

# Alderman's Green Community Primary School

Aldermans Green Road, Coventry, CV2 1PP

## Inspection dates

12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	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		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although it has improved over recent years, the progress pupils make is variable, particularly in writing. Pupils who benefit from extra government funds make good progress but their attainment is a long way behind the other pupils in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is improving but it is not yet consistently good or better. Some teachers plan lessons which do not focus sharply enough on the needs of all pupils, particularly those of average and higher ability.
- Learning time is sometimes wasted because teachers talk for too long or do not manage the change from one activity to another effectively.
- The teachers do not always make the best use of the information the school has about pupils' progress to plan challenging enough work.

### The school has the following strengths

- Staff pay a great deal of attention to catering for pupils' emotional, social, behavioural and safety needs. Parents appreciate the help and support their children get from the school.
- Senior leaders have made a real difference to pupils' achievement, which is improving strongly in most years. This is because they have improved the quality of teaching.
- The governing body knows how good teaching is in different year groups and challenges school leaders rigorously to ensure it improves where necessary.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they are keen to learn. Those who have particularly complex needs are fully involved in school life.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, or parts of lessons, across the school. A number of these were observed jointly with headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, heard some pupils read and watched an assembly.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and talked to pupils in lessons, in the playground and as they moved around school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors spoke informally with other members of staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and one letter written by a parent. They spoke informally to a group of parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the day. The 16 questionnaires submitted by members of staff were considered.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation which included: the school's check on how well it is doing and its plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress; records of observations of the quality of teaching; minutes of meetings of the governing body; the school's information about pupils' progress over time and records relating to safeguarding.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

## Inspection team

Sandra Hayes, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Peter Lawley

Additional Inspector

Brenda Jones

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is larger than most primary schools and is growing. In September 2012, the number of children who entered the Reception Year doubled from 45 to 90. This growth is set to continue until there will be three classes in each year group.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (extra funding from the government) is very high.
- Around two thirds of the pupils are of White British heritage. The remaining third come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Just under a fifth do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs who receive extra help in class is low. The proportion who need extra support from other agencies or who have a statement of educational needs is much higher than average.
- A specialist unit for 12 pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders or complex language and communication needs opened within the school in January 2013. There are currently four pupils on roll.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving during the school year is above average.
- The school currently meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching so that pupils make consistently good progress, particularly in writing, by making sure that teachers:
  - set work that is always at the right level of challenge for all pupils
  - plan tasks that actively involve all pupils in their learning
  - waste no time as pupils move from one activity to another
  - make full use of every opportunity to develop pupils' vocabulary and spoken language skills
  - give pupils every opportunity to use talk as part of their learning
  - question pupils carefully throughout lessons to check understanding and make adjustments to teaching where needed.
- Make better use of the school's data about pupils' progress so that:
  - teachers use it to plan challenging work for every pupil
  - the gap between the attainment of the pupils supported through extra funding and those who are not closes quickly in English and mathematics
  - leaders focus the way they hold teachers to account even more sharply on the needs of the pupils in each class.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- There is some variation in pupils' progress between different classes, subjects and cohorts. This is why achievement is not yet good. Progress in writing is weaker overall than in reading and mathematics. Rates of progress also vary over the year. In some classes, pupils' progress is slow at the beginning of the school year and speeds up in the spring and summer terms.
- Children join the school in Nursery and Reception with skills that are well below those expected for their age. They have very weak language skills and many find it difficult to manage relationships and their personal hygiene. They settle in well, start to catch up and make good progress.
- Attainment is low at Key Stage 1. Standards have improved slightly over recent years but dipped in 2012. However, many more pupils are now working close to expected levels. Mathematics is closer to average than reading or writing.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average. Attainment in mathematics has improved more rapidly than in English. In the 2012 national tests for Year 6 pupils' scores were closer to average in reading and mathematics. Writing scores were weak. Some middle and higher-ability pupils did not achieve well enough so did not reach the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics.
- In the Year 6 tests, almost all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, made very good progress from their starting points in mathematics and good progress in English. Pupils with special educational needs and those who receive support from the extra government funding made better progress than others in the school and much better progress than similar pupils nationally. Nevertheless, those in Year 6 last year who benefited from the extra government funding were a long way behind other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. For pupils currently in the school, this gap is beginning to close.
- The specialist unit opened in January and the pupils have settled well. Teachers have got to know their needs and set up a system to check they are progressing well.
- As pupils get older, more read at the levels expected for their age. They use the sounds that letters make (phonics) to help them read new words. Sometimes they find this difficult because they have not learned these successfully in the past. The school has recently changed the way phonics is taught and pupils are beginning to develop these skills more effectively.
- Pupils are not always developing speaking skills well enough. Although they are shown how to say difficult words correctly, sometimes they are not given chance to practise saying the words for themselves. Pupils are learning a wider range of interesting words to use in their writing as a result of the school's structured, systematic approach. In some classes they apply this more varied vocabulary in their work but in others they do not have enough opportunity to do so.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because pupils do not achieve consistently well. It has improved since the last inspection but is still variable. There is a reasonable proportion of good and outstanding teaching in the school, but not enough yet to ensure all pupils make

consistently good progress.

- Teachers do not routinely use information about what pupils can do to plan lessons and pitch the work at the right levels for all pupils. Teachers make it clear to pupils what they are learning and give them different goals to achieve by the end of the lesson. However, these are not always challenging enough for some pupils, particularly those of middle and higher ability.
- Where teaching is good, teachers plan work at the right level for all pupils and use imaginative approaches to make learning active and fun. This was the case for a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils who showed what they had learned by quickly making sets of equivalent fractions. At the end of the lesson the pupils left the room chatting enthusiastically about fractions. Teachers in these lessons check pupils' understanding carefully by questioning them skilfully and then adapting tasks or explaining things more clearly. This happens more often in mathematics lessons than in English.
- In some lessons teachers do not make frequent checks on pupils' progress and so do not make sure tasks are right for them.
- Sometimes the resources do not support pupils' learning or independence, for example when the text they are given is too hard for them to read. When resources are just right, pupils make good progress. For example, children in a Reception class were given a framework to help them write a simple sentence and they did so quickly and successfully.
- Teachers and support staff work hard to create a highly positive climate for learning. Pupils say they enjoy lessons and that teachers tell them how to improve their work. They especially like it when they work in groups. They say the work they are given is usually about right, but not always. Sometimes this is because it is too hard but usually it is because it is too easy.
- Time for learning is wasted in some lessons. Sometimes teachers do not manage the change from one activity to another efficiently so pupils do not settle quickly to their work. Quite often, pupils have to spend too much time listening to the teacher. This means they do not get actively involved in learning. In the best lessons, teachers challenge pupils to discuss their ideas. This helps them deepen and extend their thinking.
- The school adopted a new approach to marking pupils' work earlier this year and marking has improved notably as a result. The impact on pupils' progress remains variable at this stage as this development is still very new. Pupils like the 'Green Pen Question' which is used to check if they understand what they have learned or to show them the next step in their learning.
- Teachers are reflective and have acted carefully on the advice from local authority consultants. Those who need to improve most have benefited from high-quality coaching from the strongest teachers in the school.

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

- Pupils, parents and staff say overwhelmingly that pupils' behaviour has improved since the last inspection. Pupils feel safe and are confident they can ask for help if needed, either by talking to an adult or by using the 'Worry Box'.
  - The school mission statement, 'The Extra Mile' describes accurately how far governors, staff and pupils go to ensure everyone feels safe and valued. When asked what the best thing about the
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school was, one pupil said, 'It's a big, massive family.'

- Pupils behave well towards one another in lessons, around the school and in the playground. They say bullying is very rare and talk about the positive effect of anti-bullying week. Older pupils show an understanding about internet safety and know the use of homophobic language is wrong.
- Pupils are keen to learn and so behave well in lessons. They push themselves to do well in lessons that are challenging and active. In less interesting lessons, some pupils lose concentration, switch off or become fidgety.
- All staff manage behaviour well and are skilled at helping pupils with complex communication, social or behavioural difficulties to manage their own behaviour. This helps these pupils play a full part in school life.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility. The school council contributes to decisions about how to improve the school, such as planning how to develop the playground. Last year they joined staff and governors in deciding what the school needs to do better. The headteacher built their suggestions into her plans for improvement.
- The school has worked tirelessly to improve attendance and has recently tightened its procedures further. As a result, attendance rates are now improving. School records show that more pupils are absent from school in the summer than at other times of year because they go on holiday.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher leads the school with a passionate sense of purpose that promotes good teamwork. She and her deputy are focused and ambitious, wanting the best for every pupil. Staff are positive about how the school is led and share the passion and commitment to improve so that the school becomes at least good.
  - The headteacher and other senior leaders check the quality of teaching regularly to see if it is helping pupils to make good progress. They have an accurate picture of where teaching is good and where it needs to improve further. All senior leaders are unrelenting in the expectation that teaching will improve. They have taken strong and successful action to eliminate inadequate teaching and increase the proportion that is good. They set targets for teachers that relate to pupils' progress which teachers must meet to move up the pay scale. This is having a marked impact on improving teaching in some classes.
  - Plans for improvement show clearly what actions the school intends to take and how leaders will check if these have had the expected impact. Although these plans initially appear rather overloaded, the way they are organised helps phase leaders and those responsible for subjects to use them to drive improvements in their area of responsibility. Leaders check regularly whether these actions are making a difference and make changes to the plans if necessary.
  - The school plans a range of experiences to interest pupils. Pupils' personal and social skills are developed well. This encourages good behaviour and contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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- The school works well with parents. The parents who provided evidence for the inspectors were very positive about the school.
  
  - Some elements of the local authority's support and challenge to the school have been stronger than others; therefore the impact has been mixed over time. This is, in part, due to the improvement adviser assigned to the school changing three times in the last five years. The support and challenge has been stronger in recent years and this has helped leaders to check the school's effectiveness more thoroughly. The governing body has benefited from effective training on how to use the data on pupils' achievement to best effect. This means they hold leaders to account for pupils' performance. School Improvement Board meetings, recently established to review regularly the school's improvement, have begun to give the local authority a clearer view of the school's performance. These are helpful as there have been differences of opinion about the effectiveness of some aspects of the school's work. The school has received good support for some leaders but it has not always been consistently effective. For example, teachers who have responsibility for different year groups have strengthened their skills in checking the quality of teaching. Support for the teachers who lead English and mathematics has not been as focused.
  
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors provide effective support and challenge to the school. They are well informed about the school's current priorities, the quality of teaching and the way the headteacher sets targets for teachers. They know about teachers who were deemed not eligible for salary progression this year because some pupils had not made good progress. They regularly monitor the performance of the headteacher and keep a strong focus on improving pupils' achievement. They know that the pupils who benefit from the additional funding make good progress and that there is a wider gap in attainment for these pupils, compared to the others, than there should be. Governors have made informed decisions regarding staff appointments. For example, they agreed not to fill a vacant teaching post because they felt the candidates were not sufficiently strong to help raise the quality of teaching to good. The governing body ensures that resources are managed effectively and expects value for money. Safeguarding requirements are met and include some elements that are particularly strong.
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## 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>	103638
<b>Local authority</b>	Coventry
<b>Inspection number</b>	404882

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>	381
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Rees
<b>Headteacher</b>	G Bowser
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23–24 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	024 76688918
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