

Charnwood Primary School

Purcell Avenue, Lichfield, WS13 7PH

Inspection dates 24–25 April 2013

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.

- Pupils achieve well. Attainment in English and mathematics has risen in both key stages since the previous inspection. Pupils are working at above-average levels in some year groups.
- Nearly all teaching is good. Teachers have improved their use of assessment. Lesson activities are now sharply focused and ensure pupils acquire literacy and numeracy skills securely. This knowledge enables pupils to be successful when they attempt harder work, for example in Year 6.
- Leaders and staff have made very effective use of training and coaching opportunities to improve the quality of teaching. Planning for school improvement is wedded closely to a continual drive to raise pupils' achievement.
- Pupils get on very well with each other. They enjoy mutually respectful relationships with staff. They know how to stay safe and, overall, behave well. Sometimes, in lessons, assemblies and during playtimes, their behaviour is exemplary.
- Staff work successfully with pupils who have barriers to learning. Surveys show that pupils are very happy in school and feel valued and cared for by staff.
- The headteacher's determination to improve pupils' education, together with the better ways other leaders and governors check on how well the school and its pupils are performing, underpin the school's improved overall effectiveness.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Some weaknesses in a few lessons slow the pace of learning and hold back pupils' achievement.
- The impact of support programmes for writing has not been assessed carefully enough to ensure all pupils make faster progress.
- Targets for pupils' annual rates of progress are not high enough to sustain pupils' improved levels of attainment and to accelerate further pupils' progress across the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 15 lessons taught by eight teachers. Two of these lessons were observed together with the headteacher.
- Samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics were analysed. An inspector listened to some Year 2 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils and governors. A telephone discussion took place with a representative of a company working on school improvement in partnership with the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 questionnaires completed by staff and the 11 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' and pupils' responses to the school's own very recent surveys were considered. An inspector also spoke informally to a few parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the work in pupils' books; monitoring records; school improvement plans, the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; the headteacher's reports to the governing body; and policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Edgar Hastings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language but very few of them are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is below average. Currently there are no looked after children or children of service families attending the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of these pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one part-time Nursery class and one Reception class.
- A very few pupils with a statement of special educational needs who are enrolled at the adjacent special school (Rocklands) attend lessons at Charnwood on a part-time basis.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club for pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding so that pupils work at a fast learning pace in every lesson by ensuring:
 - teachers always conduct question-and-answer routines briskly, consistently make best use of resources to support pupils' learning and give more-able pupils more time to work on their own when they have mastered new ideas.
- Further improve pupils' achievement by ensuring:
 - leaders set higher targets for pupils' annual rates of progress
 - support programmes to improve pupils' writing skills are carefully reviewed to ensure they have a strong impact on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The levels of skills and knowledge of most children on entry to Nursery are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nonetheless, pupils start Year 1 with below-average attainment.
- In 2012, Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was above average for the first time for five years. Currently, Year 2 pupils are also working at above-average levels and making good progress.
- In Key Stage 2, most pupils continue to achieve well. Year 3 pupils are building strongly on their good gains last year. Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement has improved steadily as shown by the increasing proportion of pupils making better progress than is expected nationally. The attainment of pupils in the current Year 6 class is above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing.
- Pupils, including those pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, acquire over time a secure grounding in phonics (the sounds that letters make). Staff develop pupils' reading skills securely in daily classes which have a special focus on reading skills. Year 2 pupils apply phonic strategies accurately and most are keen to give their own opinions on what is to happen next as story-lines unfold in books.
- Pupils' secure calculation skills underpin their developing confidence in applying their mathematical knowledge correctly. These well-developed skills are helping more-able Year 6 mathematicians to tackle harder work and to aim at Level 6 in this year's national tests.
- Sharper use of data has enabled staff to identify more quickly pupils who need extra help with their learning. Support programmes are helping to improve pupils' progress, but those for writing are not yet firmly established in the school's work. This results in some variation between classes in pupils' rates of progress in this skill. Disabled pupils and those pupils with special educational needs, including special school pupils with statements who attend part time, also make good progress.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make as good progress as their ineligible classmates from their starting points. Eligible Year 6 pupils in 2012 were working two terms behind their classmates in English and mathematics, but at the same levels as similar pupils across the country. Currently, most eligible pupils across the school are working one term behind all pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching is good

- Nearly all teaching is good and there are a few lessons where teaching has outstanding features when teachers fully capitalise on the enthusiasm that pupils in some classes have towards their learning.
- In a few lessons, the pace of learning drops and pupils' concentration slips when questioning is not brisk, materials and additional adults are not used well enough to support pupils' learning and more-able pupils are kept too long on the carpet during starter activities.
- Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide children with an interesting range of

thematically inter-linked activities. Adults develop children's speaking skills well through precise questioning and engage children's curiosity fully, for example, when children explore insect life in the outdoor nature area.

- Teachers' planning of work in Key Stages 1 and 2 builds carefully on pupils' prior learning. Teachers match tasks effectively to the needs of different groups of pupils, explain new ideas clearly and use questions well to get pupils thinking. They draw out the meaning of reading texts expertly and give pupils' good advice about the ways they should analyse these texts to support their answers.
- Teachers provide pupils with well-planned opportunities in English lessons to practise their writing skills and reinforce their understanding of concepts in other subjects, for example science and history. This was observed, for example in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils wrote well structured accounts about the lifecycle of butterflies and used connectives imaginatively to enhance their descriptions. However, a few support programmes for writing have not been assessed carefully and this results in pupils' rates of progress in this skill not always being good.
- Mathematical skills are taught well. Year 6 pupils think logically, seek to work towards solutions systematically and this enables them to solve complex problems accurately.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs learn well, because their full involvement in teachers' questioning routines encourages them to contribute their ideas. Additional adults support them skilfully and sensitively. Both of these features were observed in a Year 3 lesson where staff employed a range of strategies, including 'hot-seating', to tease out these pupils' opinions on the lives of the ancient Celts.
- Teachers' marking celebrates what pupils have done well but also indicates clearly what pupils need to do next to improve further. Pupils' written responses indicate they have taken heed of their teacher's comments and a few older pupils support their classmates' learning well through assessing each other's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Nursery and Reception children are happy and secure in the well-organised classrooms. Almost all children concentrate well and persevere with tasks. Children are very sociable. They are keen to work and converse in large groups or in pairs, but are also content to spend some time exploring role-play areas on their own.
- A full response to the school's recent survey of pupils' views indicates that all pupils without exception believe that they are well cared for by adults in school. This unquestioning trust underpins pupils' sense of well-being in school. Nearly all parents and carers correctly believe that the school keeps pupils safe and ensures good standards of behaviour.
- Pupils work hard and are quick to comply with staff's requests, so little time is lost when they move between different activities in lessons or around school. They play exceptionally well together. All groups of pupils feel valued and supported and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning because staff give them equal portions of their time.
- Pupils say other pupils behave well and very little 'off-task' behaviour was observed during the inspection. In some lessons, pupils' very positive attitudes to learning make a major contribution to their good achievement. The school's code of conduct song regularly reinforces suitable moral messages in assemblies.

- Pupils report that bullying is rare but they say that a few pupils occasionally make nasty remarks or pull faces at them. School records show that exclusions are also rare and contain no instances of racist or homophobic incidents.
- Pupils feel safe in school because the school building is secure and they feel they can talk to an adult at any time. They know how to stay safe through e-safety, water safety and 'stranger danger' training. The popular, well-organised breakfast club provides pupils with a varied range of enjoyable activities to get their day off to a good start.
- Pupils make useful contributions to school life through their efforts to improve school facilities as school- and eco-councillors.
- Most pupils attend regularly. The rate of attendance keeps pace with the increase in attendance rates nationally.

The leadership and management are good

- Priority areas identified at the previous inspection have been tackled determinedly and effectively by the headteacher. Long-term planning is now tightly focused on improving teaching, and actions taken to improve pupils' achievement, for example, in reading, have produced substantial gains in their achievement in this skill.
- Clear, individual and whole-school targets for teachers to improve the effectiveness of their work have raised expectations for pupils' achievement and the development of teaching. These targets are closely linked to school improvement priorities and progress towards meeting them is measured carefully, for example, through a regular cycle of lesson observations.
- Staff have viewed training and coaching positively as challenging opportunities to improve their expertise. They now have a greater awareness of the importance of assessment information for the purpose of planning lessons and have improved their techniques for teaching phonics and numeracy skills.
- A full tracking system is now established and enables the headteacher to keep a close eye on how well individual pupils and groups are doing. Leaders are using this information to direct resources and pinpoint pupils in danger of falling behind or who would benefit from extra support to achieve at the higher levels. This good practice is helping to improve overall attainment, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Targets for pupils' annual rates of progress do not, however, fully reflect or build upon pupils' rising levels of attainment. Some programmes, especially for writing, have not been reviewed fully to gauge impact on pupils' achievement.
- The extra funding the school receives for the pupil premium has been used thoughtfully to employ extra staff, for example for small-group teaching, and there is secure evidence that this expenditure is accelerating progress for some eligible pupils.
- The school promotes equal opportunities and tackles all forms of discrimination well. The curriculum is carefully adapted to meet pupils' needs. For example, a few more-able pupils attend classes in older year groups so that they can tackle more demanding work. Pupils' moral development is fostered well in assemblies and imaginative lessons on the lives of Celts and ancient Greeks enable pupils to reflect on cultural shifts across centuries.

- Since the previous inspection the local authority has supported the school effectively, especially in improving attainment in reading and in developing learning in Nursery and Reception.

- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know how well the school is doing. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibility for safeguarding pupils. They receive detailed reports from the headteacher, have a secure knowledge of data and what it means in terms of pupils' progress, and how this information should be used to establish priorities for school improvement. They have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching, how this relates to pay rises for staff, and the reasons for the actions taken to improve teaching. They keep a close check on finances and are well aware of the strategies used to raise attainment for pupils eligible for pupil premium spending.

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	124185
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	402238

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	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Dunn
Headteacher	Simon Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	07 October 2009
Telephone number	01543 512015
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