

Radleys Primary School

Kings Road, Walsall, WS4 1JJ

Inspection dates 4–5 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Senior leaders', including governors', robust actions to improve teaching have ensured pupils now achieve well across the school.
- Standards in Year 6 have risen to average since the previous inspection. Current Year 2 pupils are working at the levels expected of them nationally.
- Senior leaders work effectively to reduce gaps in attainment for disadvantaged pupils.
- Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress in nearly all areas of learning.
- Teaching is mostly good. Teachers question pupils effectively to develop their ideas and understanding. They make expert use of resources to sustain pupils' interest and to support the less able pupils.
- Pupils behave well, especially in the public areas in and around school. They are well cared for and feel part of a wider 'family'. They know that their contributions to school life are valued.
- Systems for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being in school are outstanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils are not consistently provided with work which enables them to develop their knowledge and to extend their skills quickly.
- Pupils do not have good and varied opportunities to use and to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and to carry out investigations.
- Opportunities in Nursery and Reception to develop children's writing skills are not always taken.
- Teachers' marking is not always used to help pupils improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching during visits to classrooms to check on pupils' learning. On two visits, they were accompanied by the headteacher.
- Inspectors heard a range of pupils in Year 2 reading and, together with the deputy headteacher, looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with school staff, two groups of pupils including school councillors, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 25 responses to a questionnaire completed by staff and the 28 responses made by parents to Ofsted's 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

Jonathan Dyer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a little smaller than most primary schools.
- Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis, either in the mornings or the afternoons. Reception children attend on a full-time basis.
- A very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority, is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The headteacher took up her post in April 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement, by ensuring that:
 - children in Nursery and Reception are provided with a varied range of opportunities to develop their writing skills
 - pupils use and apply their mathematical knowledge skilfully in problem-solving and investigative tasks
 - the work set for the most able pupils develops their knowledge and skills fully and challenges them consistently to do their best.
- Improve the impact of teaching on pupils' progress by ensuring that teachers:
 - check pupils' responses to their marking closely
 - follow these responses up and provide pupils with clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school exceptionally well. She has taken rigorous, swift actions to tackle underperformance and to improve teaching. She is ably assisted by senior leaders, who include the new leader of the early years and the staff with allocated responsibilities for other key stages and/or subjects.
- Good teamwork and thorough checks on the school's work identify training needs sharply and ensure staff know what needs to be done to improve the school. Action plans and staff targets are regularly reviewed.
- Senior leaders check pupils' progress carefully and make suitable adjustments to teaching quickly to support pupils who need extra help with their learning. Recent improvements in provision, including the development of specialist teams to meet specific needs, are accelerating rates of progress for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Improvements in provision are not as consistent for the most able pupils, not all of whom are given sufficiently challenging work. Despite leaders' checking of pupils' work marking does not always help pupils improve their work.
- The school is developing, in consultation with local schools, its preferred approach to assessment following withdrawal of National Curriculum levels. Key staff, in their role as assessment moderators for the local authority, have a clear and up-to-date picture of expected standards and share this information regularly with school staff.
- The school ensures that there is no discrimination. Leaders know where support is needed to raise the standards of disadvantaged pupils. They have taken purposeful decisions to allocate extra resources to improve rates of progress. Their successful use of pupil premium funding is reducing gaps in attainment across the school.
- The school's range of subjects and activities is broad and balanced. It is regularly modified to tackle relative weaknesses in pupils' skills. There are many strengths in the ways the school promotes pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' studies of other cultures and customs include the Chinese New Year and other festivals, while Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy their French lessons. These experiences are supplemented by events such as World Book Day. The importance of good teamwork, community spirit and family values is regularly emphasised. This encourages pupils to work cooperatively and to show respect for each other's opinions.
- The school promotes British values, including tolerance and acceptance of differences, strongly. School councillors take their roles very seriously and are fully involved in a wide range of school initiatives, including anti-bullying measures, healthy eating and the development of the Key Stage 2 playground. Records of their meetings reflect lively debate and consideration of alternative proposals.
- The primary school sport funding has been spent appropriately, for example to employ specialist coaches to train staff and to extend the range of sporting opportunities available to pupils. A few actions have been targeted specifically at raising the profile of the school's healthy eating initiatives and in improving participation rates in sport by disadvantaged pupils. These are proving increasingly successful.
- The local authority has provided the school with useful support, for example in providing training in leadership of the early years and of the coordination of special educational needs.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that current government requirements for safeguarding are fully met and that safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors share senior leaders' ambitions and work closely with leaders to improve the school. They review their practice regularly and test out new ways of working. For example, they have decided to link governors to classes, rather than to subjects, to provide themselves with first-hand evidence of the impact of the decisions they take to improve pupils' learning.
 - Governors know about curricular changes and pupils' standards through regular reports from the headteacher and teachers responsible for key subjects. They know that gaps in attainment have reduced, including for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. They can identify some of the actions the school has taken to raise achievement for vulnerable groups.
 - Governors check the impact of teaching through focused scrutinies of pupils' books. They are aware of the strategies to improve teaching in Key Stage 1 and have supported senior leaders effectively in tackling previous underperformance. They are involved in managing staff performance and take suitable steps to ensure any salary increases are merited.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Nursery and Reception children are happy and secure and quickly form trusting relationships with adults. They behave well when they choose what activities to do and comply quickly with staff requests.
- Pupils' behaviour around school is consistently good and, on occasion, it is outstanding. Pupils make full use of the well-designed, varied, playground facilities and engage in harmonious, active play. Consequently, playtimes are occasions which require minimal adult supervision and which pupils thoroughly enjoy. Pupils behave very sensibly in the dining hall, line up in an orderly way and help staff by ensuring that little mess is left after they eat their lunch. They demonstrate in assemblies and at lunchtimes that they understand what constitutes healthy eating.
- Staff foster pupils' sense of responsibility carefully. Nursery and Reception children sign up daily for 'special helper' tasks and perform these proudly and efficiently. Older pupils act as school councillors, as house captains and, in their role as safety officers, conduct regular checks on the school's premises and environs.
- Pupils' enjoyment of a wide range of subjects and their willingness to work cooperatively help pupils to achieve well. They present their work neatly, work hard and show pride in their work. Older pupils show a growing confidence in their ability to work on their own and to assess how well they are doing. They work well in pairs or in small groups, discuss methods and whether answers are correct, and they respect each other's oral contributions. Their good behaviour ensures that lessons nearly always proceed smoothly and that pupils can maintain their concentration.
- On a few occasions, pupils' behaviour is managed less well. While learning is not disrupted, individual pupils become distracted at times and additional adults do not always step in quickly enough to help them regain their focus.
- There were two fixed term exclusions last year, but none in the current school year.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Visitors are checked through a secure electronic entry system and are made fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff employment checks are up to date and contain all the required information. Staff safeguarding training is fully documented.
- While the onus is placed on pupils to behave responsibly, staff are vigilant in their supervisory duties. Lines of responsibility for managing pupils' behaviour are clear and pupils respect the 'good to be green' sanctions and rewards system. Midday supervisors receive regular training, including for directing play at lunchtimes. Any incidents are fed back to teachers, recorded and followed up quickly. Pupils report that they are well cared for at school and feel part of a wider 'family'. They say that they are listened to; for example, they asked for a 'trim trail' and got one.
- There are, over time, very few recorded incidents of any type of bullying. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and of strategies for resolving conflict. They are especially knowledgeable about e-safety 'messages', which are reinforced regularly in lessons and assemblies.
- Systems for ensuring pupils' welfare are thorough and robust. Early intervention is effective in identifying pupils' pastoral needs. Suitable actions are taken quickly. Staff hold comprehensive records on relevant pupils and are tenacious in pursuing individual cases through to a conclusion. The school has established extensive links with outside agencies, act quickly on specialist advice, and use a wide variety of follow-up strategies successfully to improve the well-being and progress of relevant pupils.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are checked thoroughly. Staff step in quickly, as required, to follow up individual cases of persistent absence. Staff know their pupils well and can account for any periods of non attendance. Attendance has risen to average.

The quality of teaching is good

- Improvements to teaching are ensuring that pupils are achieving well in all key stages. Teachers know the levels at which different groups of pupils are working and recap previous learning effectively. Lesson activities are mostly well focused on the skills that pupils need to acquire or to practise next.
- Teachers' questioning probes and extends pupils' learning well and encourages their active engagement in lessons. Teachers regularly review pupils' learning and adapt their teaching accordingly to deal with any misunderstandings.
- Teachers make expert use of computer technology to capture and to sustain pupils' interest during

lessons. They use practical resources well to help less-able pupils to understand new ideas, for example to match different numbers and to create story sequences.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported effectively in small-group work. Teaching assistants have improved their knowledge of what these pupils know and can do and have tailored their contributions to support and challenge them better and to move their learning forward.
- Early reading skills are mostly taught well and this helps older pupils to feel confident about their reading skills. A suitable range of tasks helps them to retrieve information from stories accurately, to predict outcomes, and to improve their vocabulary, for example by acquiring a variety of interesting synonyms for common verbs.
- Writing skills are usually taught well. Teachers provide pupils with a variety of writing activities and ensure that they use their skills for a range of audiences and purposes. On a few occasions, teachers do not clearly communicate to pupils what they expect them to achieve and this uncertainty slows progress, especially for the most-able pupils.
- Mathematical skills are usually taught well. This enables pupils to develop their number and calculation skills securely. However, opportunities for pupils to use and to apply their understanding in problem-solving and investigative tasks are not yet fully developed, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Teachers' marking is not always effective. While teachers mark pupils' work regularly, their advice is not focused sharply on what pupils need to do next. They do not check closely whether pupils have followed their advice or whether they have done their corrections.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment in Year 6 has risen considerably since the previous inspection. Standards in Key Stage 1 were below average until last year. Staffing improvements and strong expectations for pupils' progress are now raising attainment in Year 2 and enabling more pupils to work towards achieving the higher Level 3.
- Standards in Year 6 in 2014 were broadly average. The proportion of pupils who reached the nationally expected Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics matched the national average exactly. Nearly one half of pupils attained the higher Level 5 in writing, but fewer pupils achieved this level in mathematics. Overall, pupils made good progress from their starting points in Key Stage 2.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were working, on average, two terms behind their classmates in reading, two and a half terms behind in writing, and half a term behind in mathematics. Compared to other pupils nationally, they were two and a half terms behind in reading, half a term behind in writing, and nearly three terms behind in mathematics. Across the school these pupils make similar progress to their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are now making good progress due to tighter assessment procedures and timely checks on the impact of actions taken to help them catch up. This information is shared quickly with staff to direct teaching better.
- The school's useful links with its main feeder secondary school raised the attainment of talented writers in Year 6 in 2014. However, some of the most-able pupils are not given good opportunities to develop their skills over a sustained period of time. On occasion they complete tasks quickly and are not moved on swiftly to more challenging work.
- Across the school, attainment is rising. Most pupils are working at, or close to, nationally expected levels. Given their below-average starting points in Years 1 and 3, this represents good achievement. Year 2 pupils talk confidently about their work and explain clearly in lessons what they need to do next. Year 6 pupils have a clear understanding of the customs of Ancient Greece and Greek theatre and use this knowledge to good effect when comparing different cultures.
- Results in the Year 1 screening check for phonics (the sounds that letters make) have improved since the previous inspection and were broadly in line with the national average in 2014. Most less-able pupils in Year 2 read fluently and their less confident classmates make determined, successful attempts to sound out accurately the words they find hard.

The early years provision is good

- The knowledge and skills of most children are well below those typical for their age on entry to Nursery. All groups make good progress, although some gaps in writing skills remain. These are now being tackled quickly in Year 1, supported by the school's Key Stage 1 action plan. The percentage of Reception children who achieved a good level of development moved closer to the national average in 2014. This trend of

improvement is ensuring that most pupils are well prepared for Key Stage 1.

- Staff's consistent focus on developing children's speaking skills and independence contributes to children's good progress. Their insistent questioning helps children master simple number sequences and to express their ideas with increasing confidence. Extra guidance is effective so that activities follow children's interests and make productive use of the new conservatory to extend children's experiences and skills.
- Staff plan a wide range of well-resourced activities in the indoor areas. These foster children's enthusiasm for learning and ensure that children sustain their concentration and efforts during tasks and at play. However, opportunities to challenge the most-able children and encourage them to develop the skills of extended writing are not always provided.
- Staff model good learning behaviours very effectively. They manage isolated incidents where individual children feel upset, skilfully, so that other children are not distracted. Children very quickly understand the importance of taking turns, of sharing equipment fairly, and of building positive relationships with each other, with staff, and with visitors.
- Staff are vigilant in ensuring children stay safe during the activities they undertake. They check children's progress regularly and use the records of their observations of children's achievement carefully to adjust their short-term teaching plans and to identify long-term objectives. Good teamwork ensures that practice and procedures are consistent across the setting.
- The early years is led and managed well. The new leader has a clear understanding of the performance of different groups of children and of key priorities. She aspires to improve provision further and is building useful partnerships with other schools to share best practice.

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	104207
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	453459

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Such
Headteacher	Juli Copley
Date of previous school inspection	28 February–1 March 2013
Telephone number	01922 721383
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