

Franche Primary School

Chestnut Grove, Kidderminster, DY11 5QB

Inspection dates 22–23 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils' progress and attainment have continued to improve in the last three years. As a result, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen from below average to average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The headteacher and governors have acted on the advice in the previous inspection report and built a strong and effective leadership team. Leaders at all levels contribute to improving teaching and raising achievement.
- Teachers plan and provide lessons that engage and enthuse pupils so they want to learn and make good progress.
- The teachers and the highly skilled teaching assistants make excellent use of carefully chosen questions to make pupils think hard about their work.
- This is an exceptionally nurturing school. Behaviour and attitudes are good because pupils feel safe and relationships are positive.
- In the early years, staff use accurate assessments of children's progress very effectively to match activities precisely to their individual levels. Consequently, children are taught well and make good progress in all the areas of learning.
- Staff use a range of successful methods to ensure pupils make rapid progress in learning about phonics (the sounds that letters make). The vast majority reach the required standard by the end of Year 1.
- The school works closely with parents, medical professionals and social services to support the pupils, and their families, and to ensure their safety.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make sure that all groups of pupils are fully challenged during mathematics lessons, particularly the most able pupils.
- Although the way senior leaders present information on pupils' performance to staff and governors has improved, it is still complex. As a result, they are sometimes not able to clearly identify priorities for improving the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 28 lessons, including in the Nursery Plus additional resource base. Four of these lessons were carried out jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan and records related to behaviour and attendance. They also examined the school's information on the pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors reviewed minutes of governors' meetings and the curriculum, and checked pupils' books. They also heard pupils read. They observed and talked to pupils at lunchtime and during break times.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also spoke to parents informally before school.
- The inspectors took account of 144 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own surveys of parents' views, and the 41 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Shahnaz Maqsood, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Shears	Additional Inspector
Michael Onyon	Additional Inspector
Glen Goddard	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Franche is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is average. This is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- All pupils in the Reception Year attend full-time. Children in the nursery attend part-time.
- There is a privately managed nursery on the school site. A 'wraparound' childcare service is also run on the school premises. Both are managed privately and were not included in the inspection
- The school has a specially resourced provision for special educational needs called 'Nursery Plus'. This is for children with communication, speech and language needs, and provides for eight children aged two or three years. They attend part-time and in the mornings only.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has grown since it opened, following the reorganisation of schools in the Wyre Forest in 2007.
- The school is a partner school in the local teaching alliance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics by ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully challenged during lessons, particularly the most able.
- Simplify senior leaders' presentation of performance data, so that teachers and governors can use it more effectively to identify priorities for further improvement and accelerate pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The determined headteacher and governors have worked hard to establish a strong leadership team. All the leaders are very enthusiastic and passionate about their roles. They have established a culture of high expectations among all the staff, which are then passed on to the pupils. This ensures that pupils both achieve well and behave well.
- The year and subject leaders monitor pupils' progress, observe lessons and examine books. They use the resulting information well to inform their action plans and contribute to school improvement.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher convey high expectations that are leading to better teaching. Collaboration with schools across the local teaching alliance and extensive training have helped teachers to improve their skills and subject knowledge. The system for monitoring teaching and learning is robust and staff pay awards depend on pupils' performance.
- Leaders use effective procedures to check the work of the school, including the resource base. The senior leaders know the areas in which it is doing well and what it needs to do to improve further. However, they do not present information such as performance data to teachers and governors in a format that is easy to understand. As a result, priorities for improvement are sometimes not identified quickly enough.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted well. Through the Franche Values, pupils learn respect, tolerance and consideration. Pupils also understand about a range of faiths, cultures and the democratic processes. During the discussion with a group of pupils they were able to name the leaders of all the main parties and even relate some of their policies. This means they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The creative and effective curriculum is designed to develop skills and to enhance pupils' enjoyment. A strong focus is placed on improving pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The curriculum is enriched by a range of clubs, visits and trips. Most subjects are taught through themes that interest pupils such as Space and the Romans.
- The school uses the national primary school sports funding to employ a specialist physical education teacher and to buy extra resources. This has enabled the school to offer a diverse and exciting range of sports and games to enhance the pupils' learning experiences and improve their skills. The after-school sports clubs are popular and the sports teams have been very successful in competitions.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to support disadvantaged pupils and gaps in attainment are closing rapidly. The effectiveness of the small group sessions for these pupils is checked thoroughly and the activities adjusted if required. Some of the money is used to provide care before and after school, and for trips and visits to enhance eligible pupils' life experiences. In such ways, leaders promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination well.
- The local authority provides good advice and support. The school has used its recommendations to plan improvements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are effective and have improved their efficiency since the previous inspection. They are now well informed and dedicated to the school.
 - Governors know about the pupils' performance and the priorities for the school. They check the work of the school through lesson observations, 'book looks' and by talking to pupils and parents. They are aware of the quality of teaching and how any underperformance is tackled, and do not give pay rises to teachers unless they achieve their challenging targets related to pupils' progress.
 - The governors hold leaders to account for the progress and attainment of all pupils. The minutes of the governors' meetings show that they support and challenge in equal measure.

- The governors know how the pupil premium is used and monitor its impact closely. They challenge if the extra support is not raising achievement quickly enough for this group of pupils.
- The finance committee makes astute decisions with regard to staffing and resources to ensure the budget is well managed and money is used to improve outcomes for pupils.
- The governing body makes sure that the school meets safeguarding requirements effectively. For example, all the staff and governors have received appropriate training.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and this contributes to them achieving well. They told inspectors that they 'love coming to school every day' and 'enjoy doing topics'.
- Pupils are polite, respectful and welcoming. They behave well at lunchtimes and break times and move around school sensibly. The inspectors did not observe any disruptive behaviour in lessons during the inspection. The pupils and parents agreed that behaviour is good.
- After-school activities have a high take-up rate. Pupils enjoy a range of activities that enhance their experience.
- Pupils take great care with the presentation of work. They feel proud of what they have achieved and are keen to share it with others.
- Although the pupils manage their own behaviour well, some very occasionally lose focus when the activity is not sufficiently demanding.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and happy in a caring and nurturing environment. Their well-being is at the heart of the school's work.
- The school has excellent links with outside agencies and use them tenaciously to support pupils and their families.
- Pupils informed inspectors that all forms of bullying are rare. Although a very small minority of parents expressed concerns, pupils told inspectors that they know who to speak to if they experience bullying and were confident that incidents are dealt with swiftly.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet and dealing with strangers.
- Attendance is average. Pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching across the school ensures that pupils achieve well. Relationships are extremely positive between adults and pupils, and among the pupils themselves. This creates an environment in which pupils can learn.
- Teachers plan stimulating activities and tasks that enthuse and motivate pupils to work hard and succeed, including in the Nursery Plus resource base.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use probing questions particularly well to challenge pupils' thinking and to reinforce new learning in different ways to ensure pupils really understand. This was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson about shape, in which pupils were encouraged to explain their learning and to give

reasons for their answers.

- Writing is taught well across the school. The recently introduced 'Franche Write' activity every Friday gives pupils the opportunity to write at length and more frequently. Pupils informed inspectors that they enjoy writing on Fridays because the topics are interesting and based on what they are currently studying, such as 'Grow your Own'.
- The teaching of phonics is highly effective because teachers and teaching assistants are very competent and articulate sounds accurately. Pupils in the Reception class are able to explain and identify two and three letters that make one sound.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. Teachers provide many reading opportunities across the curriculum that require pupils to use their comprehension skills to understand demanding text, at the same time widening their vocabulary.
- The well-trained and skilful teaching assistants provide sharp and focused support for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs. This enables them to make good progress.
- Teachers' regular, detailed marking and guidance relating to English grammar, punctuation and spelling reinforce good practice.
- Sometimes, tasks set by the teacher are not demanding enough in mathematics lessons because the teacher has not made sure that the most able pupils find the activity difficult.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the school with low starting points; they make good progress to reach levels in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. There is an upward trend of improvement and standards continue to rise in English, mathematics and science.
- By the end of Key Stage 1 the proportions of pupils reaching national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics are average. Attainment has risen each year since the last inspection. Inspection evidence and the school's assessment information indicate that this trend is continuing in 2015.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 achieving the required standard in phonics is well above the national average. This secure knowledge benefits reading further up the school. Pupils enjoy reading and are encouraged to read with their parents.
- The most able pupils are well supported and make good progress. The proportions reaching higher levels are in line with national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this group is not always fully challenged in lessons for them to make even more rapid progress.
- A strong focus on improving the quality of writing is reaping rewards and standards are rising. Pupils are inspired by topics that interest them. For example, in Year 4 pupils wrote about the Romans and Celts. The pupils thought hard and wrote a variety of reasons for becoming a Roman soldier.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 was below that of their classmates and other pupils nationally. They were two and a half terms behind their classmates in mathematics, two in writing and one in reading. They were three and half terms behind other pupils nationally in mathematics, three in writing and one and half in reading. Many of these pupils join the school in the last two years of their primary education. Leaders provided information to show that pupils who were not in the school throughout Years 5 and 6 also made good progress. Disadvantaged pupils are making progress at least in line with their peers and other pupils nationally and attainment gaps are closing rapidly.
- Last year, girls did not perform as well as boys in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has addressed this and girls' current attainment is much better.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Provision for these pupils has been reviewed and improved, and extra support is linked to pupils' individual and specific needs. The effectiveness of this support is regularly reviewed and adjusted to ensure pupils continue to make good progress.
- Children in Nursery Plus are well supported both academically and emotionally. Good leadership of the resource and the high level of personalised support from the teachers and teaching assistants contribute to the children's good achievement and behaviour.

The early years provision is good

- Many children begin nursery with skills and understanding that are well below those typical for their age, particularly in communication, language and personal and social development. They make good progress due to the warm and creative environment, which enables them to thrive. The proportions reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year are broadly average and children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leadership and management are good. The adults work effectively as a team and all contribute to the children's progress because they have a good understanding of their needs and use it well to plan tasks and activities. As a result, disadvantaged children do as well as others and the gap in achievement between boys and girls is closing rapidly.
- The school has an effective and positive partnership with parents. They are confident that their children are kept safe and secure. Parents record their child's learning at home and staff use the results to plan activities with each child's interests in mind. Reading sessions with parents are well attended.
- Children behave well because they understand what is expected of them. They accept responsibilities, socialise with other children and relate positively with adults. The procedures to keep them safe and secure are effective.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use their knowledge to plan activities that enthuse and excite children and extend their learning. They are ably supported by the teaching assistants, who are highly skilled and provide invaluable support. For example, in the small phonics groups in the Reception Year, the teachers and teaching assistants used correct articulation and a range of actions to help the children remember sounds, and this enabled good progress. The children listened intently and were keen and eager to answer questions.

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	135050
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	461819

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	844
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lee Wright
Headteacher	Val Weddell-Hall
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2012
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