

# Alderman Knight School

Ashchurch Road, Tewkesbury , GL20 8JJ

## Inspection dates

1–2 April 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make rapid progress from their low starting points because teachers plan extremely carefully to meet their individual needs. There are no differences in the rates of progress made by pupils in different groups.
- Teaching has improved over time so that most is now outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations that pupils will work hard and develop into confident learners.
- Very effective teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that young children get the best possible start to learning.
- Pupils are extremely positive. They behave well because they want to learn more. Everyone in this school shows great respect for others.
- The range of subjects very effectively promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by offering carefully planned, individual, experiences both in and outside school.
- All staff work very effectively together and support staff make a strong contribution to lessons. This ensures that all pupils join in fully and make outstanding progress.
- School leaders and managers are conspicuously successful at recognising what is working well and what needs to be improved. This is because they have introduced excellent systems for tracking how well everyone is doing.
- Members of the governing body know the school very well because during their regular visits they ask searching questions. They closely monitor all areas of the school and take every opportunity to listen to the views of parents and carers, and others in the community.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are very appreciative of how the school involves them in their children's learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by 14 teachers. A member of the school's leadership team joined inspectors in six of these lessons.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's own documents including how it plans for improvement, policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe, and the governing body and other minutes.
- The views of 27 parents and carers who completed the online Parent Survey and 41 members of staff who returned their questionnaires were taken into account.
- A meeting was held with pupils to gain their views about the school, as well as informal discussions with them at lunch and break times. Inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks and files, and listened to them read and practise their communication skills in lessons.
- Inspectors met members of the governing body, the school's leadership team and other staff to take into account their views of how well the school is doing. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority to learn about its contribution.
- During learning walks, inspectors looked at displays of pupils' work and photographs of the trips and residential visits in which they participate.

## Inspection team

Bob Pugh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Taylor

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Almost all pupils who attend the school come from the local authority area. A small number travel to school each day from neighbouring authorities.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A growing number of pupils have more complex needs including an autistic spectrum condition.
- There have been changes in the school leadership team since the last inspection and further changes to the governing body.
- There are twice as many boys as girls at the school. The number of pupils who are entitled to receive the government's additional funding, pupil premium, which provides support for those in the care of the local authority, those with families in the services or those known to be eligible for free school meals, is higher than the national average.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. Three pupils come from homes where English is not the first language.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils as well as opportunities for families to share in activities, such as cooking evenings.

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

- Introduce more opportunities for all pupils to use the very strong learning and personal skills they develop in school in a wider range of places in the local environment and further afield, so that they become even more successful when they transfer to college or other adult provision.
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## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils** is outstanding

- Nearly all pupils enter the school with learning levels which are very low for their age. From the start, they make rapid progress, and by the time they are ready to leave, very many have achieved so well that they gain a range of qualifications including GCSEs, BTEC and entry-level awards.
- Very often, pupils make faster progress than those with similar needs in other schools. On those few occasions when the rate of achievement slows, highly effective programmes are planned which almost always help pupils make stronger progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle remarkably quickly into school and begin to make immediate gains in their communication and literacy skills.
- There are no differences in the rates of progress made by different groups of pupils. Boys do as well as girls and those who have an autistic spectrum condition make equally strong progress as other pupils.
- Pupils demonstrate great pride in their achievements. One pupil was especially keen to talk about his work as a sports leader, and how he had planned sessions to help younger pupils learn to play cricket.
- Very many pupils make great gains in reading. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher's instructions and build up sounds in unfamiliar words to read stories. They read with great passion and enjoyment, giving correct emphasis to parts which they find amusing.
- Almost all pupils know what they have to do to make even better progress. They have bookmarks and other items immediately available in class to remind them about what they are learning in the lesson and what comes next.
- Pupils learn how to reflect upon their achievements very well by adding comments on the work they have completed and adding remarks about how they could have done even better.
- Pupils' work files very often show that they make excellent progress during an academic year. Handwriting and number formation skills were seen to have developed extremely well for many.

### **The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- The vast majority of the teaching at this school is outstanding. Teachers display excellent subject knowledge and they plan in such a way as to ensure that everyone is completely clear about what they must do to produce work of the highest quality.
- Teachers are well organised so that pupils' interest and imagination are captured from the very start of each day. Pupils are given ample time to work out solutions for themselves, teachers and their assistants skilfully judge when to provide just the right amount of help to get to the answer.
- Teachers regularly check on how well each pupil is doing. They use questioning to great effect, and provide perfectly pitched feedback. This is one of the reasons why pupils make such good progress over time.
- Workbooks and files are regularly marked and checked. Teachers take immense care to remind pupils about important skills they are learning, such as the size and style of their writing, and they provide excellent advice about next steps.
- In a highly effective rebound lesson on the trampoline, the teacher had very carefully allocated tasks to each pupil so that everyone was able to participate fully at all times. While one pupil practised rebound skills, others recorded his successes either on paper or by filming him. Other pupils kept watch and ensured that all safety guidelines were being followed. Time was extremely well used in this lesson and everyone was totally engaged in learning.
- Very strong planning of activities for younger pupils provides them with extensive opportunities for voicing their opinions and practising reading skills through games and stories. Teachers and

assistants encourage pupils to share equipment and toys. As a result, they learn to get on well together and enjoy each other's company.

- Pupils and their parents and carers believe that they are very well taught at the school. Teachers invite parents and carers to join in some lessons, often during the evening. One parent who attended a cookery session commented, 'It was one of the best evenings I have ever spent with my son. It was fun, interesting and helpful in building strong friendship with him.'

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

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is outstanding. They settle very quickly and are highly positive from the start. When they have to move around during lessons, they do so calmly and efficiently, with the very minimum of disruption to others.
- Lessons are very rarely interrupted by poor behaviour. One pupil who became distressed in a lesson was given the chance to leave the room. The excellent support and advice offered by a teaching assistant ensured the pupil was able to return very quickly and carry on learning.
- This exceptionally high standard of behaviour is also seen during lunchtimes and breaks. Pupils get on well together, show tremendous respect to others and they are polite to staff and visitors.
- In a meeting with an inspector, pupils mentioned how much they enjoy seeing their friends at school. They believe that their voice is heard. Pupils say that they feel very safe at school and they know who to turn to if they are confused or distressed.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their 'amazing' school buildings. One pupil commented, 'It looks like the present day.' They make the very best use of all facilities.
- Bullying of any kind is very rarely heard of. On those few occasions when it does occur, excellent support is given to the victim, and the perpetrator is asked to think about the consequence of his or her actions.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils learn well about common dangers including how to use the internet safely.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school with the result that their attendance is high.
- The highly positive attitudes which pupils display in school are also noted when they are learning in the community. Particular praise was given to one pupil by his employer for great efforts and contribution during his period of work experience at a cafe in the town.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The conspicuously strong performance of the headteacher is acknowledged by other members of the school community. They recognise how hard she and her fellow school leaders work to ensure that standards are continually rising.
- School leaders are remarkably well informed about strengths and weaknesses because they monitor its work regularly and to great effect. Governors play a full roll in monitoring and they ask searching questions following their visits.
- School leaders are also very clear about how the information they have on pupils' progress can be used to drive up standards. Where they detect a dip in performance, they closely analyse the possible reasons and design highly personalised programmes to help each pupil improve. They have ensured that all of the school's resources are equally available to everyone.
- The performance of teachers and other staff, including the headteacher, is very effectively monitored. The school makes excellent use of external advice including effective local authority support. Governors and school leaders are realistic about what can be expected of teachers at different stages of their careers. They ensure that strong performance is properly rewarded.
- The excellent range of subjects and activities offered by the school provides rich and memorable opportunities for pupils to learn exceptionally well and do their very best. In the case of one pupil, this led to obtaining an undergraduate award in philosophy from a university. Regular

consultations are held with parents and carers to discuss with them what is important for their child to learn. School leaders recognise the need to provide even more opportunities for pupils to further improve their learning and personal skills in as many different environments as possible.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well met through strong links with schools in other countries and frequent visits to community facilities such as meeting places for different faith groups.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are ambitious for their school and they want everyone to do their very best. They understand its strengths and weaknesses because they have made sure that their systems for judging its performance are robust. They are clear about how any additional funding, Year 7 catch-up money and primary sports money have helped to raise achievement and broaden pupils' experiences. For example, they know how money has been spent to help pupils make better progress in literacy and numeracy. They have a very good understanding of how the school compares with similar schools. They have ensured that the school is as safe as it can be and that all requirements for safeguarding are fully met.

## 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>	115825
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426832

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	115
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Wilcox
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Steel
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 December 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01684 295639
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