

Olive Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103796
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	355463
Inspection dates	15–16 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

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	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Brady
Headteacher	Teresa Jordan
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2008
School address	Springfield Road Halesowen B62 8JZ
Telephone number	01384 818855
Fax number	01384 818859
Email address	info@olive.dudley.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Seventeen lessons were observed and 11 teachers seen. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body including the Chair, parents and carers, a group of pupils, senior managers, curriculum leaders, the school's leadership consultant and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, monitoring information, policies and 60 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What progress in writing do pupils make in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2?
- How effective is the school's use of assessment information to ensure that all pupils are challenged in lessons?
- Are the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school sufficiently embedded to secure future improvements?

Information about the school

The school is bigger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. There are very few pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The majority of pupils are White British and the others are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. There is an above-average proportion of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two Reception classes and one Nursery class. The school runs a breakfast club that formed part of this inspection. There is a Children's Centre, which operates in the same building as the school and was inspected at the same time as this inspection. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Over the past year, several members of staff, including an assistant headteacher with responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage, have left the school. Two teachers, including the school's second assistant headteacher, are currently on long-term absence. The school has appointed a local authority consultant to lead and manage the Early Years Foundation Stage until the governing body makes a permanent appointment. A temporary teacher has been appointed to cover the absence of the second assistant headteacher. Because of the instability in leadership over the past year, a leadership consultant is supporting the school.

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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It provides its pupils with a satisfactory quality of education. Almost all pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure. Pupils are polite, behave well and show conscientious attitudes to their learning. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well together. The school works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils are cared for well.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve well. Pupils continue to make good progress in all subjects in Key Stage 1, but progress is slower for all groups of pupils in Key Stage 2, especially in writing, because there is not enough good and outstanding teaching. In those lessons where pupils' learning is no better than satisfactory, teachers are not clear enough about how to use the assessment information to plan precisely what they want pupils to learn in lessons. Where this occurs, there is not sufficient challenge for pupils because the work they are given does not build upon their prior knowledge and skills, and they are not guided through the small steps that help them learn effectively. In some lessons, teachers talk for too long and, consequently, the pace of learning is too slow. Although there is some good marking that relates to pupils' learning in lessons and gives them clear guidance on how to improve their work, it is not consistent. A system for setting targets for individual pupils has very recently been introduced. However, few pupils know their targets and they cannot understand the relevance of the targets to their learning. Consequently, targets have little impact on raising achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language are often supported well in lessons by teaching assistants. However, in some lessons, teaching assistants spend too much time not engaging with the pupils because the teacher spends too much time talking to the class.

Improved monitoring systems have added rigour to the school's self-evaluation. Consequently, leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and know what they need to do to improve it. Several initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning have been implemented and are beginning to have a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The headteacher has a strong understanding of how teachers can improve pupils' learning in lessons and is beginning to use this well to guide teacher's classroom practice. However, the monitoring, evaluation and school improvement skills of some of the leaders are not strong enough to make the necessary improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. Although, despite the significant changes in staffing, many improvements have been made to the school over recent years, leaders and managers have not communicated the benefits of these well enough to all parents and carers. The headteacher and governing body acknowledge this and have plans to improve communication. The rigour and accuracy of the self-evaluation systems and improving

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childrens' achievements in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 show that the school has satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievements, especially in writing, and improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn in lessons, provide work that builds upon pupils' prior knowledge and skills and guide pupils through the small steps that help them learn effectively
 - the pace of learning is brisk because teachers do not talk for too long in lessons
 - teachers' marking in all classes relates to pupils' learning in lessons and gives them clear guidance on how to improve their work
 - pupils know their targets and understand the relevance they have to their learning.
- Improve the capacity for sustained improvement by ensuring that all leaders strengthen their skills of monitoring, evaluating and improving the work of the school.
- Improve communications with all groups of parents and carers by implementing the plan for improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

From their low starting points, children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, attainment is usually average. Pupils' progress is slower in Key Stage 2, especially in writing. However, recent improvements in teaching are beginning to have a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement in all subjects. Pupils' attainment in Key Stage 2 is, currently, just below average, with pupils' skills in writing are lower than those in reading and mathematics. Because of the additional support, they receive in lessons, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language make similar progress to that of all other pupils.

In lessons, pupils are keen to learn and often show this by volunteering to answer questions or to share their work with the class. They enjoy working with a partner or as a team and are happy to help each other out, for example, by suggesting more complex adjectives to use in writing or giving advice on how to present a news report. In lessons where teachers talk for too long or the activities do not inspire them, some pupils find it hard to sit still and focus on their work.

Pupils readily take on a range of responsibilities in school and the local community. Pupil monitors assist with lunchbox trolleys and help the teachers in assemblies. The eco-council has established a paper recycling system. Many of the school's charity fund-raising activities are organised by the pupils. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and are confident that teachers will listen to their concerns and resolve any difficulties that may

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arise. Pupils' attendance is rising and is now average because the school learning mentor works effectively with external agencies to monitor attendance patterns and takes action if necessary. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is strong but there are few opportunities provided in lessons to promote pupils' spiritual development, which is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Relationships between teachers and pupils are respectful and caring, and help to promote a positive climate for learning. Although the lessons seen during the inspection were planned in detail by the teachers and showed many activities, only a minority of plans were focused on what pupils were expected to learn during the lesson. Consequently, in many lessons, although pupils were purposefully engaged with the activities, their learning was not focused enough and the prior knowledge and skills were not systematically built upon.

The curriculum plan has recently been revised to provide many opportunities for teachers to reinforce pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills through a range of topics. Assemblies, class discussions and programmes for personal, emotional and social education contribute effectively to pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

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Pastoral care for the pupils is at the heart of what the school does well. Kindness and consideration toward each other are promoted effectively. The breakfast club provides those pupils with opportunities to develop their social skills while enjoying a meal. The school makes good use of external partners to support its work with pupils whose circumstances may make them most vulnerable. There are effective arrangements in place to support pupils as they move through the school and on to the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

After a period of instability owing to staff and leadership changes which slowed the rate of school improvement, the headteacher has re-established a strong sense of common purpose, with raising pupils' achievement at its core. Greater rigour in all aspects of school self-evaluation is having positive impact, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The recently reorganised senior leadership team provides good support for the headteacher, but some leaders lack experience of school self-evaluation, especially observing and improving the quality of pupils' learning in lessons. The governing body supports the school well but has not been effective enough in explaining to all parents and carers the benefits of the changes made in recent years. Consequently, although most parents and carers say that they are happy with their child's experiences at school, a small minority of them do not feel that the school is led and managed effectively.

The school's commitment to equal opportunities and tackling discrimination is shown through working effectively with external organisations to promote pupils' improving attendance, support for the most vulnerable pupils and close analysis of all groups to ensure that they achieve equally. Community cohesion is well promoted within the school, but it has not established enough opportunities for pupils to engage with a range of groups beyond the immediate community. At the time of the inspection, the required safeguarding checks had been undertaken by the school, child protection arrangements were secure and risk assessments had been completed for all relevant activities. The few minor aspects regarding health and safety were reported to the governing body and the headteacher.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy coming to school, and feel safe and secure in a caring and supportive environment. Behaviour is good and children soon learn to share, cooperate and play well together. Children settle quickly into school because there is a wide range of different activities to engage them across all areas of learning. Good teaching and an effective curriculum provide children with a range of activities carefully balanced between those led by adults and those selected by the children. Leaders and managers are aware that the outside area is not sufficiently developed to allow children a suitable range of outdoor experiences in all areas of learning.

From their low starting points, all groups of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning to speak English as an additional language, make good progress. The level of children's skills by the time they enter Year 1 is rising year on year and is currently close to average. Girls consistently achieve better than boys, but the attainment gap between boys and girls is narrowing because of the greater emphasis that the school is placing on activities which motivate boys to want to learn.

Parents and carers are welcomed as partners in their child's education. Strong links with the Children's Centre and external support agencies help the adults know the children very well. This helps ensure that children's learning, emotional and welfare needs are identified and accommodated from the start. Good leadership ensures that staff work closely together as a team with a real sense of purpose to improve and extend the learning experiences of each child.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaire responses received from parents and carers was lower than in most other primary school inspections. Most parents and carers feel that their children enjoy coming to school and are kept safe. The very large majority say that they are kept well informed about their child's progress. However, a small minority of parents and carers say that they feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and is not well led and managed. During the inspection there were no instances of bad behaviour observed. Lessons were calm and orderly and pupils played well together around the school. Most pupils said that they felt that behaviour was good at school. The inspection found that leadership and management are satisfactory. However, the headteacher and governing body acknowledge that they could do more to keep all parents and carers informed about the reasons for staffing changes and about the improvements they have made since the last inspection. A few parents and carers reported that they do not feel that their child is well prepared for the future. The inspection found that relationships between the school and the Children's Centre and high schools are strong and most pupils settled quickly into their new communities. However, pupils are only satisfactorily prepared for the future because their attainment when they leave is no better than average. The few other negative comments made on the questionnaires were investigated and taken into consideration before judgements were made.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Olive Hill Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 353 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	52	26	43	2	3	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	26	43	30	50	3	5	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	32	37	62	3	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	28	31	52	8	13	1	5
The teaching is good at this school	18	30	34	57	5	8	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	27	35	58	6	10	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	32	34	57	5	8	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	20	34	57	6	10	1	12
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	23	37	62	6	10	0	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	17	29	49	11	19	5	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	17	38	63	5	8	4	5
The school is led and managed effectively	13	22	25	42	11	18	7	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	30	33	55	5	8	3	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



17 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Olive Hill Primary School, Halesowen, B62 8JZ

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such an enjoyable experience. We appreciated meeting you, visiting your lessons and hearing what you thought about your school. We were pleased that most of you say that you enjoy coming to school, and your parents and carers agree. We were impressed with the way the school cares for you, especially those who have problems or difficulties. We were pleased to find that more of you are coming to school regularly. Well done!

You go to a satisfactory school and most of you are making satisfactory progress. Although teaching is satisfactory, we want it to be better. We have asked the headteacher to make sure that, in all your lessons, the teachers are more clear about what they want you to learn and carefully guide you through the small learning steps. The teachers mark your books regularly and, sometimes, give you helpful comments on how to improve. We have asked the headteacher to make sure that the marking is even more helpful so that you can learn more. We have also asked the teachers to make sure that you understand how the work you do in lessons helps you achieve your targets.

All the teachers work hard for you and some take on additional responsibilities in the school. We have asked the headteacher to ensure that these teachers become even better at looking at how well you are learning in lessons so that you achieve even more. We have also asked the headteacher and the governing body to make sure that they keep your parents and carers well informed about everything that goes on.

You can help too by working hard and coming to school as often as you can.

We shall take away many pleasant memories about your school. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers

Her Majesty's Inspector

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