

# Warley Infant School

Bleakhouse Road, Oldbury, B68 9DS

**Inspection dates** 12–13 November 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Leaders ensure that pupils achieve well over Key Stage 1, particularly in reading. Standards in reading and in mathematics were above average in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive skilled support and make outstanding progress.
- Leaders and governors work very effectively to close gaps in attainment for disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have used training and coaching arrangements well to improve teaching in Key Stage 1.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and other adults work well together to help pupils make good progress.
- Teaching is mostly good. Teachers guide pupils' learning in lessons well. They plan lessons which interest pupils and they successfully encourage them to work hard.
- Pupils behave well. They cooperate with each other well during work and play. They know that they are treated fairly and that their contributions to school life are valued.
- Systems for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being in school are very effective.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Children in Nursery and Reception do not achieve as well as they should. The management of data and checks on their progress have not been sharp enough to direct teaching.
- Teachers sometimes do not have high enough expectations for the quality of work the most-able pupils carry out in writing.
- Boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing. Teachers do not ensure that boys are as involved as the girls in asking and answering questions and this leaves the boys less well prepared for their writing tasks.

### Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching through visits to classrooms to check on pupils' learning. On some visits, they were accompanied by senior leaders.
- A range of pupils were heard reading.
- Samples of pupils' work were looked at.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils, two members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 23 questionnaires completed by staff, parents' responses to the school's own recent questionnaire and 29 responses made by parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. An inspector spoke informally to a few parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors checked a range of evidence including: monitoring records; consultants' reports; the school improvement plan; the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; and policies, procedures and practice relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

### Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Ellis

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- The school's part-time nursery operates in the mornings and afternoons. The school also offers some extended services, including 'Warley Little Sunshines' for children aged 0 to 5 years. This provision is managed by the governing body but is separately inspected.
- Around 65% of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the remaining pupils are from various minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils previously known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care, is below average at 16%.
- At around 5%, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below average. Nearly all of these pupils are in Key Stage 1.
- The school has experienced some instability in staffing in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the last two years.
- The previous headteacher retired in July 2014 and a new headteacher is taking up post in January 2015. The deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher are currently fulfilling the roles of headteacher and deputy headteacher. The assistant headteacher assumed responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage in September 2014.

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

- Improve children's achievement in Nursery and Reception by ensuring that assessment data, progress checks and ongoing assessment are used rigorously to direct teaching.
- Increase the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels in writing by ensuring that all teachers set tasks for the most-able pupils that challenge them in the quality of work they are expected to complete.
- Ensure that boys are as involved as the girls in class discussions and in answering teachers' questions so that they are well prepared for their writing tasks and achieve as well as the girls in writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by experienced senior leaders, who include the new leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the staff with allocated responsibilities for subjects. The acting headteacher knows what needs to be done to improve the school further and works very effectively with the acting deputy headteacher to tackle priorities.
- Senior leaders track pupils' progress carefully and make suitable adjustments to teaching quickly to support pupils who need extra help with their learning. Arrangements for checking the performance of disadvantaged pupils are tight. Leaders regularly review their use of pupil premium funding and the impact of the actions they take to close gaps in attainment.
- The school is developing its preferred approach to assessment following removal of National Curriculum levels. It is seeking to combine elements of the practice used in Nursery and Reception to make judgements on children's skills and aptitudes with the levels of the system which is being replaced, pending further consultation with other schools in the local authority.
- Leaders have made good use of the coaching expertise of experienced staff to develop the skills of newly qualified teachers and to improve teaching in Key Stage 1. Staff training and appraisal are closely linked to the school's priorities and are effective in raising staff's performance and pupils' standards; for example, in reading. The school successfully uses the skills of staff in a local special school to refine targets for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Over time, leaders have been less successful in improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the school has experienced discontinuity in staffing.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It is adapted well in Key Stage 1 to meet the specific learning needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, to reflect pupils' varying skills in phonics, and for more-able pupils in mathematics.
- There are many strengths in the ways the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies and theme weeks, such as anti-bullying week, are used well to reinforce the school's expectations for respectful relationships, and for good behaviour and achievement. These experiences are supplemented by topics, trips, visitors and residential visits which acquaint pupils with life in modern Britain, British history and traditions.
- National primary sports funding has been spent appropriately. These monies have been used, for example, to fund new clubs and equipment and to provide specialist training for teachers. However, the school has not yet monitored the impact of this expenditure on improving pupils' sporting performance, health or well-being.
- The local authority, recognising that the school has consistently been able to direct its own improvement, checks the school's performance mainly on a termly basis. While it has brokered partnerships with other schools to check the accuracy of the school's assessments of how well pupils are doing, its work has not had a significant impact on improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors support the school well. They undertook three rounds of interviews before appointing a new headteacher with the skills and expertise they deemed essential to secure further improvement. They are well aware of the school's key priorities and the aspects of pupils' writing that need improvement. They know which initiatives have proved successful in raising pupils' attainment in reading.
  - Governors understand and review the strategies used to support disadvantaged pupils and know where the use of this extra funding has had most impact in reducing attainment gaps and in improving attendance. They know how well groups of pupils are performing compared to similar groups nationally.
  - Governors are knowledgeable about the actions leaders have taken to improve teaching and the performance of individual teachers. They know whether senior staff have achieved their targets. They

ensure that pay awards are only approved where staff show that they meet their targets and that their performance is consistently good.

- Governors have a separate safeguarding sub-committee which considers safeguarding and child protection issues. They ensure that current government requirements for safeguarding are met and that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Nursery and Reception children are happy and secure, and they behave well when they choose what activities to do. Children usually comply quickly with staff's requests.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils' enjoyment of a wide range of subjects and willingness to work harmoniously help them to achieve well. They show a growing confidence in their ability to work independently and to assess how well they are doing. They work well in pairs and in small groups, discuss methods and whether answers are correct, and they respect each other's oral contributions.
- Pupils' good behaviour ensures that lessons proceed with few disruptions and that pupils can maintain their concentration. They need few reminders to listen carefully to staff's questions and explanations.
- Pupils of all ethnic backgrounds play well together in the playground. They make full use of this extensive area to take part in good-natured chasing games, and do this in a sensible way so that no-one gets hurt. Individual pupils take responsibility for ensuring that they and their classmates line up in an orderly way at the end of break times so that lessons restart punctually.
- In 2013, the persistent absence of a very few pupils caused a dip in attendance. Leaders do all they reasonably can to maintain good levels of attendance. The rigorous enforcement of recent government legislation, combined with the efforts of the family support worker, resulted in a substantial rise in attendance in the last school year.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are well supervised at break times. Robust internal gateways and well-maintained premises enhance security. Visitors are carefully vetted. Lunchtime supervisors follow clear procedures to report any concerns. The acting headteacher follows up any unexplained absences through home visits and school leavers are monitored to check they have registered with their next school.
- Staff and parents are very positive about pupils' well-being in school. There have been no fixed-term exclusions in the last three years and no recorded bullying or racist incidents. The school's good links with outside agencies ensure that at-risk pupils are well looked after. Staff investigate fully any concerns raised by parents and report back to them promptly.
- Leaders ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs feel safe and can participate as well as they can in the full range of opportunities enjoyed by their classmates. There is a well-established nurture group for pupils who need extra help to develop their social skills, and the adults who manage this provision have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Over time, they succeed in improving pupils' social skills.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are well informed about road safety and know some simple rules for keeping safe when using the internet. They trust staff to look after them and to help them resolve amicably any problems with friendships with other pupils. They feel that they are treated equally and fairly and value the contributions they make to school life; for example, as buddies and prefects.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching is typically good but is more consistently effective in Key Stage 1 than in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teachers expect pupils to behave well and manage them skilfully in nearly all lessons. They make sure that all pupils stay alert, work hard and enjoy learning. They promote positive attitudes and relationships, and enable pupils to develop the self-confidence to make choices for themselves.
- Teachers know their subjects well and make effective use of lesson starters to enable lessons to start briskly and to help pupils recap and extend their knowledge. This was seen, for example, in a Year 2 lesson, where the teacher took the 'hot seat' in the role of Florence Nightingale. She encouraged pupils successfully to question her in depth about life in the military hospital.
- Teachers set pupils enjoyable work and usually provide pupils with a useful range of resources which help them sustain their work-rate and complete tasks within the time limits teachers give them. Teachers guide pupils' learning effectively so that they know what they must do when they work unaided.
- Teaching assistants and other adults support teachers well. They respond quickly and unobtrusively to redirect pupils' learning. Their careful guidance helps pupils to progress steadily, develop a willingness to explain their thinking and to find solutions with little prompting.
- No effort is spared to enable disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to take a full part in lessons, to develop their self-esteem and to make rapid progress. This was seen, for example, in a Year 1 physical education lesson, where these pupils were skilfully guided to use specially adapted apparatus to perform the same balancing actions as their classmates.
- Staff teach early reading skills well. They introduce new sounds in clear sequence and quickly provide pupils with opportunities to reinforce understanding orally and to apply their phonic knowledge in writing long words.
- Mathematical skills are taught well with the help of a range of practical activities and resources to enable pupils to understand and to explain new concepts, such as the properties of three-dimensional shapes.
- Staff's recent introduction of a new handwriting scheme is helping to improve aspects of pupils' handwriting, such as presentation and letter formation. Girls respond quickly and thoughtfully to the questions teachers ask to prepare pupils for their writing tasks. Boys, while attentive, are less inclined to contribute orally. This is sometimes overlooked by teachers and restricts boys' capacity to express their ideas in short paragraphs.
- Teachers often give all pupils the same writing task which limits opportunities for the most-able pupils to develop their talents.

**The achievement of pupils is good**

- The attainment of Year 2 pupils rose to above average overall in 2014. Pupils achieved particularly well in reading. Given their below-average starting-points on entry to Year 1, this represents good achievement for these pupils. Across the school, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds do equally well.
- Results in the Year 1 screening check for phonics (the sounds that letters make) were below the national average in 2013 and 2014. However, in both these years, nearly all the pupils who retook the test in Year 2 passed it. This reflects the good progress pupils make in developing their reading skills in Year 2. Less-able readers in Year 2 use their phonics knowledge well to split up and blend new words, and most read fluently.

- The most-able pupils achieve well in reading. They can identify and explain patterns in the formation of noun plural forms and the reasons why noun endings sometimes differ. Some of them confidently vary their expression while reading to reflect different emphases or characters in texts. Most of them also do well in mathematics, demonstrating an ability to perform addition and multiplication operations correctly with two digit numbers. However, they do less well in writing because tasks do not challenge them to think hard or provide them with enough scope to develop their ideas.
- Girls achieve better than boys in writing. They have a wider range of descriptive vocabulary and demonstrate a greater capacity to write fluently from the perspectives of different people.
- Many of the school's disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have a complex range of difficulties. Skilled one-to-one teaching and the use of a wide range of specially adapted resources enable them to make exceptionally good progress from their low starting points.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is higher than similar pupils nationally and gaps with their classmates and other pupils nationally have reduced over the last three years. From their starting points, which are generally lower than their classmates, they make good progress.

### **The early years provision** requires improvement

- Children's skills and knowledge are below those typical for their age on entry to Nursery, especially in communication, language and literacy. Baseline assessments show that entry levels have dropped a little over the last few years.
- The percentage of children in the Reception classes who reached a good level of development dipped below the national average in 2014. Discontinuity in staffing has delayed improvements in teaching in the early years. Weaknesses in understanding and using performance data have affected the reliability of assessments and the use made of them to monitor children's progress and to direct teaching.
- Under new leadership, several well-considered improvements have been made to the curriculum and to ongoing assessment. The timetable has been reorganised to provide more time for children to work on their own and in groups. Staff are making increased use of tablet computers to expand the range of observations they make on children's progress. They are making effective use of reading records shared with home to provide parents with feedback and to encourage them to read daily to their children. Literacy books are marked well, with plenty of helpful annotations made by staff. Teachers mostly question children well to sustain their efforts and to correct misconceptions.
- Children are responding well to the new opportunities they have to make decisions about their learning and they work enthusiastically on the tasks they choose for themselves. They are confident and inquisitive and are eager to experiment and investigate. They show an understanding of how to keep themselves safe, as they told each other to stand back while counting down the time until their imaginary fireworks went off. They plan and work cooperatively with each other, demonstrating courtesy and politeness. However, a few less-able children do not behave well when they are required to sit still and pay attention during phonics lessons. This sometimes slows progress for others.
- Recent improvements are more established in Reception than in Nursery. Not all staff are adept in using ongoing assessments to plan the next steps in developing children's skills. They do not always intervene quickly to redirect learning when children have exhausted all the possibilities of an activity.

## 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>	103963
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	448262

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	222
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Warren
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Hale
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 422 2886
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