

Brownhills West Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	104206
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	377033
Inspection dates	31 January–1 February 2012
Lead inspector	James Henry

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	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Debbie Rose
Headteacher	Stuart Cox
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2010
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

James Henry

Additional inspector

Akwil Gill

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 15 lessons, five part-lessons and an assembly. Nine teachers were observed and meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior staff and a group of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school improvement plans, self-evaluation documents, data tracking the progress of groups of pupils and school records concerning pupils' behaviour and safety. Also, 51 parental questionnaires were received and analysed.

Information about the school

Brownhills West is smaller than the average primary school. The school was removed from special measures at the last inspection two years ago. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage. The number of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. The school meets the current floor standard. There is before- and after-school provision for pupils managed by the governing body in the form of a breakfast club and after-school activities. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery class which takes children part time and a separate Reception class.

The school has achieved national Healthy School status and the Eco Schools Bronze award as well as an 'Anti-bullying' award from the local authority.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school which has made significant improvements since its last inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are often at well below the levels normally expected and leave with attainment that is generally above the national average in English. Attainment is typically not as strong in mathematics, but improving.
- Pupils make good progress, although progress in English is generally better than that in mathematics, especially during lower Key Stage 2. This is partly because the school has focused successfully on increasing pupils' progress in writing across Key Stage 2 while opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills across the curriculum are less well developed.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good because over time it has consistently increased the rate at which pupils learn. However, the quality of marking and the use of targets to help pupils improve in mathematics are not as well developed as in English.
- Pupil feel safe in school and the good standard of behaviour identified at the last inspection has been maintained.
- The provision for pupils before and after school is good with appropriate safeguarding and risk assessments procedures in place and suitably vetted and qualified staff.
- Attendance is broadly average. While the school has strategies to promote good attendance, too many pupils are taken out of school unnecessarily during term-time.
- Leadership and management have improved since the last inspection and are now good because the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has developed a strong and effective middle leadership team. Due to recent staffing changes, leadership to develop mathematics across the school is relatively new and there has not been enough time to fully implement initiatives to raise standards.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics across Key Stage 2 by:
 - improving the quality of marking and the use of targets in mathematics to inform pupils how to improve
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills across the curriculum
 - developing the role of the mathematics coordinator to be fully involved in monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress
 - ensuring that the good teaching of mathematics already in the school is shared more widely.
- Raise the level of attendance to be consistently above the national average by strengthening procedures to reduce the number of pupils who are taken out of school unnecessarily during term-time.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

From well below typically expected starting points, children make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. They enter Year 1 with communication and writing skills below the levels expected, but their counting and other mathematical skills are broadly average. Pupils continue to make good progress in Year 1 and Year 2, especially in their reading and mathematics. Over time, attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly average, although above average in reading because the school has an effective system to develop pupils' basic reading skills. Consequently, all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, read well and can blend sounds to attempt unfamiliar words. They enjoy reading and develop good communication skills. For example, pupils happily retold their favourite stories, such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Pupils learn well in mathematics in Key Stage 1. For instance in one lesson, practical activities were used well to develop pupils' understanding of different directions, including learning about the points of a compass.

School assessments and lesson observations show that progress continues to be good across Key Stage 2. Consequently, over time, the attainment of all pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average in English, especially in reading. Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs make good progress across Key Stage 2 and achieve well according to their starting points, especially in English. The school has successfully focused on developing pupils' writing skills. Good progress in writing was seen when older pupils were independently engaged in writing a dialogue between two characters that they had observed in a film. Building on their previous learning they produced good extended pieces of writing. However, progress in mathematics, while good overall, given pupils' starting points, is slower during lower Key Stage 2 than in

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English. Almost all the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their children were making good progress and this is an accurate view of achievement across the school.

Quality of teaching

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire expressed the view that teaching was good. This is an accurate view; teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall. Teachers consistently plan lessons to include different tasks to meet the needs of groups of pupils. This is particularly effective in engaging pupils in their learning. There were some good examples of teachers using practical activities to promote pupils' learning. For example, in one lesson pupils were working out questions to describe a mathematical shape, writing them on boards and then playing a practical game to answer the questions. However, opportunities to share good practice in the teaching of mathematics are sometimes missed. Where learning was no better than satisfactory, this was because, on occasions, tasks did not sufficiently challenge different groups of pupils. However, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. For example, after an English lesson, pupils were given different challenging tasks for homework, tailored to their ability levels, in order to accelerate their learning in subsequent lessons.

Another consistent factor in the good teaching throughout the school is the effective use of question and answer sessions where pupils are encouraged to discuss their learning with each other. This not only helps pupils develop their social and communication skills but also allows them to learn from each other. There were good examples of teachers monitoring learning and asking pupils to assess their own understanding in lessons and this was followed up by effective teacher input when necessary. Providing feedback to pupils through marking and the use of targets on how to improve is generally good in English but less well developed in mathematics. Relationships between staff and pupils are consistently good throughout the school with staff knowing pupils well and providing nurturing pastoral care and support. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are effectively supported in lessons. Consequently, teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Teachers are skilled in linking subjects together to make learning more meaningful and enjoyable. While teachers consistently use other subjects to develop pupils' writing skills, formal planned opportunities to develop mathematical skills across the curriculum are less well developed.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school has maintained the good standard of behaviour identified at the last inspection and this is reflected in the views of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire. Pupils confirmed that the good behaviour seen during the inspection was typical in school over time. Pupils are friendly and polite towards each other and towards adults in the school. They understand and appreciate the school's approach to promoting good behaviour, get on well together and cooperate with one

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another both in lessons and on the playground. While some lessons can get noisy when pupils get excited, for example in physical education or in art and design, their learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. The school is calm and orderly, although, when asked, pupils said a few run down the corridor at lunchtime. They said there was no bullying of any type in school and the effective system of 'playground buddies' helps anyone who may be upset. Pupils confirmed that they had full confidence in being able to approach staff with any concerns and know they would be listened to and their problems addressed. The behaviour and safety of pupils in the before- and after-school provision is also good. There have been no permanent exclusions and very few temporary exclusions.

Pupils said they feel safe in school and there are initiatives that help them to keep themselves safe. They understood the importance of being safe on the internet and confirmed that the school had given them information about cyber-bullying and e-safety. The local fire service visits the school to talk about being safe from fire, both in school and at home. Pupils also confirmed that different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, were free from prejudice-based bullying. Attendance is broadly average and while the school does have strategies to promote good attendance, these are not robust enough to reduce the number of pupils who are taken out of school unnecessarily during term-time.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. There is a shared ambition and commitment by leaders, including the governing body, to raise standards, and this is fully supported by all staff. Over time, effective monitoring and feedback have improved teaching so that it is now consistently good. Consequently achievement has improved because pupils are making good progress across the school. Key areas for improvement since the last inspection have been addressed. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have successfully built the school's capacity to improve by developing a strong middle leadership team which has effectively contributed to raising standards through accurate self-evaluation and the monitoring of pupils' progress. With middle leaders working as a team, there has been a particularly strong drive to improve writing and this has been especially successful across Key Stage 2. Thorough self-evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in mathematics has been undertaken. Senior leaders effectively monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in mathematics, which have improved since the last inspection, but the impact of the role of the new mathematics coordinator is not yet fully evident, although a good start has been made in identifying areas for development. While teachers share good practice gained through professional development, opportunities to do so in mathematics are less well developed.

The curriculum meets all pupils' needs and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Assemblies, often led by the local vicar, give pupils chance for reflection, prayer and opportunities to consider their own personal development, such as having the resilience to achieve their own goals in life.

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Through the religious education curriculum, pupils learn about different faiths, and appreciation of other cultures is developed through activities, for example 'Indian Culture Day', as well as topics in the personal, social and health curriculum, for example 'Black History Month'.

The governing body supports and challenges the school effectively and is involved in school development planning; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Safeguarding procedures are fully in place with members of the governing body receiving safer recruitment training to ensure that only suitable people are employed in the school. All staff have been appropriately vetted and trained in child protection. Leaders, including the governing body, promote equality effectively, as shown through the good support given to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, which allows them full access to the curriculum and to be fully involved in the life of the school.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brownhills West Primary School, Walsall WS8 7LA

Thank you for welcoming us to your school during our visit and helping during the inspection. It was a pleasure to meet you and we enjoyed watching you work with your teachers. Your school gives you a good standard of education and in the questionnaires you completed almost all of you agreed. You also said that you feel safe in school and that staff would help if you had any concerns. Here are some of the good things we found at your school.

- You enjoy school because everyone gets on well together and behaviour is good.
- Older pupils are always ready to help younger ones.
- You work hard and enjoy learning, especially when different subjects are linked together.
- The teaching you receive is good.
- You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You enjoy the different sporting and musical activities that the school offers.

To help the school improve we asked that the adults in charge do three things.

- Increase the rate at which you learn in mathematics across Key Stage 2 by improving the marking in your mathematics books and using targets to help you understand how to improve.
- Ensure that the teacher in charge of mathematics throughout the school keeps a close watch on your progress, and that teachers share more often good ideas with each other to help you learn in mathematics.
- Improve the attendance of some pupils who are taken out of school unnecessarily during term-time.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and helping one another in lessons and around the school.

Yours sincerely

James Henry
Lead inspector

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