

East Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	104308
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	377058
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Lewis

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	668
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracy Doughty
Headteacher	Nicholas Sullivan
Date of previous school inspection	22 October 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Lewis	Additional inspector
Richard Barnard	Additional inspector
Brenda Jones	Additional inspector
Janet Dinsmore	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 30 lessons led by 24 different teachers for a total of 14 hours. They heard pupils read and talked with them about their work. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They held meetings with senior staff, teaching assistants, the head of the hearing resource base and the Chair of the Governing Body. They talked with parents and carers and with groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including the data the school holds about pupils' progress, self-evaluation, school development planning and safeguarding documents and practices. Inspectors scrutinised 213 parental questionnaires and those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This very large primary school was formed in January 2011 out of two separate infant and junior schools on the same site. Although the infant school was deemed outstanding at its last inspection, the junior school was put into special measures and subsequently found to be making insufficient progress. After the two schools merged, there were considerable changes to staffing and a new leadership team put in place in March 2011. The majority of pupils are of White British origin, though the proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There is an above average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including 18 with a statement of special educational needs. The school has specialist resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This provides currently for 14 pupils who are deaf.

The school does not meet the current floor standard, whereby the government sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. At the time of the 2011 assessments, pupils had only been on its roll for just over a term.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school that is rapidly improving. Effective senior leaders have transformed the learning environment and recruited a strong staff team in a very short time.
- Achievement is satisfactory. However, whatever their starting points, backgrounds or needs, pupils have made accelerated progress in their reading and writing skills. Year 6 pupils are very close to the standards expected for their age, having been considerably below these levels when the schools merged.
- Children get off to a good start in the nursery. They make strongest progress in communication, language and literacy and their personal development because of the continuous support for these areas of learning.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good; they are proud of their school and try hard to keep to its rules. They say they feel very safe within it.
- Pupils are making accelerated progress in their mathematics work and particularly in their calculation skills. However, not all teachers systematically reinforce these skills in subjects other than mathematics and so they miss opportunities for improving pupils' problem solving and numeracy skills further.
- Teaching is satisfactory, but rapidly improving. The many newly qualified staff and those in training have been supported very well indeed by the ways in which the leadership team has deployed its more experienced staff.
- Staff plan carefully so that the work they give to pupils is generally well matched to their needs. Occasionally, this is not so and pupils all have the same things to do or they are not challenged to think enough in all parts of lessons.
- Pupils who are deaf are included well in lessons and say how much they love school. They make good progress in their communication skills such as in their use of British Sign Language.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all groups of pupils have more opportunities for using and applying their mathematical and problem-solving skills in the different subjects of the curriculum.
- By December 2012, improve the quality of teaching, so that at least 80% of lessons are good or better at each key stage by ensuring that:
 - the pace, challenge and activities in all parts of lessons meet the needs of all learners
 - all teachers involve pupils more actively in the whole class part of lessons through skilful use of questioning and a better balance of pupil and teacher talk
 - teachers check more consistently on pupils' understanding and skills in lessons.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory and rapidly improving. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are making accelerated progress. Despite not reaching floor standards in 2011, pupils in Year 6 achieved higher levels in English and mathematics than expected. Current Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are making similarly accelerated progress. They are in line to exceed their targets and reach standards closer to the national average by the end of Year 6. New whole school approaches in literacy, including more opportunities to write at length, are raising standards across the school and giving pupils confidence in expressing their ideas. Analysis of the school's data reveals no differences in the progress of different groups including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. Parents and carers are very positive about their children's progress, praising particularly the ways in which this has improved for older pupils since East Park became a primary school.

Children enter the nursery with skills that are generally below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and particularly in their early reading and writing skills, in their communication and their personal development. Nevertheless, they perform slightly below average at the end of the Reception year. Pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrate a good range of approaches to sounding out words and working out meanings. They make good progress in their reading, and their attainment in English is broadly in line with that expected by the end of Key Stage 1. The faster progress made by pupils in Year 6 means that they too are attaining at the levels expected for their age in reading. Their progress in mathematics is accelerating but it is more variable: though satisfactory overall, it is not as strong as in English. There is a good focus on calculation and shape, size and

measure but too few planned opportunities to use and apply mathematical skills in other subjects.

Pupils with identified speech and language difficulties and those who have additional learning difficulties benefit from an emphasis on speaking and listening in classes, as do those who are deaf. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils because of the quality of interventions and support. Pupils who are deaf make good progress in their general communication skills, including their use of sign. Their progress in language and literacy, though satisfactory, is more variable. Although the support they have in lessons enables them to be included, they have only limited opportunities currently for regular individual sessions with a specialist teacher of the deaf to drive their language and literacy forward. Senior leaders have tried hard to recruit to deal with this.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory but rapidly improving as the new staff teams get used to pupils' needs, and whole-school mentoring and planning systems support their development. Pupils, parents and carers are very positive about the quality of teaching and the ways in which pupils and teachers treat each other with respect. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, and pupils rise to the challenge. Teaching is most successful when teachers have planned work for the whole class and different group sessions that match the next steps in all pupils' learning. For example, in an excellent Year 5 lesson about money, both more- and less-able pupils had work that challenged them and were engrossed throughout the lesson whether working by themselves or with the teacher. Excellent learning was promoted as the teacher constantly checked on how each was doing. Occasionally, lessons lack the right challenge for everyone when, for example, pupils of different abilities have the same task to do. Sometimes, teachers are too quick to provide answers or do not ask pupils questions that challenge them to work out things for themselves.

Teachers, sports coaches, learning mentors and teaching assistants, all work and plan together well so that pupils receive consistent messages about how they can achieve even more. Some practices, such as the marking scheme, are so new they are not yet fully embedded into everyone's practice. However, most teachers already use this well to help pupils understand how to improve their work. Pupils who are deaf are appropriately supported for their specialist needs in classrooms, such as through the use of sign language and radio aids. There is good attention to their listening needs. However, those who have additional learning needs do not always have access to other aids such as symbols to support their literacy and independent recall of what they have done. Good teaching supports good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where teachers nurture each child's confidence and disposition to learn well and provide systematic support for their self-expression, early numeracy and literacy skills.

The good curriculum includes a wide range of clubs and visits and many vibrant aspects such as Spanish and music which excite and absorb pupils. Some aspects are developing still but there is already a good emphasis on pupils applying and using their literacy, and information and communication technology skills. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures and beliefs, and the

strong personal, social and health education and religious education programmes support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school has worked tirelessly with pupils and parents and carers to deal with the behavioural issues many pupils manifested when Key Stage 2 pupils joined the school last year. It has transformed pupils' attitudes and behaviour and raised attendance so that it is now average and continuing to improve. This is because consistent messages are given to pupils. Discussions with pupils, including those who are deaf, show that they have a clear moral code as to what is or is not acceptable and think the rules are fair. Behaviour in lessons is almost always good and records show that behaviour rarely disrupts learning. In their replies to the inspection questionnaires, a few parents and carers indicated that they had concerns about behaviour, although the very large majority felt behaviour was good. Inspectors explored these issues, as well as making focused observations. The school's procedures for dealing with incidents and practices for supporting good behaviour were judged to be rigorous and behaviour and safety good. Incidents of bullying are rare but dealt with swiftly. Discussions with pupils indicate they are confident that when such incidents occur, they know they will be dealt with appropriately.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and of the risks that they face. They know about internet safety and the dangers of social networking sites and younger pupils understand about 'stranger danger'. Almost all say they feel very safe in the school and their parents and carers agree.

Leadership and management

The school is led and managed well. Parents and carers describe the headteacher as 'inspirational' and he has been tenacious in securing the people and resources necessary to move the school forward. The work achieved to date is impressive. The classrooms and grounds have been transformed so that they are safe, warm, inviting and include excellent resources so that pupils are really motivated to look after their school and are proud to be there. Behaviour is now good. Key Stage 2 pupils are demonstrating accelerated progress. This is because the school has used its teaching and other resources wisely. It has recruited a team with a huge sense of ambition and commitment to improvement. The capacity to improve further is good. The newness of some staff means that elements of middle management are still to be developed but this is planned for and the allocation of responsibilities is clear. The senior leadership team has an excellent range of skills which are used well to drive improvement. Governance is good. The governing body fully understands the school's development needs and holds it to account well.

There are effective systems for tackling underachievement, securing equality and preventing discrimination. Pupils' progress and experiences are monitored very carefully. Any difficulties are identified early and addressed. The school works well with external agencies such as the local multi-agency teams, the speech and language therapist and the sensory support teams. This ensures that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or whose circumstances make them vulnerable are included effectively. Many staff have taken qualifications in British

Sign Language to help them meet the needs of pupils who are deaf. Pupils who are deaf enjoy this and all pupils like the signed songs and poems that are a prominent feature of school life. The good curriculum excites pupils with its more creative elements. An excellent range of clubs develops pupils' social skills and curiosity well. The breakfast and after-school club reinforces pupils' social and physical development and their awareness of the environment in fun ways. It is highly valued by parents and carers. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, with particular strengths in developing self and social awareness, pupils' understanding of right and wrong and of other cultures.

Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. The school works very well with parents, carers and outside agencies to secure the safety and well-being of the pupils in their care.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Park Primary School, Wolverhampton, WV1 2DS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you. Thank you too to those of you who read to us and talked with us. It was pleasing to hear how much you enjoy school and like your teachers. You also told us how much you like your headteacher and that you think the school has improved a lot lately. We found that your school is satisfactory and it is improving quickly because of all the new things that the headteacher and his team have done. These are some of the other things we found out about your school.

- Those of you in Key Stage 2 who moved in from East Park Junior School are now making fast progress.
- The youngest children get off to a good start in the nursery and you all are making good progress in your speaking and listening.
- Your behaviour is good and you are very polite and respectful to your teachers and helpful to each other.
- You feel safe and know that if there are any squabbles or teasing, your teachers will quickly sort it out.
- You join in with your lessons well and try hard to work things out for yourself.
- You enjoy all the different activities provided for you, including visits out of school, music and the activities you have at lunchtime.

We have asked your headteacher and the governing body to do two things to make your school even better:

- to make the teaching better by checking more on your work during lessons, making sure you have work that is always at the right level for each of you and by giving you more opportunities to join in lessons
- to provide you with more opportunities to practise your mathematical skills in other subjects.

All of you can help by continuing to come to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Susan Lewis
Lead inspector

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