

Elston Hall Primary School

Stafford Road, Fordhouses, Wolverhampton, WV10 6NN

Inspection dates 4–5 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Teachers are relentless in their drive to support pupils in making the best progress they can. As a result, pupils' achievement is outstanding.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in developing their reading, writing and mathematical skills in all year groups. Their attainment by the end of Year 6 is well above average.
- Teaching is outstanding because teachers and teaching assistants skilfully develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in a wide range of subjects. They have very high expectations of how quickly pupils can learn and how high they can achieve.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children develop excellent learning habits as a result of the high-quality teaching they receive.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and talk about how their school ensures they are safe at all times.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, demonstrating excellent attitudes to their learning. Such attitudes contribute very well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher has created a culture in the school which inspires all staff to do the very best they can for the pupils. School leaders are constantly seeking ways to further improve teaching and pupils' achievement. As a result, leadership and management are outstanding.
- Governors have a highly accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and how well pupils achieve. They challenge and support school leaders well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 27 lessons covering all year groups. Eight of these were observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading and listened to them read, both within lessons and separately.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and a local authority adviser.
- The 56 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire were taken into account. Inspectors also spoke with parents and carers.
- The views expressed in questionnaires returned by 60 members of the school staff were considered.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school, looking at a range of documentation. This included an examination of work in pupils' books.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Bird	Additional Inspector
Randhir Sandhu	Additional Inspector
Christopher Webb	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Elston Hall is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Nursery classes, with 80 children attending part time, and three full-time Reception classes.
- The majority of pupils are White British. Other pupils are mostly of Caribbean or Indian heritage.
- Around 40% of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- At 20%, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school manages a before and after-school childcare facility.
- The executive headteacher and leadership team are supporting another local school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils in Years 3 and 4 present their work to the highest standards.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The executive headteacher is an extremely effective leader. He has skilfully developed the school leadership team. They challenge each other to ensure they strive to further improve all aspects of the school. This results in pupils' standards continuing to rise. An example is how leaders are being consulted on new ways of assessing pupils' progress in light of the new curriculum being introduced.
- There is an excellent system in place for developing leaders. All teachers, including those newly qualified, are encouraged to think about how their careers might include leadership roles. Many teachers at the school have taken on leadership responsibilities and are thriving in these roles. Examples include year group leaders, who work with their staff to ensure the best possible teaching takes place.
- School leaders have developed an effective system for monitoring the quality of teaching. They create time for all teachers to visit other classrooms, to see how others teach and then consider and make changes to improve their own teaching. Information about pupils' current progress is used to help write precise and challenging targets for teachers. Such attention to detail leads to accelerated rates of progress for all pupils.
- All teachers and leaders use accurate information about pupils' progress and attainment very well to analyse how well each pupil, and groups of pupils, are currently achieving. The teachers who oversee the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, provide excellent leadership in this regard. Parents value the communication they receive about the rates of progress their child is currently making.
- Subject leaders have implemented the new National Curriculum effectively. They have not only ensured that all required aspects of their subject are covered, but that teachers and pupils are inspired by the new topics. They have made sure that pupils will continue to secure their understanding of numeracy and literacy skills, which has led to such high standards, and that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains a priority.
- School leaders ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to do well in all aspects of school life. An example is how the school uses its pupil premium funding, with highly skilled teaching assistants employed. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is outstanding.
- The school has made very effective use of primary school physical education and sport funding. It has provided pupils with opportunities to participate in a wider range of activities, including gymnastics, cross country running and athletics. More pupils now represent their school in competitive events; moreover, they take great pride in doing so.
- Pupils are tolerant and respectful. Discrimination does not occur, with school leaders expecting pupils to learn and play well with each other. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain as they understand and value differences in people.
- The local authority knows the school well and provides termly support. Having witnessed the excellent leadership of the executive headteacher, it approached the governors, who then agreed to support a local school. Leaders at Elston Hall have benefited from this relationship, as they have been able to practise and develop their skills at both schools.
- Leaders ensure that all staff follow safeguarding procedures and that all relevant policies are reviewed and kept up to date.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a highly accurate understanding of the school's performance. This includes information about how well pupils are progressing. They receive detailed reports from school leaders and use this information to ask challenging questions. The headteacher and leadership team always respond to such questions quickly and with clear explanation.

- Governors expect the highest standards of teaching and use reports from the headteacher to monitor the performance of teachers. They ensure that teachers' pay rises are tied to the good and better progress of their pupils, and they make sure that effective support is provided where further training is needed.
- The governing body is kept well informed about the implementation of the new curriculum and how school leaders are developing their preferred ways of assessing pupils' performance.
- Governors understand how the school promotes tolerance of, and respect for, people of all faiths and those of no faith. They listen to views from parents and pupils to ensure that school leaders' monitoring of the effectiveness of its work is accurate.
- The governing body makes sure that statutory requirements are fully met, including those for safeguarding.
- Governors ensure that the school's financial resources are well managed. They make careful checks on the impact of additional funding, such as sports funding and the pupil premium.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. Their eagerness to learn and ask questions begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continues through every year group. This is because the experiences they receive encourage pupils to be inquisitive.
- Pupils persevere with the challenging work they are presented with. Teachers are skilled at ensuring that all pupils are learning in all lessons. Pupils' positive attitudes, not only during lessons but at all times of the school day, contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are very proud of their school, showing respect for the well-maintained school buildings and environment. Parents comment that their children love coming to school.
- Everyone's opinions are given equal consideration. Mutual trust between pupils and staff is evident in classrooms, corridors and outside at playtimes. Pupils feel comfortable in approaching staff for support, confident that any issues will be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Pupils welcome opportunities to contribute to school life and take on responsible roles. Year 6 pupils enjoy supporting younger pupils in their play at lunchtimes, with pupils in Years 1 and 2 saying they value the company of the older pupils.
- Parents, staff and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour. They agree that all pupils, irrespective of their background, get on very well with each other. There are a variety of ethnic groups represented in the school, and all learn and play together extremely well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Governors ensure that policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe fully meet requirements. They are vigilant in maintaining regular checks that school leaders ensure pupils are safe. This includes the childcare facility, which operates both before and after the school day.
- Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and in other situations, such as when crossing roads. They understand the reasons for fire drills and so follow evacuation procedures impeccably.
- Pupils are very aware of the different types of bullying and state very clearly that it does not happen in their school. There are no recorded incidents of bullying. Indeed any examples of inappropriate behaviour are extremely rare and are dealt with quickly and effectively by staff.
- There has been recent improvement in attendance, with current attendance above the national average. The deputy headteacher has responsibility for improving attendance rates and is ensuring that the school

is more rigorous in its work. For example, members of the office staff now have dedicated time to follow up every pupil absence each morning, challenging the reasons given for non-attendance. Teachers expect and reward good attendance. Parents and pupils understand the importance of this.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Pupils thrive on the challenging work they receive and they complete their work to a high standard. This is because teachers have very high expectations of the standards pupils should achieve. Teachers are totally focused on working with pupils to make the best progress they can. There is no learning time lost in lessons.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are very highly skilled, both in their subject knowledge and knowing when to intervene in learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, for instance, staff encourage children to find things out for themselves then skilfully ask questions which further develop their understanding.
- Pupils' work receives highly effective feedback from teachers. Marking and written comments provide pupils with recognition of their success and points for improvement. However, it is the verbal feedback which drives strong progress, leading to such high standards in all subjects. Teachers engage effectively with pupils in all lessons, probing their understanding and presenting harder work at the right times.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is very effective. This is because staff know precisely what these pupils need to do to make outstanding progress and have the skills which enable this to happen. Strong, trusting relationships are evident between pupils and staff. This helps pupils when the work is very challenging for them as they feel secure sharing their work with staff.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is outstanding. Pupils use this knowledge to make rapid gains in their reading through Key Stage 1. Pupils continue to develop excellent skills through Key Stage 2 as the teaching ensures they develop more-demanding skills, such as scanning the text to find information.
- Pupils write effectively in all subjects, including homework. Teachers ensure that pupils gain a thorough understanding of key skills and then expect pupils to apply these in their writing. Pupils have plenty of time to write long pieces, which allows them to practise and demonstrate their new skills.
- Standards in mathematics are very high and continue to improve. Teachers ensure that there is an effective balance between calculation and problem-solving work. Pupils know how to break problems down in order to reach solutions, and they do this exceptionally well.
- Teachers set homework that encourages pupils to think and present their work in imaginative ways. Clear tasks are assigned and pupils are left to present their understanding in any way they choose. For example, Year 6 pupils presented facts about an American state using sketches, internet research and writing their own questions. Pupils are encouraged to pursue their own interests; in this example, using poetry to express personal views about the scenery.
- School leaders and teachers are very reflective of their own practice. They have identified that pupils in lower Key Stage 2 do not always present their work to the highest standard. This is due to pupils not consistently applying the school's handwriting style and not always taking the upmost care over the layout of their work. In response, the school is making adaptations to teaching, with teachers increasingly modelling correct letter formation and links, in order to enhance still further the presentation of work.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children joining the school in Nursery have skills which are below those typical for their age. This has been the case for many years. In order to understand which skills require immediate attention, the school works with parents to gain an accurate early assessment of children's abilities. Children then make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, leaving Reception with skills above national averages. Outstanding progress continues through Key Stages 1 and 2, with pupils leaving Year 6 with attainment

that is consistently well above the national average.

- Pupils make outstanding progress in each year group in reading, writing and mathematics. From below typical starting points, pupils move into Year 1 ready to tackle the harder work. In reading, for example, pupils are able to apply their phonic knowledge well. Over the past two years, a greater proportion of pupils than national have attained the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- The school is very effective in its provision for disadvantaged pupils. Over the past three years, the performance of pupils supported by the pupil premium leaving Year 2 has become much closer to that of their peers and of pupils nationally. Last year, they were between one and two terms behind in each subject. Their performance continues to improve through Key Stage 2. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils outperformed other pupils nationally, being typically a term ahead in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to their peers in school, they were a term behind in reading and mathematics, and less than half a term behind in writing.
- The most-able pupils achieve very well in reading, writing and mathematics in every year group. As a result, they attained standards that were well above national averages last year. They benefit from very challenging work and continue to make excellent progress throughout the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress. This is due to very effective leadership of the provision for this group of pupils, and precise teaching from skilled staff. The rapid progress made by these pupils results in many no longer receiving specific support by the time they leave the school.
- Progress in writing is very strong across the school. All ability groups benefit from lessons which enable them to write long pieces in most subjects, and teaching that expects pupils to use excellent grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Rates of progress in mathematics are similar to writing. Pupils experience a wide range of mathematical tasks, including problem-solving activities. They thrive on the harder work, being keen to select and use skills and techniques to solve problems.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children make excellent progress in Nursery and Reception. From children's below typical starting points, staff quickly find out how they can best plan for rapid progress and then teach key skills. As a result, by the time they leave Reception, they are well prepared for all aspects of the Year 1 curriculum. The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development is above the national average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage leader provides highly effective leadership. She understands how accurate information about how well children are performing can be used by staff to further develop children's understanding. All staff have benefited from additional training which has improved their skills.
- Children thrive in the well-designed indoor and outdoor areas. They come into school ready to learn and quickly engage in the varied activities. They show perseverance in their learning, only moving from one activity to another once they are satisfied they have completed the task.
- Teaching is outstanding, with all staff skilled in knowing when to work with children and when to leave them alone to explore things for themselves. Activities are carefully selected for children to practise and apply their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in developing strong relationships with the children. They show the children what good behaviour looks like and children respond by playing and working very effectively with each other.

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	104351
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	448891

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	679
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Len Kruczek
Headteacher	Kevin Grayson
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2010
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