

# Chilwell Croft Academy

Chilwell Croft, Newtown, Birmingham, West Midlands B19 2QH

## Inspection dates

4–5 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Over the past three years, the standards pupils reach by the end of Year 6 in reading and mathematics have been low. Pupils, therefore, have left the school not well prepared for their secondary education. Older pupils currently are still catching up for weaker teaching in the past.
- The most able pupils do not make sufficient progress in mathematics currently. This is because they are not challenged sufficiently well.
- The teaching of mathematics is not as effective as the teaching of other subjects and requires improvement. Teachers' questioning of pupils is variable. Pupils do not use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Leaders do not provide teachers with information about what pupils already know and can do in mathematics to make sure that work is not too easy for most-able pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school. Leaders and trustees are ambitious for their school. They show this by setting high expectations for staff and pupils.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Reading and writing are now taught well.
- Most groups of pupils are now making good progress. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged.
- Pupils behave well. Their conduct is good around the school and in classrooms. They use good manners throughout the school day.
- Pupils are safe and know what the school does to keep them safe. The school has robust safeguarding procedures.
- Children receive a good start to school in the early years provision. They settle into routines quickly.

## Full report

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

- Raise standards in mathematics by improving teaching so that it effectively challenges pupils by:
  - setting the most able pupils harder work through which they can apply their calculation skills in difficult problems and explain their reasoning
  - providing all groups of pupils with work in other curriculum subjects which require them to apply their mathematical skills
  - questioning pupils to ensure that any misconceptions are addressed and understood.
- Sharpen current assessment systems to ensure that leaders provide teachers with clear expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher and headteacher have secured good improvements since the last inspection. This is most noticeable in pupils' behaviour and in the quality of teaching. Leaders consult with staff and pupils in order to gain their views. Both groups say that the school has improved markedly over the past two years.
- Senior leaders have created a culture where all staff, pupils and families feel welcome. They are ambitious for the pupils in their school. Staff have been appointed who are responsible for ensuring that pupils feel safe and valued. As a result, pupils are keen to attend school and are ready to learn at the start of lessons. All leaders now have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. These expectations are most noticeable in reading and writing activities.
- The capacity for further improvement is good. Newly appointed leaders have quickly identified what needs to improve and have made changes to enable this to happen. The leader accountable for the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities began her role at the start of this term. She has established a clear understanding of the needs of this group of pupils and how timetables are designed to support their learning. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- Leaders have found it difficult to recruit staff for teaching and leadership roles. They have ensured that any new staff are well supported as they begin their new roles. For example, the leader for the early years has received effective support and guidance from the key stage 1 leader. As a result, the early years is led well.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive relevant training to enable pupils of varying ethnic backgrounds to do well. For example, staff in the early years and in key stage 1 are skilled in teaching early reading. This helps pupils whose first language is not English progress well.
- Leaders are well supported by the trust board. Trustees know the school well, acknowledging the effective leadership of the senior leadership team. A teaching and learning team, made up of leaders from the trust, has been set up to support teachers in both schools. Teachers at Chilwell Croft have benefited from guidance provided by this group.
- Teachers' performance is monitored well by senior leaders. Various methods are used to check that teachers are performing well. These include observations and analysis of pupils' progress information. Where weaker performance is identified, support is put in place quickly. Newly qualified teachers value the support they receive from their mentors.
- Senior leaders and trustees have established a clear rationale for pupil premium funding. This is to enable disadvantaged pupils to make good progress and for them to have experiences which they might not have access to outside of school, such as visits to places of interest. Increasing staff hours, in order for pupils to work in smaller groups, has led to this group now making slightly better progress than their peers, who are now attaining better outcomes themselves. Disadvantaged pupils who are very able mathematicians do not yet make sufficient progress in mathematics. Leaders and trustees are aware of this and have put plans and actions in place to address this.
- The school makes effective use of its primary school physical education and sport

funding. It employs sports coaches who offer a wide range of sporting clubs to pupils. Some of these clubs are competitive, with pupils from Chilwell Croft excelling in sports such as basketball. Pupils are also developing leadership skills and sportsmanship attitudes. Pupils demonstrate these attributes by showing respect for others around school.

- Leaders ensure that pupils learn about different cultures. Pupils talk clearly about their understanding of why it is important to respect different cultures and faiths. They talk about British values, such as democracy and tolerance, in such a way as to show that they have made sense of what such values mean for them. For example, they read posters around the school which encourage them to reflect on their own views. As a result, pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Subject leaders report to the trust board and to senior leaders. Subject leaders evaluate how well pupils are learning through their particular subjects. The trustees have ensured that these leaders have sufficient time and budget to lead their subject well.
- Leaders at all levels have developed and implemented a curriculum which motivates pupils well. Subject leaders evaluate how well a range of subjects are used to help pupils practice and embed grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. Changes are then made as needed. As a result, pupils' books show that pupils practise and embed these skills. This is not the case for mathematics. Pupils are not presented with tasks which require them to use skills learned in mathematics lessons.
- In recent years, inaccuracies in teachers' assessments of pupils' abilities have led to pupils not being given sufficiently challenging work. This meant that pupils did not make the progress in reading and mathematics they should have. Through work with colleagues in the trust, leaders now provide teachers with more accurate information, who are using this to challenge pupils in their reading more effectively. Such information is not readily available for mathematics. This means that leaders do not provide teachers with clear expectations of what the most able pupils should be achieving.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is effective. The trust board is effective in holding the school to account. Through its scheme of delegation, trustees ensure that all statutory duties are carried out. Trustees check that pupils are making sufficient progress. If this is not the case then leaders responsible for any weaknesses are supported and challenged well. This is currently the case with mathematics.
- Senior and subject leaders attend scrutiny meetings, which are held every term. During these meetings trustees receive written and verbal information about how well groups of pupils are performing in different subjects. As a result, they are able to explain why pupils are making stronger progress in reading and writing than in mathematics.
- Systems have been established to ensure that the performance of all teachers is checked. There are close links between performance and salary rewards. If weaker performance is identified, then trustees check that measures put in place to support teachers are effective.
- Trustees are aware that weak teaching in the past led to low outcomes for pupils in reading and mathematics. They have assured themselves that teaching is now better,

acknowledging that further work is needed to ensure that pupils make sufficient progress in mathematics, especially the most able.

- Trustees know the community well. They understand the issues that parents and pupils face on a day-to-day basis. They have used this knowledge to develop a school in which pupils feel safe and can experience a range of activities, including sporting, which they might not be able to access easily outside of school.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive regular training and use this to ensure they stay vigilant in spotting any signs of concern. Referrals are made promptly and are followed through to a satisfactory conclusion.
- Leaders understand the dangers that pupils might face in the local community. They ensure that staff follow agreed routines which are designed to protect children. For example, at break and lunchtimes, staff supervise areas close to the perimeter fencing as this enables them to monitor any engagement between pupils and the public.
- Throughout the school day the ratio of staff to pupils is always high. Pupils value this as they say it helps them stay and feel safe. Pupils talk to various staff if they are concerned about anything. Clear systems are in place through which any concerns about children's welfare are recorded and reported to senior staff.
- Through surveys, leaders know that parents, staff and pupils acknowledge the work of the school in ensuring that pupils are kept safe. They recognise the improvements that have been made over the past two years.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Weaker teaching has led to low standards in recent years. Over time, teaching has not challenged pupils well because expectations of what pupils could achieve have been too low.
- Although teaching is improving, the teaching of mathematics is not as effective as that in other subjects and requires improvement. This is because teachers do not have information about the achievement of this group of pupils in order to plan and deliver appropriately challenging work. As a result, work for the most able lacks challenge. These pupils have consolidated their calculation skills, however, they are not given sufficiently difficult problems to solve – problems which require them to select and use calculation skills. Pupils' ability to explain how and why they choose to solve problems is a key requirement of the mathematics curriculum.
- Teachers' questioning is mostly effective. Teachers use questions to check out pupils' understanding and then ask further questions to deepen their thinking. For example, in Year 6 in science, pupils were required to state and then explain why chemical reactions resulted in observed changes. However, sometimes teachers do not explore pupils' responses well enough. This means that misconceptions are sometimes not addressed, especially in mathematics.
- Most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are now making good progress in reading and writing. Pupils are set work which challenges them well.
- Teachers check that pupils have secured required skills, including grammar and punctuation skills, by looking at their work in other subjects. Inspection evidence

shows that these skills being embedded through science work, for example. There is, however, very little evidence of this for mathematics.

- Teaching is well organised now. Timetables ensure that a wide range of subjects is taught each week. Teachers with subject experience and knowledge are deployed well. This ensures that pupils experience good-quality provision, for example in music and sport. Pupils have created artistic pieces with the support of external artists. These are displayed in corridors, which not only makes the school environment attractive but also encourages pupils to talk about their work.
- Teaching assistants know which groups they will be supporting and what is expected of them. This contributes to an orderly environment in which pupils understand routines and conduct themselves well as a result.
- Teaching of reading is effective. All adults use their secure phonics knowledge to teach early reading skills well. In Reception, adults skilfully balance time to enable children to practice and embed letter sounds and also experience new sounds. Pupils' work at home contributes well to this progress. Daily activities include reading with family members.
- Teaching ensures that lower-ability readers use their phonic skills well in order to decode words in their reading books. Higher-ability readers demonstrate their effective use of harder skills, such as deduction and inference, and as a result gain a deeper understanding of their books.
- Over the past three years, writing has been taught well. This is because teachers know what they need to teach and when. They know how to assess whether pupils have embedded skills, including grammar, punctuation and spelling. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to give pupils oral and written feedback which challenges them to think about how they could improve their writing. Sustained good teaching has led to pupils making good progress. Pupils in all year groups, except in Years 5 and 6, attain well now. Older pupils still have gaps in their understanding as a result of weaker teaching in the past.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are taught well. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively, teaching groups of pupils at times of the day that best suit the needs of the pupils. They know the barriers that restrict individual pupils from making good progress. Teaching assistants use this information, together with their own subject knowledge, to deliver sessions which enable pupils to make good progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel secure in their school and classrooms. They know that any unwanted behaviour will be dealt with by staff effectively. This gives them confidence as they know they can concentrate on their learning without being distracted.
- Pupils' physical and emotional well-being is well promoted. Staff have specific roles and responsibilities to support pupils during the school day. For example, sports coaches deliver activities through which pupils develop healthy lifestyles. Learning mentors supervise at breaktimes and work with individual pupils to help them in their play with other pupils.

- Pupils say that bullying is rare and if it does occur then staff deal with it quickly and effectively. Repeated bullying does not occur. Parental, staff and pupil surveys, coupled with school information which records such incidents, confirm that anti-bullying work is effective.
- Pupils know that they are kept safe in school. They are able to describe what the school does well. For example, many staff supervise pupils at the start and end of the school day, as well as during breaktimes. Through these interactions, pupils know they are valued by staff and welcome this daily, routine supervision.
- Staff receive regular training which helps them keep up to date with current safeguarding issues. As a result, they are very aware of dangers pupils might face, both in the school community and further afield. They ensure that pupils understand the dangers of using the internet and what to do if they become concerned while online.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Leaders have created policies and staff have implemented these well. This has resulted in marked improvement in behaviour over the past two years.
- Pupils know what staff expect of them and step up to these expectations at all times of the school day. They show good conduct around the school and in their classrooms, always adopting a well-mannered approach when talking with adults.
- Pupils enjoy working and playing with each other. They develop good social skills, which enable them to listen to others' views and respond appropriately. This helps them to develop good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. In an assembly, pupils were introduced to Black History Month. They were clearly interested in this topic, keen to talk about their views. Other pupils listened attentively to what others had to say. This helped them reflect on their own perspectives.
- Pupils' attendance has improved over the past three years. The attendance rate for all pupils is now similar to the national average. Persistent absence rates remain above the national average, although the school's work has led to a decline in such absence. Different groups of pupils attend well, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff are effective in supporting parents to ensure that their children are punctual and attend school regularly.
- Staff and pupils have developed trusting relationships. These can be seen at the start of the school day at breakfast club. This daily facility is well attended by pupils. Pupils enjoy talking with staff about their activities out of school and what they are looking forward to in school.
- Disruption in lessons is rare. Occasionally, pupils lose interest in their work if they are not challenged sufficiently. This is more often seen in mathematics lessons. Pupils present their work well in their books, especially in Years 1 to 4. Where older pupils have weaker handwriting skills, as result of weaker teaching previously, their written presentation is weaker.
- Pupils who find it difficult to behave well are supported by teaching assistants and learning mentors effectively. As a result of this support, pupils spend more time learning. They maintain their concentration in lessons.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In recent years, by the end of Year 6, pupils have attained low outcomes in reading and mathematics. This was because they made insufficient progress through key stages 1 and 2. As a result of low attainment, pupils have not been well prepared for their move into their next stage of education.
- Teaching has improved. However, pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 still have gaps in their learning as a result of weaker teaching in previous years. This means that they still have ground to catch up in order for them to reach the required standards at the end of their time at Chilwell Croft.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress they need to attain expected outcomes in mathematics. This group of pupils are not challenged in mathematics effectively. In other subjects, most-able pupils are making better progress and are securing the skills required.
- Over time, disadvantaged pupils have made similar rates of progress to their peers with the same starting points. However, when compared with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally they have not attained well. Last year, progress for this group was better than previously. In the majority of year groups currently, disadvantaged pupils are outperforming their classmates.
- Pupils are now making much better progress than in recent years. So far this academic year, progress is good, with reading and writing the strongest subjects. More pupils are on track to attain expected outcomes by the end of each year group as a result.
- There is little variation in the performance of pupils from different backgrounds. This is because leaders and staff quickly assess what pupils need in order to make good progress. For example, children in the early years who have not had the opportunity to learn about phonics are taught initial reading skills as soon as they enter Reception. Phonics is taught well in the early years and in key stage 1. This has led to a similar proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in recent years, when compared with national figures.
- Effective teaching of early reading skills has led to pupils being able to read fluently in Years 3 and 4. This has enabled them to gain more information from their reading in other subjects, such as history. As a result, pupils progress well in these subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The leader with responsibility for this group of pupils, has quickly identified how best to support pupils with specific needs. The leader carries out checks to see if teaching is effective. Support is adjusted as and when necessary.
- Pupils made good progress in 2015 from different starting points in writing. Information held by school leaders, coupled with inspection evidence gleaned from checking pupils' writing in books across a range of subjects, show that pupils write well. This is particularly the case in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2, where pupils have had more time to embed their writing skills.
- Good progress is evident in a range of subjects. Pupils use their reading and writing skills to convey their ideas well. Further, pupils collaborate well, sharing their ideas and learning from each other. Mathematical skills are yet to be used well to support pupils' learning in other subjects.



## Early years provision

Good

- Children get a good start to their education at Chilwell Croft. The early years department is well led and managed. The early years leader ensures that her team use information provided by parents and from external agencies, including those whose role is to provide schools with speech and language support, to welcome the children in to Reception effectively. As a result, children were observed enjoying their learning and behaving well, having only arrived at the school recently.
- Teachers and teaching assistants teach well. This has been the case over the past few years. They use their secure subject knowledge together with their understanding of individual children, to plan and deliver effective learning. This has led to a curriculum through which children engage well and make good progress through the year.
- Many children enter the early years with skills lower than typically seen nationally in most areas of learning. A wide variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds are represented in each cohort of children. Many children use English as an additional language to the one they use in their homes. Staff are quick to understand the children's language abilities and use this to make sure that the environment provides children with opportunities to acquire English language skills quickly.
- Children from different backgrounds progress well through the early years. Unvalidated information indicates that the proportion of children, who left Reception having attained a good level of development, rose in 2016 to be above the 2015 national average. As a result, all such groups attain good outcomes and are well prepared for their move in to Year 1. Leaders make good use of funding to ensure that disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well.
- Children behave well and keep themselves safe in the well-organised learning environment. They understand what is expected of them and step up to this expectation. For example, children do not need prompting to take turns and share equipment sensibly. On one occasion, children were observed praising each other for forming their letters accurately and pointing out how their friends could improve further.

## School details

Unique reference number	138395
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10012425

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alex Lofthouse
Headteacher	Nick Lambert
Telephone number	0121 464 3402
Website	<a href="http://www.chilwellcroft.com">www.chilwellcroft.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiry@chilwellcroft.bham.sch.uk">enquiry@chilwellcroft.bham.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	1–2 July 2014

## Information about this school

- Chilwell Croft became an academy sponsored by Aston Manor Academy in September 2012.
- The trust board encompasses Aston Manor Academy and Chilwell Croft Academy as part of Equitas Academies Trust. The trust board took over the governance of both academies in January 2014.
- An executive headteacher oversees the work of both academies.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.
- Chilwell Croft is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the early years are taught in one classroom. There are two full-time Reception groups. All other year groups have two classes.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average.

- Approximately half of the pupils are of Black African background.
- The pupils come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Approximately half of the pupils speak English as an additional language, which is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.
- A breakfast club runs every day and is managed by the trust board.
- There are four newly qualified teachers.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and visited small group intervention sessions. They visited 18 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the chair of the trust board and other trustees and staff.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading and listened to both higher- and lower-ability pupils read.
- Inspectors examined work in pupils' books.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documentation written to support school improvement, including minutes from meetings of the trust board.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 replies to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors considered a parental survey conducted by the school and also spoke with parents.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website.

## Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ian Beardmore	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Hickerton	Ofsted Inspector

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