

St Giles Church of England Primary School

Walsall Street, Wilenhall, Walsall, WV13 2ER

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The strong leadership of the senior leaders has made sure that all teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- The teaching of phonics (links between letters and sounds) is outstanding and younger pupils make outstanding progress in their reading.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well from their different starting points. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average, and improving.
- Teachers have high expectations and provide learning activities that are well matched to pupils' varying abilities. Good opportunities for discussion and teachers' skilful questioning ensure pupils think deeply and develop their understanding.
- There is a very positive atmosphere in the school, partly because of all the good relationships. Pupils say they feel safe. They behave well and their positive learning attitudes contribute to their good progress in lessons.
- The school accurately evaluates how well it is doing and what it needs to do to improve. Leaders keep an exceptionally careful check on how well every pupil is doing.
- The governing body is effective and provides a good balance of support and challenge to the school. Governors are well informed about the school's performance.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of experiences, which also help develop their good spiritual, social, moral and cultural understanding. All pupils learn a musical instrument when in the lower juniors.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils how to improve their work, and some teachers do not check that pupils act on the advice they are given.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not given enough good opportunities to practise their writing and number skills on their own.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, including five which were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, looked at a range of their work and listened to a sample of pupils read.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents including: the school’s self-evaluation report and related monitoring of achievement and teaching; the data on pupils’ attainment and progress; behaviour and bullying records; safeguarding information; plans for the school’s future development; local authority reports; and documents provided by the governors.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, staff members and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors held conversations with parents at the start of the school day. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, but inspectors took account of 113 responses from a recent parent questionnaire undertaken by the school. Questionnaires completed by 11 staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Angela Kirk, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Deirdre Lyddy

Additional Inspector

David King

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than average.
- About half of pupils are White British and a quarter are of Indian heritage. Other pupils are from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- About a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is above average.
- The school receives the pupil premium for nearly half of its pupils (additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed services) which is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding, and hence increase pupils' rates of progress by:
 - clarifying what pupils have done well in their books and what needs improving, making sure that pupils have the opportunity to act on this advice
 - providing more opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage for children to practise their writing and number skills on their own.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children join the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding that are low compared to the levels typically expected for their age, particularly in language and communication. Since the last inspection, standards at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 have improved considerably.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in their phonics and, in 2013, standards at the end of Year 1 in the phonics check were above average. This is because teachers regularly check the learning of all the pupils in their phonics lessons and excellent quality catch up is in place immediately for any pupils who fall behind. Even the younger and less able pupils in Key Stage 1 read with confidence and expression. They sound out unfamiliar words accurately and talk knowledgeably and enthusiastically about what they are reading.
- Pupils of Indian heritage and those pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve particularly well, but the school is starting to close gaps between different groups of pupils, ensuring that all achieve well. Pupils currently supported through the pupil premium funding make progress, which is often better than that of their classmates, because they receive good quality additional support. In 2013, eligible pupils in Year 6 were about two terms behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils, and those who have special educational needs, make good progress from their different starting points. Careful assessment identifies where pupils need to catch up anything that they do not understand.
- Achievement across the curriculum is good due to the good balance of time spent on a wide range of subjects. There are particularly good opportunities for pupils to write for different reasons, such as investigations in science and their thoughts and beliefs in religious education.
- The progress of the more able pupils is similar to that of other pupils. These pupils are usually provided with the right level of challenge to help them make progress. For example, many pupils across the school receive additional English and mathematics tuition to help them to achieve the higher levels.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good, and sometimes outstanding. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, accurate and carefully gathered checks on progress help adults plan appropriately for children's next steps in learning. Children are happy, keen to learn and get on well with each other. Challenging activities, both when led by an adult or when provided for children to work on their own, are well focused on specific learning tasks, making sure all abilities can enjoy themselves and achieve well.
- Senior and middle leaders provide particularly good teaching role models and set high standards of practice, which promote pupils' good attitudes to their learning. Teachers' subject knowledge, particularly in the teaching of phonics, language and communication and reading, is excellent because they benefit from regular teaching courses and use advice from speech and language therapists.
- Teachers check pupils' progress accurately. Teachers share the levels that pupils are working at, together with each pupil's individual targets and their progress with pupils and parents. Where needed, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive additional good guidance from teaching assistants working alongside them individually or in small groups in class.
- Work set for more able pupils challenges them to think carefully. For example, more able Year 2 pupils discussed if they thought the beast from the traditional tale *Beauty and the Beast* was right to teach Beauty's father a lesson because he had trespassed on this land and taken his property (the rose) without asking. They showed a particularly well-developed moral sense of

right and wrong for their age.

- There is much good marking, which helps pupils know how to further improve their work. However, some teachers' comments simply tell the pupil that they have completed some good work, without explaining which aspects of their work were particularly successful, and specifically where improvement is still needed. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils act on the advice they are given. As a result, pupils are not helped to make as much progress as they could.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers do not provide regularly enough, opportunities for children to practise their writing and number skills so that they can apply these skills to lots of different themes and topics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults in lessons and around school. The introduction of older pupils acting as playleaders in the playground to lead games and organise toys has given them a sense of responsibility and pride in ensuring that they do their job well and playtimes are fun for all.
- The school manages very well a number of pupils who find managing their own behaviour a challenge, especially when outside the classroom. Exclusions have been eliminated since the last inspection because the school identifies pupils at risk and provides support so that poor behaviour does not escalate. One of many successful initiatives provides access to nurture support, known to pupils as the lunchtime dolphin club. All pupils can choose to discuss any concerns or difficult emotions they may have with an adult who can help them to reintegrate back into the playground.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and that incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with quickly. They find 'worry boxes' in classes helpful should they choose to use them.
- Pupils also know how to keep themselves safe, for example what to do if on the way home they are approached by a stranger. They have a good understanding of bullying in different forms, such as cyber bullying, and regularly take part in various activities to improve behaviour, such as anti-bullying week.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and apply themselves to all tasks, supporting their good achievement. Presentation by pupils of their work is good. It is set out thoughtfully and handwriting is neat. In Key Stage 2 it is usually joined.
- Attendance is average, and improving. There has been a reduction in the number of pupils who have previously been persistently absent and the school continues to tackle parents who choose to take holidays in term time and those who do not contact the school to explain the absence of their child.

The leadership and management are good

- All leaders are very determined to ensure that all pupils have the best possible education. The inspirational headteacher is ably supported by an exemplary senior leadership team. Very well targeted actions have transformed the school into a flourishing learning community.
- Knowledgeable senior and middle leaders regularly and relentlessly check pupils' work and progress, and ensure that all receive teaching which is never less than good. Each leader, including those responsible for special educational needs, the Early Years Foundation Stage and phonics, tirelessly checks exactly what is going well and exactly where improvement is still needed, based on the whole-school vision.
- Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement and teaching have continued to improve. The school's checking on how well each individual and group of pupils are doing is central to its system of monitoring. Quick action is taken to keep pupils on track to achieve the best that they can, but it is taking longer for older pupils to catch up from their previously lower standards.

- The process of setting targets for teachers' performance is based securely on nationally-expected standards for teachers, together with challenging whole-school and individual targets. Pay is linked securely to a teacher's performance, which is reported annually to governors. Underperformance is tackled initially through intensive support and guidance.
- The pupil premium funding has been mainly spent on academic support, learning resources and help for eligible pupils with additional emotional needs. The monitoring of particular interventions and the improved progress of these pupils show that the spending has been effective.
- The local authority has provided appropriate and effective English, mathematics and monitoring support to the school since the last inspection. Due to the good progress made by the school, the authority reduced the support at the start of 2014.
- New funding to support primary school sports and physical education has been used mainly to increase the number of swimming lessons for pupils with weaker swimming skills and to improve the delivery of gymnastics in lessons and after school. Over two thirds of pupils can now swim the required 25 metres compared to only one fifth on entry, which is a much greater increase than previously achieved in the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has stepped up its accountability since the last inspection. Governors have a good knowledge of how well the school is doing compared to other schools. They know how good teaching is and understand about the management of teachers' performance and how systems are used to improve the quality of teaching, linked to pay rises as appropriate. The governing body now provides effective challenge, as well as support. Governors are well informed and back up their knowledge through visits to the school to check how well actions in the school's planned improvements are progressing. They monitor safety and safeguarding carefully, which meet the requirements. Additional funds, including those for pupil premium and sports, are monitored effectively to ensure that actions result in improvements to pupils' achievements. Governors oversee equal opportunities for all and see that discrimination is not tolerated. Parents are positive about the school and the school seeks and responds to their feedback.

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	104226
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	431157

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Welsby
Headteacher	Mark Dakin
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2012
Telephone number	01902 368308
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