

Sutton Park Community Primary School

Greatfield Road, Kidderminster, DY11 6PH

Inspection dates 7–8 November 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.

- The school has improved a lot since the last inspection 18 months ago. Pupils' test marks have caught up with other schools and now they make good progress as they move through the school. By the time they leave in Year 6, pupils are a term ahead of pupils in other schools, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils with special needs, including those in the autism base and the two language units, also make good progress due to the high-quality support they receive.
- Pupils are well behaved in class and in the playground. They play well together outside and concentrate in lessons.
- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding throughout the school, which is why the pupils are making good progress. If a pupil falls behind with their work they get extra help to catch up.
- The headteacher has made a big difference in the school in a short space of time. She has sorted things out, made sure that teaching has improved and is always checking to make sure that all the pupils are making good progress.
- The governors are doing a good job to support the headteacher. They make sure they check that improvement plans are on track, that all the pupils are making progress, that the headteacher is rewarding teachers for their hard work and that extra government money is well spent.
- The school goes to great lengths to involve all pupils fully in its daily life, including those from the autism base and language units.
- Parents think that the school has improved a lot since it was last inspected and can see how much their children have come on.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of pupils' writing is not always as good as their reading and mathematics. It is taking longer for them to catch up in writing because of their underachievement over the past few years.

Information about this inspection

- This school has been visited by the same HMI three times since it became subject to special measures in March 2011. On this fourth visit, the same HMI judges it now to be a good school.
- The inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed 13 teachers, and other adults such as specialist teaching assistants who were teaching at the time of the inspection.
- Inspectors visited and assessed the provision in the three specialist units based in the school.
- Inspectors listened to some Year 2 and Year 6 pupils read and scrutinised their literacy books, numeracy books and home school diaries.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior staff, members of the governing body, the same group of parents spoken to on each of the previous monitoring visits, staff and pupils, a group of outside professionals who regularly work with the school, and a representative of the local authority who knows the school well.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors checked the arrangements to safeguard pupils, and related records.
- Inspectors looked at the school development plan and self-evaluation document. They also scrutinised the school's own pupil progress monitoring data, and records for the performance management of staff.

Inspection team

Clive Kempton, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rowena Green

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

- This is an average-sized primary school with specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs in three specialist units:
 - an autism base for up to eight pupils on the autistic spectrum
 - the Wyre Forest Nursery language unit for 16 part-time nursery-aged pupils from the area who need extra help to develop their speech and language
 - the mainstream language unit for 10 pupils.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery class for three-year-olds who attend part-time and a Reception class for four-year-olds.
- Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra government funding (the pupil premium) is average.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. The proportion supported by school action is below the national average. The main areas of additional need include speech, language or communication difficulties.
- A large number of teachers have left or joined the school in the last two years. Staffing is now more stable.
- The school meets the current government floor targets, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve writing across the school so that standards are above average by:
 - creating exciting opportunities for pupils to write for a purpose, in different styles and for a specific audience
 - improving pupils' spelling by using a range of methods, including letter sounds, and making sure all teachers correct misspelt words in pupils' books
 - improving pupils' handwriting and the way they hold a pen, by making sure they all learn how to do the same style of joined-up writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils, including those eligible for additional government funding, make good progress. Those in the language units and the autism base and other pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs also make good progress because they receive high-quality specialist support and are fully included in the life of the school. The school regularly checks how much progress pupils are making, so it knows which pupils are struggling and need a bit of extra help. This extra help makes sure individuals get the right support to get them back on track.
- Many children start the Nursery with fewer skills and knowledge than children in other schools. They need a lot of help with their personal and social skills. The good teaching soon addresses this and children start the Reception Year able to work on their own and with each other without so much help from the teacher.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time pupils get to the end of Year 2 they have learned a lot and have nearly caught up with pupils in other schools. Their writing is a strength, and those who have problems with their speech and language become much more confident to speak in full sentences.
- Pupils make even better progress in Key Stage 2. When they leave school in Year 6 their test marks are better than those of pupils in most schools. They have managed to catch up and in some cases overtake other schools. Their work in reading and mathematics is especially good, but not their writing. Overall, this shows how much progress they have made in reading and mathematics since they started the school in the Nursery. Pupils' writing, including spelling and handwriting, is not quite as good yet because they started further behind, although they are catching up quickly now.
- The teaching and the leadership of the school have improved. Pupils make such good progress because the teaching has got better in every class and the headteacher and senior staff make sure no pupil gets behind with their work. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and want to come to school.
- All pupils learn to read well. The group reading sessions with the teachers are very well organised. The weakest readers can sound out the letters and try hard to read the sounds that groups of letters make. They are confident to read aloud to an adult and often get help from an adult at home who listens to them read. The more confident pupils read with fluency and some expression. They read other books at home apart from their school books, often inspired by their parent or carer's love of reading. Pupils' reading skills help them to enjoy other learning, like looking up information in books and on the internet for their topic work.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved a lot since the last inspection. Improving the quality of teaching is a high priority in the school. Individual teachers are supported by experts from the local authority, by the senior staff in the school, and by other teachers sharing their own good practice. Poor-quality teaching is not tolerated and as a result teaching is improving all the time.
- All the teaching is good or outstanding, which is why pupils are making such good progress. At its best, inspectors observed lively lessons with exciting activities. The pupils were totally gripped

by the things they were learning and behaved well. An outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson was full of number challenges. In a Year 4 lesson, the pupils travelled on a pretend time machine to the Victorian age, where they found out information. In the Reception class, the children painted an outdoor dinosaur den with water. The good teaching and exciting lessons are making pupils want to come to school. They do not want to miss anything.

- Teachers mark books regularly. They work hard to make sure that marking books tells them how each pupil is getting on and whether they have understood the work. The books show that there is not yet enough insistence on joined-up writing or correction of misspelt words. Pupils spell words by the sound of the letters, but have not learned enough ways of spelling more difficult words, for example those that have a silent letter. More teachers are now writing comments in pupils' books to get them to respond and make improvements in their next piece of work.
- Teachers plan well for lessons. They make sure that the work is interesting and all pupils go on visits out of school to have first-hand experience, for example a visit to Blists Hill Museum as part of their work on the Victorians. Pupils use computers and cameras and work on their own and in small groups. Teachers' good plans make sure that all pupils get the work that is right for them; the able pupils have work that stretches them, and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs get work that challenges them in appropriate ways. This is why all pupils are making good progress.
- Teaching assistants are used well by all the teachers to help pupils make progress. They play an active role in lessons and help to make learning exciting and to improve pupils' test marks.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons has improved a lot over the last 18 months. This is because lessons are more interesting and school is more fun. Good behaviour is rewarded and pupils move up a colour-zone board when they behave well. They are very proud to have a lunch with the headteacher when they reach the gold zone. Pupils want to learn, so they concentrate hard and behave well.
- Outside in the playground, behaviour is much calmer now. Pupils play well with each other and enjoy using the play equipment and the new markings on the playground, some of which helps to develop their mathematics or social skills. There are now hardly any lunchtime incidents recorded in the log books, and no pupils have been excluded from school for their bad behaviour for a long time.
- There is little bullying in the school. Pupils say that they cannot remember the last time anyone got upset because they were being bullied. This is because the teachers quickly sort out any issues and get parents involved straight away. The only bullying that pupils could think of is occasional name calling when friends fall out.
- Pupils of all backgrounds get on well together. There have been no racial issues in the school.
- Some pupils have made huge progress with their behaviour and social skills. The teachers quickly spot which pupils need extra help to improve their behaviour. They work hard with individual pupils and their parents until their behaviour improves. Their improved behaviour helps them to make friends and make good progress with their school work.
- Pupils' attendance has improved. When the school was last inspected attendance was below average, but it is now above average. This is a great achievement. The school has worked hard with parents and carers to tell them how important it is to get their children to school every day.

Pupils want to come to school more too, because school is fun and they know they are learning more now.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's leadership is good. She is respected by parents and pupils and has done a good job to improve the school from needing special measures 18 months ago to being a good school now. There have been a lot of staff changes over the last two years, but the headteacher has high expectations of all the teachers and has made sure that they get better and better.
- Individual teachers get good support. The experienced and skilled deputy headteacher works with individual teachers to help them become even better. Some teachers are also well supported by experts from the local authority who visit lots of schools to help individuals.
- Other leaders are good too. The headteacher is well supported by a good team of other senior staff. They share the responsibility for improving the school and all have specific jobs. All the leaders help to make sure that the teaching and support staff are happy and well trained, get help when they need it and enjoy working at Sutton Park.
- The headteacher and senior staff do lots of checking. The most important check, every half term, is that all pupils are making good progress with their work. If they are not, then individual pupils get extra help straight away. For example, one teacher works with pupils to help them catch up with their mathematics work. The data proves that these pupils make outstanding progress in these sessions. The headteacher knows that writing across the school should be better, especially for the older pupils, and this is the next area to tackle. All this checking is helping the school to improve.
- The school makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are inspired in some lessons by exciting work, for example teachers and pupils dressing up in role, autumn poems created after a sensory walk in the forest school, and using their mathematical skills to count traffic outside the school. They know the difference between right and wrong and play well together. They go on residential trips where they can get to know themselves and each other better, and have lots of visits to help them with their work.
- Pupils are learning more subjects now. To start with, the school rightly had to focus on English and mathematics as the pupils were so behind with their work. Now that these subjects are quickly improving, the children are doing more creative things, including school plays, going on trips, and enjoying their parents coming into school to work with them on family learning days and helping them with homework projects. The curriculum is much more interesting now, with many more activities for the pupils to enjoy.
- The local authority has provided good support and has checked each term that the school is making progress. As time has gone on and the school has improved, the headteacher and senior staff have shown that they can make further improvements with less outside support. There is also no longer a need for one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools to come back each term to check that the school is improving.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are committed to supporting the headteacher in continuing to improve the school. They get the training they need to ask the headteacher challenging questions, so they know how well the school is performing compared to other primary schools. They keep a close eye on how the school budget is spent. For example, they make sure the extra pupil premium money helps pupils who need extra help, and that the headteacher rewards the right teachers

for their hard work, based on the impact they have on helping pupils learn. They also make sure that the school is a safe place for the pupils and that it meets government requirements to safeguard pupils.

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	135075
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	398973

This inspection of the school 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	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penny Cooper
Headteacher	Marie Buckland
Date of previous school inspection	30–31 March 2011
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