

# Upper Arley CofE (VC) Primary School

Arley, Bewdley, Worcestershire DY12 1XA

## Inspection dates

4–5 October 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that pupils have made consistently good progress in mathematics.
- Leaders do not use pupils' workbooks sufficiently well to detect where improvements in teaching mathematics are needed, or where pupils need additional support.
- Although leaders track individuals' progress well, they do not analyse the progress of some key groups, for example the most able, so are unsure how well these pupils are achieving.
- On occasion, the teaching of mathematics is not sufficiently challenging for different groups, especially the most able pupils. It does not give pupils enough opportunity to use their mental arithmetic skills, solve problems or explain how they reach their answers.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in different subjects. Additionally, some pupils' work is untidy and not well presented.
- Too few children in the early years make good progress. The majority of children are not secure in their formation of letters and numbers by the end of the Reception Year.
- Significant evidence is gathered about children's progress in literacy and numeracy in the early years but very little about other areas. Staff do not use different sources of information well enough to accurately identify children's starting points.
- Governors are not provided with measurable targets, in school action plans, by which to hold leaders fully to account.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in reading and writing from their starting points.
- Phonics is taught well. There is a rising trend in attainment and, in 2016, standards were above average in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are polite and helpful and all age groups mix well together. Their behaviour is good.
- Pupils feel safe and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above average.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching and raise achievement in mathematics by:
  - increasing the level of challenge for pupils, especially the most able
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use problem-solving, reasoning and mental arithmetic skills
  - ensuring that pupils apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects
  - ensuring that pupils present their work neatly and methodically.
- Improve provision and leadership in the early years by ensuring that:
  - greater levels of challenge are provided for the most able children
  - children form their numbers and letters correctly
  - all sources of assessment information are used to accurately pinpoint children's starting points
  - leaders collect a wide range of evidence to support teachers' assessments in different areas of the curriculum, other than literacy and numeracy.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - carrying out regular checks of pupils' work books in mathematics to ensure that all groups and cohorts are making good progress
  - tracking the progress of key groups, including the most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - ensuring that development plans have measurable, interim milestones which enable all leaders, including governors, to determine whether actions taken are being successful.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leadership has not had sufficient impact in improving pupils' achievement in mathematics. Leaders have not focused sufficiently on pupils' work books to identify weaknesses in teaching or detect where pupils' progress slows. As a result, too few pupils make good progress in this subject.
- The headteacher meticulously tracks the progress of individual pupils, all cohorts and some groups, such as disadvantaged pupils. However, this information is not gathered or analysed for other groups, for example the most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, subject leaders and governors are unclear how well these groups are achieving and whether progress is rapid enough.
- The headteacher and staff formulate appropriate development plans to tackle weaknesses identified, and these are reviewed annually. However, no interim, measurable milestones are included to allow governors and leaders to check mid-year whether the actions being taken are leading to improvements.
- The headteacher sets the tone for the inclusive and welcoming culture promoted at Upper Arley. The core values of care, respect and tolerance are at the heart of the school's ethos. Staff work as a united team to support the headteacher. As a result, pupils are happy, enjoy school and feel valued.
- Staff performance is evaluated effectively. Targets set are linked closely to whole-school priorities, and aligned to government criteria. Leaders invest in staff training to help teachers improve their performance and equip them with the skills needed to carry out their roles well. For example, the special educational needs coordinator has recently achieved a national qualification in this subject area.
- Leadership of English is effective. Leaders provide training for staff to ensure that they have the knowledge needed to cater for pupils' needs. They carry out regular checks of teaching and ensure that additional support is provided for pupils where needed. Leaders have already reviewed the weaknesses in mathematics and are applying the same successful strategies used in English to improve this subject area.
- The school's curriculum is broad, with particular strengths in technology. Interesting topics develop pupils' wider knowledge in other subject areas and these are backed up with interesting visits. Extra-curricular activities are also popular, for example, badminton and cross-country, and many pupils learn to play a musical instrument. These experiences help to develop pupils' physical and creative talents.
- Leaders strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a good understanding of other cultures and people whose beliefs are different from their own. Important moral values are regularly taught in lessons and assemblies, for example, thankfulness, respect and honesty. Through the school council and taking on additional responsibilities, pupils learn the importance of working together and respecting each other's views. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to support the very few pupils in the school who are disadvantaged. Additional one-to-one teaching is provided to ensure eligible pupils achieve at least as well as others nationally.

- The physical education and sport premium grant is used well by leaders to promote regular exercise. It funds membership of the local sports partnership in order to provide wider opportunities for pupils. A sports coach also leads weekly sessions for pupils and supports staff training. Pupils have achieved a number of sporting awards and successes. Pupils enjoy sport and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy.
- Parents have very positive views of the school and feel that it serves their children well. All of those who responded to Parent View said that they would recommend the school to other parents and that their children were happy and felt safe. As one parent put it, 'I wouldn't want my child going anywhere else,' and another, 'Happy children and happy parents.'
- The local authority has carried out checks on teaching and agreed that the school's own assessments of pupils' work are accurate. However, the local authority has failed to detect the decline in standards in mathematics or provide any additional support for the school.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governance of the school requires improvement. Governors have not held leaders to account sufficiently over time to ensure that outcomes for pupils have remained good in mathematics.
- Governors receive regular updates about pupils' progress and achievement from the headteacher. However, the lack of information, about some groups, limits their ability to challenge underperformance of key groups, for example, the most able. As a result, governors' evaluation of outcomes in mathematics is overly generous.
- Governors carry out their duties diligently. They ask probing questions in meetings, visit school to talk to pupils and meet regularly with school leaders. They have a good understanding of the strengths within the school and are committed to improving areas of weakness.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They ensure that pupils and staff are safe, that finances are used appropriately and that the headteacher's performance is reviewed annually.
- Governors are aware of how the pupil premium and physical education and sport funding are spent and the impact this is having on pupils' achievement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has developed a strong culture for keeping children safe. All staff are vigilant and work collaboratively to protect children from harm. Appropriate checks are carried out for adults who work with pupils. Staff receive statutory training and know what to do if they have any safeguarding worries. The headteacher makes appropriate referrals to the local authority where concerns are raised. Records are well kept and stored securely. Policies are regularly updated and made available to parents.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because pupils have not made good progress in mathematics.
- Teachers' expectations in mathematics, on occasion, are too low and work set is not always challenging enough, especially for the most able pupils. For example, pupils were provided with multiplication charts to support work in division when, for some, their mental arithmetic skills were already quite strong. At other times, work in pupils' books shows that they spend too long on repeated calculations before being moved on to applying the skills learned, or mastering problem-solving skills and reasoning skills.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to use mathematical skills in other subjects. This restricts their ability to apply and further develop their mathematical knowledge. Additionally, teachers too readily accept work that is untidy and poorly presented. This increases the potential for pupils to make errors and directly affects the effort made by pupils, and the standard of work produced.
- Teachers make good use of resources, including technology, to support learning. Explanations are clear and pupils know what they are expected to do. Where appropriate, teachers helpfully model what the work should look like so that pupils know precisely what to do. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss ideas with partners and participate fully in lessons.
- Reading is taught well from the outset. Pupils acquire early phonics skills and apply these well to their reading. Younger pupils use their phonics knowledge to break down and decode tricky words. They are given different reading books to add breadth to their reading range. Older pupils enjoy selecting books from the school library. They can talk about their favourite authors and are developing good reading habits, for example, reading at bedtime.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of exciting and imaginative opportunities that teachers provide to promote and develop writing skills. Drafting and planning tasks help pupils set out their ideas in advance of the main activity. Teachers make skilful links between reading and writing; class texts are used successfully as writing stimuli. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 wrote imaginative story openers following their invitation to Willy Wonka's chocolate factory, and older pupils used sophisticated language to describe the 'Lost Thing'. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively in English lessons.
- Teachers cater well for the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Personalised learning plans are written and targets set for each pupil. Additional teaching and intervention programmes provide valuable support. These are regularly reviewed and help address pupils' additional needs and ensure that they achieve as well as their classmates.
- One-to-one teaching is also provided by a qualified teacher for pupils who are disadvantaged. Their individual needs are considered and good support is provided. This ensures that these pupils are treated equally and achieve well.

- Leaders have compiled a gifted-and-talented register and identified the most able pupils in different subjects, for instance, reading, writing, physical education and art. Work is set at different levels and, in some lessons, pupils can choose their own starting points and level of difficulty. Some pupils work in classes for older pupils to access more challenging work. Provision is in place for these pupils but, to date, too few pupils have exceeded the standards expected or made rapid progress in mathematics.
- Teaching assistants work in close collaboration with teachers and provide valuable support to individuals or small groups.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide pupils with helpful comments to improve their work. They check pupils' understanding by posing questions or setting additional short tasks to ensure that pupils are confident and competent in the skills learned. Pupils routinely complete these tasks and respond to teachers' comments. This aids and strengthens teachers' assessments and improves pupils' progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have a very good understanding about keeping themselves healthy. They comply with the school policy of only eating fruit at playtime. They know that physical exercise and a good diet are crucial elements of staying healthy. They also understand the dangers of drug misuse and the effects of smoking around children. The school sports council organises different events, for example, the school sports day.
- Pupils enjoy school and particularly like attending a small school. As one pupil put it, 'We all know each other really well.' Pupils are well cared for and happy in school. All staff have a detailed knowledge of individuals and their needs. Relationships between all adults and pupils are strong.
- Pupils are confident and mature. They readily take on additional responsibilities in school. For example, older pupils organise games at playtime for younger pupils, such as 'Jumping Jaxx', carry out office duty at lunchtime, and are members of the school and eco councils.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different types of bullying, for example, physical, verbal or cyber-bullying. Pupils report that bullying does not happen in school but that if there are any minor disagreements, staff will sort these out if reported.
- Pupils are taught well to keep themselves safe. Computers are used regularly in school and pupils know the dangers associated with the internet. They know that firewalls are in place to block unsuitable sites and that they should not send their personal details to strangers or talk to them online. Pupils understand that the main gate is locked to keep the site safe. They are confident to report incidents to adults or confide in them if they have any worries.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Most pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning although, on occasion, some do not present their work as well as they could. In terms of their conduct, pupils are polite, helpful and respectful. They behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils of all ages play and mix well together at break and lunchtime.
- Pupils say behaviour is good. They understand and follow the school's behaviour policy. 'Zone boards' and 'dojos' are used effectively to promote good behaviour. Adults manage pupils' behaviour well and incidents of poor behaviour are rare. School records show that the number of recorded incidents has decreased and there have been no exclusions in the last two years.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. Leaders keep a close check on pupils who are absent and have supported the issuing of fines to parents who take their children on holiday during term time. Pupils are rewarded with certificates for their good attendance.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Outcomes in mathematics require improvement. Attainment in 2015 and 2016 was below the national average at the end of Year 6 and too few pupils made good progress in these cohorts. Progress rates for current pupils and most groups in the school remain too variable.
- The most able pupils do not consistently make good progress in mathematics. Sometimes, work set is not challenging enough and this results in pupils not reaching the standards of which they are capable. Too few pupils exceed the standards expected at the end of Year 6. Similarly, the most able pupils in key stage 1 and the early years do not make the progress they should.
- Outcomes in English are good. Attainment over time is above average at the end of Year 6, especially in writing. The school's own assessment information and evidence from pupils' work books, including those from last year, show that current pupils are continuing to make good progress in English.
- The very small number of disadvantaged pupils in the school achieve well. This is due to the effective use of the pupil premium funding and the additional support these pupils receive. In 2015, pupils attained in line with other pupils nationally and made better progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in reading and writing but their progress in mathematics requires improvement, in line with that of other pupils. Pupils are quickly identified for support with reading and writing but, too often, pupils' mathematics books are not checked closely enough to detect where pupils are struggling to keep up with their classmates.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check have risen steadily and, in 2016, were above the national average.



## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- Most children join the school in Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are at least typical for their age. However, children do not always build sufficiently on these entry skills and their progress requires improvement. For example, the majority of children do not form their numbers or letters accurately by the end of the Reception Year and the needs of the most able are not fully catered for. Over time, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen and, in 2016, was slightly above the national average.
- Teachers assess children on entry to Reception Year. However, the assessments made are, on occasion, overly cautious. This is because teachers and leaders do not use all of the information available, for example, evidence of home learning, records from pre-school settings, work in children's books and standardised tests, to inform their judgement of attainment on entry.
- During the year, adults carry out regular observations of children and make notes to assess their abilities in literacy and numeracy. Examples of children's work and a small number of photographs add to the evidence collected in children's well-organised learning journals. However, only limited information is gathered in relation to other areas, for example, children's physical, social, emotional or creative development. As a result, it is difficult for leaders to track the overall progress made by children, or have sufficient evidence to support their assessments in these areas.
- Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. The classroom is bright and stimulating with helpful literacy and numeracy prompts displayed. It is clean, tidy and well resourced. Children can easily collect any equipment needed themselves, thus fostering their independent skills. The secure outdoor area is accessible at all times and used well for physical activities.
- Effective induction arrangements are in place and these ensure that children settle quickly at school. Several visits are arranged so that children get used to coming into school. Children integrate well with the Year 1 pupils in their class and older pupils in the school. This helps develop their personal, social and emotional skills.
- Children behave well and are kept safe in the early years. Adults act as good role models and encourage good manners from the outset. Early routines are established and children quickly become confident learners and develop independent skills. They listen carefully and respond quickly to instructions. They are respectful to staff and other children and they cooperate well with each other.



## School details

Unique reference number	135037
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10000643

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susanne Birch
Headteacher	Ian Smith
Telephone number	01299 861260
Website	<a href="http://www.upperarleyprimary.co.uk">www.upperarleyprimary.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@upperarley.worcs.sch.uk">office@upperarley.worcs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	28–29 September 2011

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- Children in the early years attend full time and are taught in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. There are three other mixed-age classes.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes. She saw 10 parts of lessons, five of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with pupils and heard a selection of pupils read. She looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils about their learning. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and the subject leaders for English, mathematics, the early years and special educational needs. There were no responses to the online staff questionnaire but their views were considered during meetings.
- The inspector met with four governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body. No one from the local authority was available to meet with the inspector during the inspection but historic reports were evaluated.
- The opinions of parents were considered through 28 responses on Parent View together with conversations with parents as they collected their children from school. The school's own survey of parents' views was also considered, together with additional comments made via letters to the inspector or parents' texts.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, development plans, information about managing teachers' performance and staff training records. Minutes of meetings of the governing body and information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety were also analysed.

## Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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