted support they receive.
- Disadvantaged pupils who left Year 6 in 2014, made faster progress overall than their peers in school, and at broadly the same rate as all pupils nationally.
- The gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils, and their peers in school and all pupils nationally, widened slightly between 2013 and 2014. Disadvantaged pupils were about one and half terms behind their peers in school in reading, writing and mathematics, and all pupils nationally. This was exacerbated by the overall weaker performance in mathematics, and by a variance in overall levels of ability between the pupils in the different year groups. The school's tracking suggests that gaps will close in 2015, mainly due to the intrinsic ability of the pupils themselves.
- In 2014, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs made progress at similarly disappointing rates to their peers in the different subjects. Pupils currently in school are making progress at a similar good rate as their classmates because of the tightly focused support they receive, largely from expert teachers.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are making progress at the same good rate as their peers in

reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the school has expert teachers who help pupils to build their language skills rapidly. They grow rapidly in confidence and can tackle work independently requiring minimal support with translation.

- The most able children in different Year groups and classes do not always progress as rapidly as might be expected. This is usually because teachers do not always plan work which sets them appropriate levels of challenge. On occasions, progress is slowed further when teachers fail to notice that the more able children have finished quickly.

The early years provision is good

- Children make good progress and achieve well in this new and exciting setting. They quickly catch up and make good progress from their lower than typical starting points. They are joined in the Reception classes by a significant number of children new to the school who have not had the benefit of this good start. As a result, a lower proportion than might otherwise be expected reaches a good level of development by the end of the early years. This means that despite having made good progress from their different starting points, the number of children well prepared for learning in Year 1 is only average.
- The school's Nursery works very closely with the Phoenix Nursery next door, and shared planning is preparing children for entry into the school with greater knowledge and understanding. However, this work is very new and its results will not be seen until the first children enter the school in September 2016.
- The school has good induction procedures for entry to either Nursery or Reception classes. All children are visited at home before they join the school. Parents' then visit the school so that a detailed picture of each child's needs and interests can inform what happens to the child in school.
- The early years provision operates the same good safeguarding procedures as the main school. Children are kept safe and secure.
- Children quickly learn to adopt good routines. They learn to share toys together, and play and learn in harmony. This lays down very strong foundations for the excellent behaviour they display later on in school.
- Communication with parents is growing strongly, and 'learning journey' books of a high quality are available for them to see at any time. This builds security for the children and makes a significant contribution to their achievement.
- Children benefit from and enjoy a wide range of adult-led and self-chosen activities, all always linked around a central theme. Indoor and outdoor spaces are safe and provide an attractive learning environment for children to explore and learn together.
- Children concentrate well because they have new and interesting ideas to consider. They behave well. Adults consistently seek answers to questions beginning 'Why...?' or 'What..?'. This encourages children to think things through for themselves and gives them many opportunities to build their communication skills.
- Though the early years leader is relatively new to the school, her experience and enthusiasm have quickly built a shared vision among the large staff team, who now have clearly defined goals all centred on the progress children make.
- The school accurately measures what pupils know and can do when they enter the Nursery or the Reception classes. This was not always the case until recently.

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	103696
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	461971

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	736
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Browett
Headteacher	Derek Gardiner
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2012
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