

Northleigh CofE Primary School

St Peter's Road, Cowleigh Bank, Malvern, WR14 1QS

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 pupils make good progress and learn well in a wide range of subjects. Older pupils' attainment levels are consistently well above average.
- Teaching and learning are predominantly good. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons, conveying high expectations of behaviour and achievement, so pupils respond positively.
- Teachers make sure they pitch work at just the right level for pupils.
- The school's development of its 'irresistible curriculum' motivates pupils, and arts subjects are especially strong.
- Pupils feel safe and understand different ways of keeping so, knowing they can approach staff with any concerns. Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and thoughtful to others. Sometimes behaviour is outstanding.
- The quietly determined headteacher and senior staff clearly set the school's direction and are fully supported by the staff. Consequently, all are focused on helping children develop personal and academic skills and raising standards.
- The governing body knows the school well. Governors vigorously challenge the school and it is improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons, teachers talk to the whole class for too long, slowing progress because pupils have less time to apply what they are learning.
- Marking in pupils' books does not always show what the pupil should do to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a whole school assembly, 12 lessons taught by 11 teachers including three lessons jointly observed with senior members of staff, and parts of several phonics sessions. Additionally, breakfast club, break time, lunch arrangements and play, and an after school club were seen.
- Inspectors had meetings with four groups of pupils, staff, and members of the governing body. A telephone discussion was held with a representative of the local authority.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents including school development plans, records of behaviour and attendance, school information on pupils’ progress, and safeguarding documents. They looked at a range of pupils’ books and other work.
- Individual pupils read aloud to inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of 57 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally to parents and carers collecting their children after school.

Inspection team

Michael Farrell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julie Fox

Additional Inspector

Jen Southall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school.
- Nearly all pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is similar to that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is also similar to that found nationally.
- The governing body is responsible for a breakfast club and after school clubs.
- The school exceeds the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium (extra money given to the school by central government) is below average.
- Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed. He has been in post for two years.
- None of the school's pupils are in alternative provision (none are taught elsewhere).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure more teaching is outstanding by:
 - reducing the amount of time that teachers spend talking to the whole class
 - making sure marking in books shows pupils how they can improve and that they understand and act on this.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children in Reception and pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress. They generally enter at expected levels and reach above average standards by the end of Year 2. Where occasionally they have entered Reception at below expected levels, pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also make good progress, and by Year 6 attainment in English and mathematics is consistently well above average.
- Good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and communication, and the application of these basic skills to other subjects, prepare pupils well for the next stage of education. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable make good progress because the school provides individual tuition and works effectively with outside agencies.
- Pupils quickly acquire knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects. They achieve well in and enjoy arts subjects including drama, art and music. Breakfast club and after school clubs are popular and well attended.
- Different groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make good progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because their needs are carefully identified and well-judged individual and small group support is provided. Challenging work pitched at the right level encourages these pupils in lessons.
- Pupil premium funding supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. They make similar progress to pupils who are not eligible. In the 2012 Year 6 tests the score for eligible pupils was less than the score for the others, but the gap was smaller than it is nationally.
- Learning is good. In Reception, for example, guided by the teacher's good subject knowledge, children successfully practised and developed sounds systematically, with concentration and enjoyment. In another lesson, younger pupils achieved well when they learned about the features of a non-fiction text and grew in confidence because the teacher conveyed high expectations and gave pupils ample opportunity to study texts and test their ideas. Older pupils improved previously attempted work on describing settings for stories, because the teacher guided the task skilfully, asking searching questions to check understanding.
- Pupils read widely and with enjoyment. They talk fluently about books and magazines they like. Readers at early stages work persistently to sound out letters to help them pronounce words. Phonics (understanding the sounds made by letters) is taught systematically and enthusiastically; as a result pupils enjoy these sessions and progress well in them.
- Pupils know the targets set to help their learning because staff give regular reminders and pupils recognise the targets' importance.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is predominantly good. Outstanding teaching was also seen during the inspection. Relationships between staff and pupils are trusting and staff create a positive climate for learning.
- Teachers' high expectations encourage pupils to do their best. Behaviour is skilfully managed

and teachers make activities interesting so pupils behave well. For example, Reception children improved throwing and catching skills quickly because the lesson was well structured, and staff worked as a team to ensure children participated.

- Pupils are enthusiastic about reading at home and at school. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively and practiced through well-planned use in other subjects. Teachers set interesting homework which pupils enjoy. One pupil spoke of interviewing 'an elderly person' in his family about what they ate when a child and comparing this with today's diets.
- Teachers' probing questions establish what pupils understand and they also ask pupils to make quick checks (pupils put their thumbs up, down or sideways). Teaching assistants assess the progress of targeted pupils during lessons, and work skilfully with individuals and small groups. Brisk, well-organised phonics sessions ensure pupils of all abilities concentrate and make good progress.
- Teachers know their subjects well and convey enjoyment. For example, the teacher's strong subject knowledge and enthusiasm ensured older pupils made good progress in finding solutions to a number sequencing problem. Older pupils comparing the diet of children today with that of the 1940s were captivated by a tray of food representing a week's rations.
- Well-structured lesson planning ensures work is pitched at the right levels, and teachers adjust these for subsequent lessons according to what pupils have learned. For example, younger pupils achieved well in a lesson on writing captions and subtitles because detailed lesson planning ensured work was just right for different pupils.
- Sometimes, teachers talk for too long in lessons, reducing the time pupils can engage in activities and so slowing progress. The best marking in books shows what pupils should do to improve their work and the books provide evidence that this is followed up and that the pupil does do better. However this quality of marking is not consistent across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school, at meal times and during playtimes. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are consistently positive, encouraged by the stimulating work they are given to do. Sometimes behaviour is excellent.
- Pupils are well mannered and thoughtful towards others, for example holding doors open for adults and other children. A younger pupil informed inspectors, 'We don't do anything very rude and everyone is smiling every day.'
- Parents and carers, staff and pupils correctly consider that behaviour is good. Behaviour is consistently well managed. Pupils rightly feel that the school listens to them and they express their views confidently.
- In the school's warm and positive atmosphere, attendance is above average and pupils attend lessons very punctually because they are keen to learn. They seize opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups, and when talking as 'learning partners' they are animated and stick to the required topic. Pupils mention music, physical education and playing with friends as particular favourites amongst the activities they have.

- Pupils have a good awareness of bullying and of different types of bullying and they remembered the messages of the school's anti-bullying week accurately.
- Pupils feel safe, and parents and carers expressing their views on the Parent View website showed confidence that their child is safe. Pupils know about risks and understand ways of keeping themselves safe, including when using the internet.
- Occasionally older boys' football dominates the playground at lunchtime. The school has agreed to change the way the space is used so that such games can be enjoyed while not constraining playtime activities for others.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers convey high expectations and ambition, ensuring a cohesive staff team with high morale. Staff at different levels of management are supported and encouraged well in their roles. Good teaching is encouraged by regular and accurate checks that convey clearly where the strengths of teaching are and where it can be improved.
- The management of staff performance is thorough and pay rises are securely linked to how well teaching is ensuring good progress. Staff are very appreciative of opportunities to study within and beyond school. These opportunities are tightly linked to overall school requirements.
- The school's evaluation of how well it is doing is accurate. Its precise planning about how to improve draws effectively on the school's accurate information on pupils' progress. When the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals slowed the school took decisive action, including well-focused individual tuition, which considerably accelerated progress.
- The school ensures equality of opportunity. It checks the progress of different groups and intervenes where progress slows, fosters good relationships, and tackles any discrimination through clear policies and making it clear that discrimination is unacceptable.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support, accurately judging the school to be good. It is aware of the school's strengths and priorities.
- The good and improving programme of subjects covered includes topic work, which provides opportunities for pupils to apply skills in enjoyable and informative ways. Arts subjects such as music, dance, art and drama are strengths. Assemblies contribute well to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Links with a school in Tanzania enhance pupils' cultural understanding.
- The school works well with parents and carers and they have positive views of it.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body recognises the school's strengths, including good teaching, and where it can improve. Governors manage resources well. They check pupil premium income and its use, which is mainly for individual tuition. They know this is accelerating the progress of the targeted pupils. They have a clear overview of how staff performance is managed and know that where any underperformance occurs, improvement is expected in a specified time. Governors know the progress pupils are making and challenge the school by comparing this with national primary school information. They ensure safeguarding meets government

requirements through regular checking. Members stay up to date by attending relevant training courses.

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	116863
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	403301

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cathy Spence
Headteacher	Duncan Jones
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2008
Telephone number	01684 574889
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