

Eaton Valley Primary School

Dagger Lane, West Bromwich, B71 4BU

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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.

- Since the last full inspection, pupils' progress has accelerated rapidly. Pupils now achieve well throughout the school and many make outstanding progress.
- Teaching has improved considerably over the past year. Some is now outstanding and nearly all is consistently good.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered and behave well. Rare examples of bullying are dealt with well by the school. Pupils feel safe at school and are taught how to keep themselves free from harm.
- Pupils of all backgrounds work and play happily together. Attendance has risen significantly and is now average.
- Leaders ensure that all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are fostered well. There are good opportunities to reflect in assemblies and to discuss moral and social issues in lessons.
- All leaders, including the governing body, have been relentless in their drive for improvement. Rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and careful checking on pupils' progress have ensured that pupils now receive a good standard of education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Few pupils attain higher than the expected levels for their age, especially in writing.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding and there remains a very small proportion that requires improvement.
- The system for monitoring and evaluating pupils' achievement is only fully developed in English and mathematics.
- Not all leaders have fully developed their skills of monitoring, evaluating and improving the work of the school.
- Some of the plans for improvement do not have measurable achievement outcomes and are not focused sharply enough on the main areas which will continue to raise pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors heard pupils reading and observed 18 lessons. Nearly all of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with staff, pupils, a representative of the local authority and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspectors looked at the school's plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, work in pupils' books, the school's monitoring information, school policies and governing body documentation.
- There were 12 responses to Parent View at the time of the inspection. These views were taken into account by inspectors, along with responses to the school's own parent and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Roy Bowers, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jeffery Plumb

Additional inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- In March 2011 the school was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading or governing the school were not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. Since that time, the school has received three monitoring inspections by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Approximately one quarter of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is more than in most other schools.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language is well-above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The needs of all these pupils are mainly related to moderate learning difficulties.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils who attain higher than the expected levels for their age, especially in writing, by:
 - ensuring that in all lessons the more able pupils receive work that is matched to their ability
 - providing more opportunities for the more able pupils to apply their writing and mathematical skills in many situations across the curriculum.
- Ensure that all teaching is consistently good and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have the subject knowledge to enable them to break down the learning into stages
 - ensuring that in all lessons there is a clear focus on learning and teachers guide pupils through small learning steps.
- Ensure that the system for monitoring and evaluation of pupils' achievement is fully developed in all subjects.
- Ensure that all leaders fully develop the skills of monitoring, evaluating and improving the work of the school.
- Ensure that all plans for improvement have measurable achievement outcomes and are focused sharply on the main areas which will continue to raise pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's level of skills and knowledge on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is lower than that usually expected for this age group, and much lower in communication and language skills. Nearly all children rapidly settle into the routines of the school and even the youngest children quickly learn to share and take turns. Children of all backgrounds and abilities make good progress. They move into Year 1 with attainment that is just below average.
- Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2. They have a good knowledge of how to blend letters to make sounds and use this well to improve their reading and writing skills. Pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 is rising and is currently very close to average.
- During the last school year, pupils' progress throughout Key Stage 2 accelerated rapidly. Currently, the proportion of pupils who have the knowledge and skills expected for their age is average in nearly all year groups and slightly above in some. However, few pupils exceed the expected levels for their age, especially in writing.
- Improvements to the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those supported at school action and school action plus, ensure that these groups make similar progress to other pupils. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants, who use specialist resources so these pupils also make good progress.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively by the school to provide additional support for children who are looked-after and those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, ensuring that they also achieve well. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make as much progress as their peers.
- Pupils are now making good progress in reading and some older pupils read widely. Nearly all the pupils spoken to said that they enjoy reading in school and many said that they regularly read at home. Pupils are proud that they were winners of the local inter-school reading competition.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last full inspection. Most teaching is now of good quality and a small minority is outstanding. In most lessons, all pupils are challenged well. However, in a few lessons, especially writing, the work given to the more able pupils is too easy and does not enable them to develop their skills beyond those expected for their age.
- In lessons where the quality of teaching is less than good, it is mainly because: lessons have no clear focus on learning; teachers do not have the subject knowledge to enable them to break down the learning into stages; and pupils are not guided through small learning steps.
- In all classes, relationships are strong and caring. Teachers and pupils treat each other with respect and courtesy. Pupils are eager to answer questions and, when working with others, they cooperate and support each other well.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those supported by the pupil premium

funding and those who are learning English as an additional language often benefit from support from well-trained and skilled teaching assistants.

- All teachers plan activities that promote pupils' writing and mathematical skills in all subjects. Over the past year, this has developed well, especially for pupils of middle and lower levels of attainment. However, the activities given to the more able pupils do not stretch them sufficiently because they do not allow them to apply their skills in a variety of situations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's calm and harmonious atmosphere is the result of strong relationships and pupils' consistently positive attitudes to learning. Improved teaching is reflected in the decline in low-level disruption in lessons. This is now extremely rare.
- There is no discrimination. The emphasis given to improving achievement and personal development of all groups of pupils, regardless of background or ability, shows the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The school's own surveys, and responses to Parent View, show that most parents and carers believe that behaviour is usually good and any instances of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with well. Discussions with pupils and other inspection evidence confirm these views.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Initiatives to encourage independence and safety, such as the Forest School programme, help pupils to develop an understanding of risk in the local area. Pupils in Year 1 are provided with road safety training and older pupils benefit from sex and relationships education.
- Pupils of all ages are taught how to keep safe and how to prevent bullying. Older pupils can talk about types of bullying, such as racist bullying and cyber-bullying. Those pupils spoken to said that incidents of bullying are extremely rare and they know what to do if they feel threatened or upset. They have every confidence in their teachers to protect them and keep them from harm.
- The school's rapid response to pupils' absence, the many rewards offered for good attendance and punctuality, and the regular reminders in assemblies and newsletters have resulted in a year-on-year improvement in attendance and a decline in the proportion of persistent absentees. Two years ago, attendance was exceptionally low. It is now average and nearly all pupils arrive on time.

The leadership and management are good

- The commitment and determination of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff and the governing body to improve the life-chances of all groups of pupils is evident in all the actions taken by the school.
- The headteacher's strong leadership and her relentless drive to raise pupils' achievement through eradicating inadequate teaching and improving pupils' learning throughout the school are the main reasons why the school has shown rapid and substantial improvement since being placed into special measures.
- Procedures to manage the performance of staff, regular monitoring of pupils' progress, effective staff training and new teaching appointments have improved teaching from

inadequate to good.

- Some school leaders are recently appointed and are taking opportunities to improve their skills of monitoring the pupils' progress, looking for patterns and trends which indicate strengths and weaknesses, and evaluating pupils' learning through data analysis, checking pupils' work in books and observing learning in lessons. However, for some of the leaders, these skills are not yet fully developed.
- Some plans for improvement do not have measurable achievement outcomes and are often mainly lists of tasks to undertake rather than focusing sharply on the main areas which will continue to raise pupils' achievement.
- Because of the emphasis that the school has correctly placed on raising pupils' achievement in English and mathematics, the system for monitoring and evaluating pupils' achievement in other subjects is not fully developed.
- The local authority's support for the school since the school was placed into special measures has been very effective. As the school's leadership and management have developed, the local authority has correctly reduced its guidance. Although still monitored by the local authority, the school now takes full responsibility for all strategic and day-to-day decisions.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has improved significantly and is now effective
 - fulfils its duties well and, with the guidance of the local authority, is rigorous in setting and reviewing the headteacher's leadership and management objectives
 - is well informed by the headteacher's reports, which include analyses of pupils' progress information
 - ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements
 - makes important financial decisions, including how pupil premium funding is spent, based upon improving outcomes for pupils
 - challenges the school well and holds senior leaders to account for pupils' achievement.

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	103923
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	393577

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	364
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Smith
Headteacher	Susan Ramsay
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2011
Telephone number	0121 5531593
Fax number	0121 5252313
Email address	office@eatonvalley.sandwell.sch.uk

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