

# Hallow CofE Primary School

Main Road, Hallow, Worcester, WR2 6LD

**Inspection dates** 5–6 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Achievement in reading is a particular strength.
- Teachers and learning support assistants have high expectations for what pupils can achieve, and provide a good level of challenge and support.
- A wide variety of practical first-hand experiences enrich pupils' learning in subjects such as music, history and information and communication technology.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well and have very positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Good leadership, including from the governing body, has led to clear improvement since the last inspection.
- Particularly good personal care for pupils and their families makes sure that all feel included and safe.
- Attendance has risen since the last inspection, and is now above the national average.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress is not as rapid in mathematics as in English. The teaching of aspects such as mental arithmetic is not always demanding enough, and the action plans in mathematics do not show clearly how improvements will be made and checked.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to check their own work, or respond to teachers' marking.
- Subject leaders do not focus enough on the quality of pupils' learning when checking lessons in their subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 14 lessons taught by seven different teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- They observed the school's work and looked at planning documents, monitoring records, assessment data and pupils' work.
- Inspectors took account of 37 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire) in reaching their judgements about the school.

## Inspection team

David Shears, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Lafford

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Hallow CofE Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, and at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs, are below average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are both below national averages.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is extra government funding for particular groups, including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides before- and after-school clubs for pupils.
- Since the last inspection the school has formed a partnership with another school, which means that the headteacher now oversees both schools.
- The school does not use any alternative off-site provision for any pupils.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, so that all pupils make outstanding progress by ensuring that:
  - assessment information is used consistently to plan lesson activities at exactly the right level of difficulty for pupils of all abilities
  - all pupils are challenged to develop good mental arithmetic skills
  - pupils have regular chances to assess their own learning, and to respond to marking and feedback.
- Build on the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - action plans in mathematics clearly show how areas for development are to be addressed
  - subject leaders develop their monitoring and evaluation skills to support better learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children begin school with attainment that is broadly in line with age-related expectations, although there are particular weaknesses in their writing and calculation skills. They settle well and make good progress in all areas of learning. This is because staff plan demanding activities while giving children good support, and regularly check how well they are doing. This was illustrated in a lesson on exploring counting to 10, where the teacher gave specific tasks to particular children to check their understanding.
- The good progress made in the Early Years Foundation Stage is successfully built on in Years 1 and 2, and by the time pupils start in Year 3 their attainment is above average. The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is of a particularly good quality, strengthening their reading skills. In one lesson pupils learnt about a new sound and practised it in different ways, such as singing a song and writing a sentence that contained words with the new sound.
- In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make good progress in English. The focus on reading has helped pupils to become better writers, and their attainment in English has been rising for five years and is now well above the national average. For example, in one lesson pupils were inspired to write a report for the radio, remembering what needed to be included to make it interesting and informative.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not as strong, and inconsistent across classes. This is because the work set for pupils is not always at the right level of difficulty for them all to make at least good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of effective support from teaching assistants that is tailored to their specific learning needs. Other groups of pupils make similar progress. The very few pupils supported through pupil premium funding do well. Test results show that gaps in attainment in English and mathematics are closing for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, both with other pupils in the school and pupils nationally. This is because they receive extra support with their key skills, such as reinforcing their understanding of phonics.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils make good progress because most of the teaching meets their learning needs well. Pupils are clear about what they are going to learn in lessons, and teachers plan interesting activities to engage them in their learning. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to enhance learning, and ask searching questions to check pupils' understanding and make them think hard.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support learning. They work closely with teachers to ensure that pupils get the right level of support and challenge. This includes disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Pupils use the skills they have learnt in literacy and numeracy in a wide range of other subjects, which quickens the pace of learning. The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) is a particular strength. Pupils have many opportunities to develop other skills through first-hand experiences such as learning a musical instrument or participating in an archaeological dig. These experiences enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are highly positive and pupils say how much they enjoy learning. Consequently they are very keen to work, and grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- Occasionally teaching does not fully meet the needs of learners in mathematics. For example, while all pupils have opportunities to practise their mental arithmetic skills, teaching does not always take enough account of their differing ability levels, and so tasks are sometimes not demanding enough to really stretch pupils.
- Marking always includes feedback, and this often tells pupils what they need to do to improve their work. However, while there are good examples of pupils responding to the teachers' comments, this is not consistent through the school. In some classes there are good examples of pupils recording in their books whether they understood the work or needed extra help, but this, too, is inconsistent.

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

- Everyone, including parents and carers, teachers and pupils, is clear that behaviour is exemplary. Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and are equally able to work together highly effectively, or to complete their tasks independently when needed.
- The playground is a happy place in which to play and relax and there is a 'buddy' system to ensure that all pupils have a friend to spend time with. While pupils say that there are occasional differences of opinion, they are learning to resolve these themselves. Members of staff are always on hand to give support where needed. They enable pupils to resolve issues for themselves.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and say that this rarely happens in school and so they all feel safe. They learn through many subjects and in collective worship how to keep themselves safe. For example, when working outside they are well aware of any health and safety issues, and equally know all about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Attendance has risen since the last inspection to above the national average, and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen to below average. Pupils are consistently punctual to school and make the most of all learning opportunities.
- The school provides before- and after-school care. The pupils who attend enjoy the range of activities on offer, both outdoors and inside. They are appropriately supervised and enjoy being there.

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

- The senior leaders have a strong drive for improvement, not just in terms of developing pupils' literacy and numeracy understanding, but also in extending the range of experiences to broaden their skills across many subjects. The resulting rise in achievement demonstrates their capacity for further improvement.
- The care of pupils is a strength. All are included and nurtured and there is a clear emphasis on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils through regular acts of collective worship and the wide variety of subjects explored. Safeguarding policies and procedures meet current national requirements. Parents and carers strongly support the school, and nearly all would recommend it to others.

- Leaders know the school's strengths, and identified areas for improvement are recorded clearly in a school development plan. The focus on reading has been highly successful, and it is now a particular strength. However, in mathematics the action plan lacks clarity in identifying how improvements are to be made or what is being done to check that any changes are having a good impact.
- The progress of all pupils is carefully tracked. Where any are identified as being at risk of falling behind in their learning they are quickly given extra support to help them catch up. For example, the school identified a gap between the progress of girls and boys in literacy. Boys were particularly encouraged to develop an interest in reading and writing, and as a result the gap in attainment has closed. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling any discrimination.
- Regular checks are made about the quality of teaching in each class. Any areas for development identified are checked to ensure that improvements have been made. This information helps to make decisions about the pay that teachers receive.
- Middle leaders have a secure understanding of how their areas are developed through the school and encourage staff to develop creative ways of linking subjects together. However, their role in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility, including observing the quality of teaching and learning, is not focused enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.
- The local authority has provided effective help and guidance. The level of support has rightly been reduced as the school's overall effectiveness has rapidly improved.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body knows how well the school is doing compared to other schools nationally and is effective in giving support and challenge to raise progress and standards further. Governors manage finance well, including checking how well staff are performing and, in particular, the effectiveness of the headteacher. They have a good understanding of the way extra money from the pupil premium is used to enhance the learning for these pupils and are currently examining the impact that this is having. Appropriate training has helped the governing body to identify ways to become even more effective, including the establishment of a partnership with another school. They have ensured that time spent on developing the partnership has not detracted from their main responsibility for the achievement of pupils at Hallow CofE Primary School. They are working on developing their own communication with parents and carers.

## 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>	116882
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402807

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	191
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Zoe Baril
<b>Headteacher</b>	Simon Stubbs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01905 640354
<b>Fax number</b>	01905 642870
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