

Hockley Heath Academy

School Road, Hockley Heath, Solihull, B94 6RA

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is consistently above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well because they are taught well. Teaching in some year groups is outstanding.
- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Pupils feel very safe. They are proud of their school.
- Staff and pupils feel valued as individuals.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils say they love coming to school.
- The school provides many rich and rewarding opportunities for pupils to develop into mature individuals.
- The principal has been instrumental in making sure the school's move to becoming an academy ran smoothly.
- Senior leaders and governors have played an important part in improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school works well with parents and carers, who feel involved in their children's learning.
- Links with partner schools are strong and shared training is particularly good at helping staff to develop their skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils make good progress or reach higher levels in writing throughout the school. The quality of their writing and presentation varies, and reflects too many careless mistakes.
- Sometimes teachers do not ask enough of the most able pupils, or give pupils enough information on how to improve when they mark their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the principal.
- Meetings were held with pupils, a representative of the governing body and staff, including senior and subject leaders. A telephone discussion was held with the school adviser.
- Inspectors took account of 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also looked at the school’s own parental questionnaires and spoke informally to parents and carers.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan, policies, data about pupils’ progress and attainment, and how the school sets targets for the teachers to improve their work. They also looked at child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Kath Campbell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pat Fielding

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hockley Heath is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.
- A low proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are supported at school action, and an above-average proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Care is provided for pupils before and after school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school converted to an academy in August 2012. When the predecessor school, Hockley Heath Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2009 it was judged to be good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in writing by making sure that:
 - all teachers insist that written work is of a consistently good standard and well presented, with no basic spelling mistakes.
- Further improve teaching by making sure that teachers:
 - demand the best work in all subjects, particularly from the most-able pupils
 - use marking effectively to help pupils improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding above the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared for their move into Year 1.
- Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the rest of the school. In 2013, the attainment of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 was above average in reading and writing and slightly higher in mathematics. Attainment varies between year groups because of the small number of pupils involved. This year attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is on track to be higher, partly through better progress and partly because this group of pupils had higher starting points.
- Achievement in mathematics is good. Improving basic skills has been a whole-school area for development. Initiatives have proved both enjoyable and effective. Pupils' current work shows that attainment is rising because pupils have better calculation and problem-solving skills. An above-average proportion of pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach high levels.
- Reading is taught well. It is an important part of school life and pupils in most need read daily with an adult. Parents also support reading well at home. Younger pupils quickly gain the confidence to have a go at unfamiliar words because the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is effective. In 2013 a high proportion of pupils in Year 1 reached the expected level in the phonics screening check. Older pupils develop a love of reading and can talk with maturity about why they like a particular book.
- Writing is an ongoing area for development because not enough pupils reach the higher levels. The tracking of pupils' progress is now much better than in the past. Pupils who are not achieving as well are quickly identified and receive the help they need to get back on track. Some initiatives to raise pupils' performance are too recent to measure their impact on learning. However, there are still some inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' written work. Some writing is of good quality and many pupils write at length and with maturity. By contrast, some older pupils spell simple words incorrectly and do not present their work well.
- The school is closing the gap between its least able pupils and the rest. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils because their progress is tightly monitored and they receive good quality support in the classroom and, when appropriate, on a one-to-one basis.
- The school has used its pupil premium funding effectively to improve pupils' basic skills and ensure they make good progress. In 2013, too few pupils in Year 6 were supported by the pupil premium to judge their attainment and progress without potentially identifying individuals.

The quality of teaching is good

- Consistently good teaching is at the heart of this school's success. The school's records from monitoring teaching, and the work seen in pupils' books and lessons confirm that it is typically good over time.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, learning is fun. Staff work together well as a team and make sure children enjoy a wide range of interesting and purposeful activities, both in the classroom and in outdoor areas. The generous ratio of adults to children means those in most

need achieve as well as others because they receive good quality individual support.

- Teachers present activities in interesting ways. Strong relationships between adults and pupils contribute to good learning. Most pupils want to succeed because they enjoy their work.
- Where teaching is at its most effective, teachers and other adults show that they have high expectations and pupils learn quickly. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson on measuring time, pupils were totally absorbed in their activities, not a minute was wasted and everyone made great strides in their learning. The teacher skilfully moved pupils' learning forward in a structured way and this added to the success of the lesson. Every pupil rose to the challenge to do his or her best.
- Lesson activities are carefully planned to take account of pupils' differing abilities, and teachers make sure pupils know the purpose of each lesson. Activities are often demanding, but not in all lessons. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations, particularly in what they demand of their most-able pupils. As a result, these pupils sometimes do not take enough care or produce enough work because not enough is asked of them, especially in their written work.
- Adults who support teachers in the classroom make sure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good quality support that helps them to succeed. They are also careful to make sure these pupils develop the skills they need to work without adult help.
- Most work is carefully marked and pupils know their targets for improvement. However, although there are examples of helpful marking, some does not give pupils clear enough guidance on how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good in lessons and around school. Pupils' very positive attitudes towards learning have a strong impact on their good personal development.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy the activities on offer very much. Nursery children look forward to their time in the outdoor 'Forest School' and particularly enjoy exploring and playing together.
- Pupils are ready and eager to learn. They value the help that they receive from their teachers and other adults. Currently they are very excited about using their new building.
- Adults manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. In discussion, neither parents nor pupils expressed concerns about behaviour. Occasionally, some older boys do not give of their best or are slow to start their work because they have not listened carefully enough to instructions. As a result, some of their work is badly presented, with careless mistakes.
- A few pupils who need extra help with learning to behave well are able to participate fully in school life because they receive good quality one-to-one support.
- Parents regard the good quality care provided by the before- and after-school 'HH club' highly. It is very popular because pupils enjoy the activities on offer.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding procedures meet current

government requirements. Parents are very confident that the school keeps their children safe and secure. Pupils say they feel very safe, including when using computers or the internet.

- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are very rare, but are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils particularly like the many ways, including worry boxes, in which the school allows them to express any concerns anonymously. They say that teachers and other staff follow up their concerns quickly and confidentially.
- Attendance is above average and rising. The school keeps a careful check on a small number of pupils who may be at risk of falling behind in their work to make sure they attend regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- The principal has provided much needed stability during the school's transition to an academy and during the management of recent building work. He is regarded highly by staff, pupils and parents.
- The vice-principal gives the principal strong support. Indeed, all senior leaders have successfully driven through improvement and have played a major part in raising the quality of teaching through monitoring the performance of staff effectively. Teachers are far more accountable for the standards achieved and are only rewarded with a pay increase if pupils achieve well.
- Subject leadership is good because teachers have an accurate view of whether pupils are doing well enough in their subjects. Staff are committed to seeking improvement. Teachers say they are supported well in their roles. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are accurate and thorough. The school improvement plan is a good working document that reflects an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The wide range of purposeful and exciting learning experiences makes a strong contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Art and music are important features and pupils greatly enjoy the many sporting activities on offer. The recent addition of the 'Forest School' has been a great success with pupils of all ages. It has added much to pupils' enjoyment of school. There are many good examples of pupils developing their literacy and numeracy skills well in different subjects, such as in some recent work on the explorer Shackleton.
- Strong links with parents and partner schools are a very important feature. Collaboration with several other local schools has benefited Hockley Heath greatly. They share expertise and pool resources otherwise not available to a school of this size. Training has recently been used to good effect to develop the expertise of subject leaders.
- The primary school sports funding has been used effectively to provide, for example, an outside climbing wall to encourage less motivated pupils to become more active. It contributes well to the school's strong promotion of healthy lifestyles. An athletics club has been introduced to encourage pupils to participate in competitive sport.
- The school has retained its good links with the local authority since it became an academy and this has contributed to a smooth transition because the adviser knows the school very well. She reviews its work regularly and provides training when requested. She has an accurate view of what the school does well and what needs to be improved.

■ The governance of the school:

- The Chair of the Governing Body is very experienced and knowledgeable. He is well informed and highly supportive of the school. He has a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and data on pupils' performance. Governors keep up to date with training on important matters such as child protection. They keep a careful eye on how effectively pupil premium funding is being used to close the gap between the attainment of these pupils and others. They review the principal's performance and check that leaders are managing the performance of other staff well to improve the quality of teaching. They make sure pay awards are closely linked to an improvement in pupils' progress. Currently, the governing body is in the process of developing the skills of several new members so that they know whether standards are high enough and can challenge with greater confidence and depth of knowledge.

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	138462
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	431506

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gareth Crawley
Principal	Stephen Gowan
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01564 783161
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