

Castle Bromwich Junior School

Hurst Lane North, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, West Midlands B36 0HD

Inspection dates

14–15 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is a well-led and orderly community where pupils are safe and enjoy learning due to good teaching that meets their needs.
- A culture of high expectation has been established through vigilant governance, focused leadership and high-quality training for staff.
- The most able pupils, disadvantaged most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils, are now making good progress in relation to their starting points. This is due to improved teaching, accurate use of assessment and prudent use of monies allocated to diminish differences in academic outcomes.
- Morale is high because teachers are passionate about giving all groups of pupils the help that they need to succeed. Parents are very supportive of the school.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils leave the school well prepared for secondary school. They are confident learners who achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics, making good progress in relation to their starting points.
- The curriculum is vibrant, exciting and is enriched with plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of reading, writing, and mathematics in other subjects.
- All groups of pupils have access to a broad range of extra-curricular clubs, which include good opportunities to participate in sporting activities.
- Pupils behave well in and around the school. All subjects promote British values and provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and understanding.
- Procedures to ensure pupils' welfare and safeguarding are effective.
- A very small minority of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils do not attend school regularly.
- Lower attaining pupils, including several disadvantaged pupils in Years 3 and 4, do not do as well as other pupils in writing and spelling.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of spelling, handwriting and presentation skills for lower attaining and disadvantaged pupils needing to catch up in Years 3 and 4 by consistently embedding the school's handwriting and spelling policy in lessons.
- Improve the attendance of the very small number of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities by engaging more effectively with parents so that they see the value of sending their children to school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has been instrumental in galvanising the talents and passion of her staff to improve many aspects of the school's work since the previous inspection. Staff work as a harmonious team and successfully implement the school's values of 'Aspire, Adapt and Accept' in all aspects of provision.
- All staff strongly believe that when a pupil struggles to learn the teacher must seek out ways to aid the pupil's understanding. They stop short at nothing to find strategies that will engage pupils' interests. This is due to the good training opportunities that they receive. The diminishing differences between disadvantaged pupils' attainment and that of all pupils nationally is the positive effect.
- The headteacher rigorously monitors teaching, pupils' outcomes and equality of access to learning. Immediate identification and help provides support to pupils who need to catch up. As a result, teachers quickly address the gaps in pupils' learning.
- Rigorous monitoring of all aspects of provision has ensured that the school has identified the correct priorities for improvement on the school development plan. This, coupled with ambitious performance management targets for teachers, provides a clear focus for accelerating the rates of progress for all groups of pupils.
- The leadership team and well-informed governing body ably support the headteacher. Governors effectively challenge leaders to seek information on how resources, including the spending on staff training, impact on pupils' learning.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment has improved due to focused school improvement planning and rigorous coaching and training. For example, staff routinely check the progress that different groups make in relation to their starting points. This is having a positive impact on improving the progress of the pupils, as evidenced by the high standards of writing over time by the end of Year 6.
- Strong leadership of subject leaders has ensured that the school has achieved many awards such as the School Games Mark silver award, Artsmark gold award, Eco-Schools and The British Council International Schools Award.
- The school's curriculum is vibrant and exciting. Pupils told inspectors that learning was enjoyable and interesting. 'We don't just do literacy and numeracy,' said one pupil speaking for many, 'we learn about everything and there is always more to learn.' There is appropriate emphasis placed on reading, writing and mathematics in all subjects so that pupils have opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in different contexts.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully across the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have opportunities throughout the curriculum to develop their knowledge of British values, including learning about radicalisation and extremism. Pupils engage in collaborative problem-solving activities and they learn how to value and act upon differences of opinion.
- Good use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is having an increasingly positive impact on accelerating the rates of progress of eligible pupils. Governors ensure that individual cases are taken into account when monies are allocated. They actively seek solutions, based upon identified best practice, on what more can be done

to improve the attendance of the very small number of pupils who do not yet attend regularly. Expenditure is accurately analysed to increase its effectiveness even further. However, the attendance of a small number of disadvantaged pupils is still below that of other pupils.

- The school makes effective use of the physical education and sport premium. Leaders closely monitor the spending to ensure that it successfully contributes to pupils' involvement in competitive sports, team games and the development of teachers' skills in teaching physical education. Any pupils demonstrating a particular talent have plenty of opportunities to represent the school in competitive sport. This has proved so popular that 'B' teams give all pupils a chance of participating in inter-schools sporting events.
- The school tackles any issues of discrimination and fosters good relationships with parents. This promotes equality of opportunity successfully and contributes to pupils feeling valued.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved considerably since the last inspection. Governors are passionate about the school and make a valuable contribution to school improvement through systematic and frequent checks on the school's work. Governors set suitable targets for the headteacher.
- Governors now hold all staff to account for the progress pupils make. Members of the governing body know the school's strengths and areas for development.
- The governing body is well led and managed. Members undertake roles that closely match their skills. The governing body has reviewed many of its practices and is now working efficiently, providing both challenge and support to the school.
- The governors update the school's policies and website regularly and ensure that they meet statutory requirements. They manage finances effectively through the close scrutiny of all aspects of budget planning and the impact of such spending on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders routinely update governors about the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, governors are in a position to support the headteacher's decisions about teacher pay increases. They are clear about the steps the school needs to take to address any aspects of underperformance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The protocols used by staff to safeguard pupils are effective. Policies are up to date and reflect local and national guidance. Staff are well trained in child protection and supported by good systems of record-keeping and communication with other agencies. Leaders treat incidents relating to pupils' safety thoughtfully and follow appropriate procedures. The school deals with fixed-term exclusions sensitively with the correct 'return to school' support given.
- Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are safe. They work relentlessly at raising awareness and keep pupils and parents informed of the potential dangers of abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. They are vigilant about the

whereabouts of the very few pupils who do not attend school regularly to ensure their safety. The curriculum promotes and develops pupils' understanding of the issues around personal safety. Pupils discuss these matters in an open and honest way. As a result, they can understand and identify the potential danger signs of, for example, exploitation.

- Displays around the school warning pupils of cyber bullying and peer pressure raise their awareness of safeguarding and encourage debate. Pupils are encouraged to use 'worry boxes' should they have any concerns. They know who to see if they have any issues that they need to discuss. Parents say that their children are safe in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good across the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when teaching required improvement. The strong relationships between teachers and their pupils engender a safe learning environment where pupils are confident to ask for further explanations if they have not understood a particular concept. Classrooms are orderly and stimulating environments for learning. All groups of pupils are keen to learn and regularly aim to do their best.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils should know and can do have improved since the last inspection. They are aware of the skills that different groups of pupils need to acquire to make accelerated progress. This is a direct result of the good professional training they receive from subject leaders and outside providers. The secure progress of the most able, disadvantaged and the most able disadvantaged pupils is the positive impact. Teachers consistently challenge the most able pupils' learning, including those pupils who are disadvantaged, in reading, writing and mathematics. They ask questions that challenge their mathematical reasoning, such as giving them an answer and then asking them what possible questions might be asked.
- Pupils' work in lessons and in books shows that teachers have high expectations. The presentation of work is neat and in line with the school's presentation policy. Teachers ensure that pupils have understood concepts by consistently asking them to repeat what they have learned in order to clarify any misconceptions. This has a positive impact on the learning of different groups.
- Pupils are excited about their learning. For example, pupils in Year 4 talked enthusiastically about weather across the world and the opportunities they have to conduct their own televised weather forecasts. This helps to develop their confidence to speak in front of an audience. Pupils really enjoy the many opportunities given for group work as they are able to help one another and discuss their views and opinions on the topics taught.
- Teachers make good use of their knowledge of pupils' starting points and track the gains that they have made in their learning. They adjust content according to what their pupils know, understand and can do. Nevertheless, some teachers have not given sufficient attention to the weaknesses in the spelling and handwriting skills of several lower attaining disadvantaged pupils in Years 3 and 4.
- Lower attaining and disadvantaged pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not consistently reminded how to hold their pencils correctly, form their letters and spell key words accurately in some lessons. This prevents them from being able to keep up with their

peers when completing writing tasks.

- The school's monitoring of teaching over time shows that staff maintain strong relationships with pupils and manage pupils' behaviour well. Staff create a positive ethos for learning in classes by celebrating pupils' achievements, providing good use of realistic praise, encouragement and feedback on how well pupils are doing. This is consistent with the school's marking and feedback policy.
- Skilled teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils who find learning difficult. For example, they use individualised and personalised programmes to support pupils of all abilities including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able. Teaching assistants are flexible in their work and contribute well to the teaching of phonics. This helps those pupils who have low starting points in their reading to improve their reading skills and to have improved access to the curriculum.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is thorough. The most able pupils, including the disadvantaged most able, are given challenging problem-solving tasks in mathematics and are required to write at length in different subjects. The teaching of reading is particularly strong, especially for lower attaining pupils who previously struggled with matching letters to sounds. Particular attention is paid to ensuring that pupils of all abilities can find information in texts and that they understand the meaning of the author's choice of words to create mood and tension.

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 many opportunities to develop their musical, artistic and sporting skills. They recently took part in the United Kingdom Junior Mathematical Challenge and learned how to compete against other schools. Year 5 pupils took part in 'make fivers flourish' and developed their entrepreneurial skills by investing their money in making cakes for sale so that they could support Age UK Solihull. This has a positive impact on their personal development because they learn about caring for others.
- The school's focus on teaching pupils how to persevere in learning is having a positive impact as pupils are aware of what they need to do to be successful learners, manage distractions and improve their performance. They know that they have individual differences and that not everyone learns in the same way. Strong relationships between teachers and pupils have ensured that pupils are not afraid to ask for help when they need it.
- Classrooms are safe environments for learning. The school's welcoming and caring ethos is central to its work in promoting the welfare and safety of all pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged to ask questions, work in teams to solve problems and help one another to learn. This develops an ethos of achievement in classrooms where everyone's opinion is valued because it contributes to learning.
- Pupils learn about British values. They reflect upon rights, responsibilities of living in a democratic country and treating people with respect and dignity regardless of race creed or sexual orientation. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their future lives in modern Britain. Pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged most able and disadvantaged pupils, have made their own films about aspects of school life and are

regular contributors to the school's website. They enjoy the opportunities to develop their skills of 'street dance', debating about fair trade and participating in residential visits all of which develop their social skills very effectively.

- Pupils benefit from the good pastoral care provided by all members of staff and external agencies. Pupils enjoy learning because of the consistent application of the behaviour policy, routines and high expectations of all staff.
- Parents are pleased with their children's personal development and say that the school is a safe place. The school's values of 'Aspire, Adapt and Accept' permeate all aspects of the school's work and contribute to pupils' good personal development.
- Good transition arrangements ensure that all groups of pupils in Year 3 learn how to identify emotions when faced with unfamiliar situations. This contributed well to their personal development, as they were able to explore their feelings about moving to a new school.
- Staff encourage pupils to be kind, honest, respectful towards others and to do their best. This promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and contributes to their good learning and progress. Pupils appreciate different cultures and celebrate a wide range of religious festivals, reflecting modern Britain.
- Many pupils develop self-confidence through the varied leadership opportunities that they have. For example, pupils develop early leadership skills by being eco-rangers, house captains and classroom monitors. As a result of the effective promotion of British values, pupils recognise prejudiced behaviour and how people can feel isolated as a result of being different.
- Throughout the school, pupils are polite and courteous; they take responsibility for their actions and create a harmonious school community. Staff's vigilance ensures that incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils say that staff deal with bullying quickly and appropriately.
- Staff ensure pupils' safety by undertaking thorough risk assessments, checking up on those pupils who arrive late to school and reminding all pupils of the dangers of the internet if not used appropriately. Pupils are taught how to take care of themselves when not accompanied by an adult and not to talk to strangers nor give out their mobile numbers and email addresses.
- Pupils say that there is always a trusted adult that they can go to should they have any worries.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Exclusions are diminishing. The school follows appropriate procedures for integrating pupils with behaviour issues back into school and supports them after they have been excluded.
- Pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school contributes to a calm environment. For example, in the canteen pupils chat happily and politely to one another and to the midday supervisors.
- Pupils say that the typical behaviour in school is good and their parents agree. In lessons and other activities, pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They show respect to their teachers and to one another. Most of the pupils' written work in all subjects shows both pride and effort, with the most able pupils writing in depth about their learning.

- Pupils' attendance is just below the national average but it is improving. This is due to the correct targeting of pupil premium funds and the work of the staff in the attendance office. Pupils usually arrive well prepared for lessons and only a few disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are persistently absent. The school is working hard at engaging parents so that they see the value of sending their children to school. However, a small number of parents do not make sure that their child attends school regularly.
- The school makes good use of the primary physical education and sport funding for outdoor activities and inter-school sports where every year group takes part. These contribute to the development of pupils' team-building skills and personal skills as well as to their physical fitness, health and well-being.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, outcomes for all groups of pupils have improved. This is due to the headteacher introducing tighter systems of accountability in measuring progress.
- All groups of pupils, including the most able, the disadvantaged most able, disadvantaged pupils, those of lower prior attainment needing to catch-up and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points in most subjects.
- Staff are quick at identifying any gaps in learning and immediately act upon them. This results in almost all groups of pupils doing well from their different starting points. However, the lower attaining and disadvantaged pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not do as well as other pupils in spelling and writing.
- Bespoke interventions aimed at reducing barriers to learning and accelerating progress effectively support pupils who are disadvantaged, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those needing to catch up quickly, most-able pupils and the disadvantaged most able pupils. As a result, the majority of the pupils in these groups do well across a range of subjects.
- The most able pupils write and read in depth about the topics they study. They are consistently stretched to deepen their learning. Suitable computer software supports pupils' learning well. For example, pupils in Year 6 have made their own animations.
- In 2015, pupils at the end of Year 6 achieved standards that were high in writing and broadly average in reading and mathematics. These pupils were well prepared for their next stage of learning. Standards were below the national average in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Girls marginally attained better standards than boys in writing. However, boys' attainment was higher in mathematics. The lowest performing group was that of a very small number of below average attainers needing to catch up in reading, writing, and mathematics, and grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- In 2015, disadvantaged pupils were nearly two terms behind in mathematics and a term and a half behind in reading. Differences had virtually diminished in writing. The biggest difference was in grammar, punctuation and spelling where disadvantaged pupils were a year and a term behind other pupils nationally. The most able pupils made good progress and just narrowly missed the national figures for making more than expected progress in reading and mathematics.
- The effective use of pupil premium funding has seen an improvement in the performance of disadvantaged pupils. These pupils, as well as those who have special

educational needs and/or disabilities, are now making good progress. This is especially evident in mathematics where higher attaining disadvantaged pupils are gaining fluency in mental strategies as well as their reasoning skills. These pupils are now achieving well by the time that they leave Year 6.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress in relation to their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics, English grammar punctuation and spelling.
- The school's current unvalidated 2016 data shows that pupils continue to achieve well in writing, with most pupils attaining the expected age-related outcomes in reading and mathematics. From broadly average starting points this represents good progress and reflects the work seen in pupils' books.
- The work in pupils' books and the school's records show that due to improved teaching and stringent systems aimed at improving progress, the achievement of all groups of pupils is improving rapidly. This is because staff are fully aware of the skills that they have to teach to accelerate the progress of different groups of pupils. Nevertheless, there is still some work to be done to ensure that below-average attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 are challenged further to improve their letter formation skills, handwriting and spelling.
- The work of the most able pupils, as seen in the school's tracking information, shows that they are making good progress in working at greater depth within the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading, they are able to confidently locate answers within paragraphs using detailed information and evidence from the text. In mathematics, they offer detailed information as to how they arrived at a particular answer – demonstrating their reasoning skills. They are skilful in writing at length, selecting words for effect with correct subject–verb agreement.
- In science, pupils can work scientifically asking questions and looking for patterns to support their answers. They have good skills of observation and can accurately identify parts of the body and their related functions. In geography, they have secure mapping skills and know about the different temperatures of the world.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in music, which they thoroughly enjoy, especially composing music for when using the steel pan drums.

School details

Unique reference number	104066
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10009248

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	467
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jacqui Sennett
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Hobden
Telephone number	0121 7472247
Website	www.cbjs.co.uk
Email address	office@cbjs.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 March 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected nationally for pupils' attainment and progress in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school is a larger than average junior school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school is a member of the Unity Trust of schools based in north Solihull.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited one act of collective worship and 14 lessons with senior leaders. They undertook a series of learning walks around the school and observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes.
- Samples of pupils' work across a range of different subjects were examined. Inspectors heard pupils of different abilities read.
- Inspectors looked at the school's tracking information to evaluate the progress pupils are making in different subjects.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and subject leaders, governors and the school's improvement partner. Inspectors also held meetings with a small group of pupils to discuss their learning and progress across different subjects.
- The views were considered of 125 pupils who completed questionnaires online.
- Inspectors took account of the 36 responses of parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at 22 staff responses in their completed online questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including: records of governors' visits to the school; safeguarding policies and procedures; records of behaviour and attendance figures; the summary evaluation of the school's work; the school development plan and the headteacher's monitoring of teaching and learning.

Inspection team

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Malam	Ofsted Inspector
John Bates	Ofsted Inspector

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