

# Glenthorne Community Primary School

Glenthorne Drive, Cheslyn Hay, Walsall, WS6 7BZ

**Inspection dates** 8–9 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although recent changes in senior leadership have led to rapid improvements in teaching, this has not had enough time to lead to good achievement. The progress pupils make is not yet fast enough to raise attainment, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- Teaching still requires improvement in some classes. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, so the work set for them is not always hard enough to promote good progress.
- Adults who work with teachers in lessons are not always used well to help learning.
- Pupils do not always have enough responsibility for their own learning, for example by responding to teachers' marking.
- Although subject leaders are extending their roles, they are not yet making sure that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed across all subjects to raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Until recently, the governors have not held leaders and managers accountable for how good a job they are doing, and had not been involved enough in improving the school.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new leadership team has quickly gained the confidence of staff, pupils and parents, and is well placed to raise standards across the school.
- Parents are highly positive about the school, the new leaders and new teachers, and the stable environment now secured.
- Behaviour is good. There is a culture of mutual respect and pupils feel safe at all times. Pupils enjoy taking a lead in supporting each other.
- Pupils enjoy being at school, and say they are confident in the teachers' abilities to help them to learn and develop.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons, of which nine were jointly observed with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and observed learning assistants working with small groups. They looked at a wide sample of work completed by pupils. They also heard pupils reading.
- Discussions were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a range of leaders. This included the staff in charge of literacy and numeracy, the Early Years Foundation Stage, and support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They spoke with the local authority representative, and also took account of 11 responses to a staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at school planning, monitoring and evaluation documentation, including the school's own data and analysis of pupils' progress from when they joined the school, performance management information, safeguarding information and records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as responses to parental questionnaires provided by the school. They also met with parents.

## Inspection team

Paul Delbridge-Smith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Catherine Beeks	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Glenthorne is smaller than the average primary school. It caters for part-time Nursery children and provides additional care for Nursery-aged children in the afternoon.
- A new headteacher joined in January 2012, and a new deputy headteacher in September 2012. Before that an executive headteacher was in post for a term.
- Most pupils come from White British families.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is below average. The proportions supported through school action, school action plus or a statement of special educational needs are below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement to good or better by:
  - ensuring that all lesson activities are well planned to meet the different needs and abilities of all pupils, so they are challenged at the right level
  - providing training for support staff so they can make a consistently good contribution to learning, particularly for pupils with additional needs and those who are eligible for pupil premium funding
  - giving pupils more chances to develop their reading and problem-solving skills in all subjects
  - giving pupils a greater role in leading their own learning and that of others, so they can take more ownership and responsibility for their success.
- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that:
  - subject leaders and governors routinely and thoroughly check the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in relation to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills
  - support for teaching and learning is better managed, especially for pupils with additional needs
  - leaders and managers fully understand their roles and responsibilities, and are held accountable for them through thorough appraisal procedures
  - the governing body is fully involved in checking the quality of leadership and management.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Until the recent arrival of the new headteacher, pupils underachieved. As a result of rapid actions taken to improve the quality of teaching, pupils are now making accelerated progress and catching up in all subjects and classes. However, achievement requires improvement because more-able pupils, and those who have additional needs, are not yet attaining at good levels in relation to their starting points.
- Children begin school in the Nursery with levels of knowledge and skills that are in line with those expected for their age. Thanks to better leadership, teaching is now at least good and often better in both the Nursery and the Reception classes. Well-planned learning opportunities build on children's communication and language skills, so they are developing good confidence, independence and problem-solving skills that prepare them well for Year 1.
- Results in reading, writing and mathematics are improving rapidly thanks to improvements in teaching. Standards in 2012 at the end of Key Stage 1 were above average in reading and writing, but average in mathematics.
- Standards in phonics (the sounds that letters make) are improving and this is contributing to improvements in pupils' reading skills. Pupils are confident readers, and work out words they do not know by themselves.
- In Key Stage 2 variations in the quality of teaching, particularly in reading and mathematics, have led to pupils underachieving. However, the headteacher's efforts to improve pupils' attainment in Year 6 led to above-average results in 2012. Pupils are now making accelerated progress in most classes and all pupils are on track to attain higher standards, though teaching requires further improvement to make sure this is sustained.
- Pupils are keen to produce work that reflects their good efforts, particularly in writing, where they show good language, comprehension and punctuation skills. However, teachers do not always insist on the highest standards in all subjects. For example, in mathematics graphs, charts, shapes and calculations are not always presented neatly in pupils' books.
- Pupils are learning to read well in literacy lessons, but do not always practise this skill in other subjects. Similarly, although pupils are learning to solve problems in mathematics they do not readily apply this ability when such skills might be useful in other areas. This is because teachers do not always take opportunities to encourage pupils to apply and develop what they have learnt.
- Gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils are narrowing as a result of actions taken by senior leaders to make better use of resources, reflecting their aim to make sure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed. This is helping pupils supported by pupil premium funding, as well as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, to make better progress.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because the quality varies too much, and not enough is good. This means that pupils are not yet making consistently good progress over time, particularly in Key Stage 2 and in their literacy and numeracy. There have been significant changes in the

teaching staff over the past year but things are now more stable, with some creative and innovative learning activities being developed by newer staff.

- In the most effective lessons, teachers ensure the pace of learning is brisk to accelerate progress, activities are well planned to meet individual pupils' needs, and pupils are encouraged to use their highly developed speaking skills. A good example of this was found in a Year 6 literacy lesson, where pupils were debating whether to allow the playing of football in the playground. Pupils listened carefully to each other's excitable exchanges of ideas, and arrived at strong arguments for and against them.
- Similarly, in the Nursery, children develop their creativity, communication, language and literacy skills particularly well as they move around a range of stimulating and well-planned activities, themed around 'fireworks' to develop their independent learning skills as well as their knowledge and understanding about the world in which they live.
- In weaker lessons the work is not always hard enough. Teachers and teaching assistants do not always take account of what pupils already know and can do to ensure activities fully meet their needs and different ability levels. Occasionally teachers' questioning is not demanding enough, and they do not encourage pupils to share their thoughts and opinions with each other. Variations in the quality of support provided by teaching assistants mean that pupils' learning is not always maximised.
- In some lessons, teachers spend too long explaining or interrupting pupils' learning, causing the pace to slow down. For example, sometimes pupils sit on the carpet for too long listening to overly long explanations from the teacher about what they will be doing. This limits the responsibility they can take for their own learning, as they do not have enough opportunities to ask questions in order to fully understand what is expected of them.
- Homework provides regular challenging opportunities for pupils to further explore their learning with their families. Pupils' work is marked and assessed consistently well, and they know what their targets are and refer to these in their books. However, they are not always given the chance to respond to teachers' comments or to reflect on the quality of their work in relation to those targets or success criteria, either by themselves or with each other. As a result, pupils do not always know how well they are doing in relation to their targets.
- Teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, particularly when pupils are able to make full use of the school environment to explore their learning. In a science lesson in a Year 1/2 class, pupils explored the concept of camouflage, and set a hypothesis to find out which colours would make different woollen worms difficult to spot among the autumn leaves in the school's forest area. One pupil related this to his knowledge of how a gecko camouflages itself to protect itself from other predators. In another lesson, Year 4 pupils were in different roles investigating a crime scene, which had been set up to replicate a burglary.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils' behaviour is typically good across the school. Pupils demonstrate their impeccable social skills in the leadership roles they take. For example, older 'play leaders' enjoy caring for younger pupils, and in doing so contribute to their good safety and well-being during play and lunch times.
- Pupils say they feel safe at all times and enjoy being at school. They know about different types of bullying, but say that it only occurs rarely. They know how to stay safe when using computers

to communicate. They have high confidence in staff and feel secure that any concerns will be taken seriously. Pupils said that any incidents of poor behaviour are instantly dealt with by their teachers, and the headteacher does not tolerate any anti-social behaviour.

- Pupils say they enjoy the lessons where they can take a lead in their learning and can solve real-life problems. They say 'Teachers are fun and fair', and 'This headteacher makes sure there is no bad behaviour.' Pupils are thoughtful and show care and consideration for each other's opinions, particularly when they are asked to debate moral issues.
- Teachers develop excellent relationships in lessons and the pupils' excellent social skills mean that they typically learn well together. Sometimes, where teaching is weaker, pupils lose concentration and do not work as hard as they are able to.
- Staff, governors and parents who were interviewed or who responded through 'Parent View' and the school's own recent survey indicated that pupils' behaviour is typically good.
- Attendance is average and improving, reflecting the diligence of staff in encouraging good attendance. The headteacher rigorously monitors absences and works closely with parents and carers as well as the local authority to keep persistent absence low.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Although recent changes in leadership have brought about more rigorous approaches to managing the performance of pupils and the staff, leadership and management require improvement because governors and some staff who hold responsibility for subjects and aspects of the school are not yet fully involved in checking and improving what is happening.
- Previous training has not yet been effective in ensuring such leaders make a positive contribution to pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy, as well as those with additional needs. They have not been sufficiently involved in checking on how good teaching is in their areas, or checking on pupils' progress. However, all staff are now working well together as a cohesive and stable team. Leaders are using the recently introduced tracking systems to monitor the progress pupils are making.
- Since the arrival of the new headteacher five new teachers have been appointed. The new senior leaders are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have set challenging targets for all members of staff to increase pupils' progress and attainment. These are already having an impact, although there is still further to go to ensure that the initial acceleration of pupils' progress continues across the school, particularly to improve reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported by many activities, trips and visits to enrich and develop their understanding about different faiths and cultures, and their enterprise skills.
- There are good partnerships with the local authority specialists, other local schools, local churches and community organisations, as well as with parents and carers themselves. All of these links help to widen pupils' learning opportunities.
- The local authority is providing specialist expertise and guidance for this school to help it respond to the challenges it faces following a period of staffing turbulence.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance requires improvement. The governors are fully aware that leaders and managers in the past have been promoted and paid higher salaries without improving pupils' achievement. They recognise that the governing body needs improving so their collective strength can be used to better effect in helping the school to improve. In working with the new headteacher, governors are developing their knowledge about these aspects and are being professionally trained and developed to hold the senior leaders accountable for the school's performance and make sure it compares well against similar schools nationally. Governors now have a better grasp of the school budget and how it is spent, including how well pupil premium funding is being used to improve the achievement of eligible pupils. They make sure that statutory responsibilities for safeguarding are met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124162
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	406216

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	177
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Deborah Martin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Simon Barker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01922 857000
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