

# Bearwood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	103933
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	376992
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Derek Watts

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	479
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Eling
<b>Headteacher</b>	Deborah Haywood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Bearwood Road Smethwick B66 4HB
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	9–10 July 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376992



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Derek Watts

Additional Inspector

Jan Connor

Additional Inspector

Anthony Green

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons, taught by 16 different teachers. They held discussions with the headteacher, other staff, members of the governing body, pupils, parents and carers. Inspectors listened to pupils read. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, assessment information, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. The inspectors analysed 112 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and 27 from staff.

## Information about the school

Bearwood is much larger than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds with Pakistani, Indian and White British being the largest groups. About two thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The overall proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average, but the proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. An above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress last year. A before- and after-school club is managed by the governing body and was part of the inspection. The headteacher took up the post in January 2009. The appointment of a new deputy headteacher and two new assistant headteachers followed.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Bearwood Primary is a satisfactory school. Through strong leadership, it has made good improvements during the past few years. The school is not yet good because of inconsistencies in pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, and in teaching. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory over time but improving. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from low starting points. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Achievement in Key Stage 2 has been less consistent. While attainment in the current Year 6 is average, it has been low in the past. Positive action is being taken to raise achievement in writing which usually lags behind reading and mathematics. There are inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting and pupils do not always have enough opportunities to write extended pieces across the curriculum.
- Teaching is improving but is not consistently good. Teachers establish strong relationships with pupils. Teachers' demonstrations and explanations promote learning and engage pupils well. In the best lessons, pupils are challenged and motivated. They make good gains in their learning. Assessment information is not always used well enough to match tasks to pupils' different needs, especially for the more able. At times, pupils' learning is over directed by the teacher and opportunities are missed for pupils to plan and organise their own work.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel safe and they are cooperative, considerate and respectful. Attendance has improved from low to above average levels.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She is well supported by the leadership team and staff in raising achievement. Self-evaluation is thorough and positive steps are taken to raise achievement and improve the performance

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of teachers.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing and narrow the attainment gap between writing, reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:
  - improving pupils' handwriting and presentation.
  - extending opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching in all subjects, and eliminate satisfactory teaching by:
  - ensuring that assessment is always used well to carefully match tasks to pupils' different abilities, particularly for the more able.
  - ensuring that pupils have good opportunities to plan and organise their own work.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory over time. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 was low three years ago. Attainment by the end of Year 2 improved and has been average for the last few years. Attainment at the end of Year 6 was still low in the summer of 2011. Improvements to teaching mean that pupils' progress is improving, including in Years 3 to 6, and attainment is average in the current Year 6 in English and mathematics.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and commented, 'We learn a lot of new things'. The vast majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire stated that their children are making good progress. However, the inspection considers pupils' achievement over a three year period and this has not been consistently good, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Children enter the Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding much lower than is typical for their age. They make good progress in the areas of learning because of good teaching and the exciting learning activities provided inside and out.

In Years 1 to 6, pupils often make good progress in speaking and listening in lessons because of the frequent opportunities for discussion. Progress in reading is improving. Particularly in Years 1 and 2, pupils benefit from the school's discrete and well-focused programme for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make).

Staff are working hard to improve pupils' writing. Pupils write for a range of

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purposes. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are improving. An increasing proportion of pupils are attaining the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6. Nevertheless, there are inconsistencies in the presentation of pupils' work and not all pupils by Year 6 write with a fluent and joined style. There are some good examples of pupils' applying their writing skills across the curriculum but this good practice is not consistent across the school.

Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving and in the current Year 6, there are pupils who attained Level 6 in national tests. Pupils apply their investigative skills well when solving problems in mathematics and science. On occasions, pupils complete teacher-produced charts rather than being given opportunities to plan and decide how best to record and present their results and findings.

Information and communication technology is used well by pupils to support their presentation and writing skills. Microphones, video recording and net books are used confidently and to good effect.

Pupils who speak English as an additional language make sound progress overall. Those at an early stage of learning English make rapid progress in acquiring the language, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress similar to their peers in each class. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals are making similar progress to their national counterparts.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching continues to improve but some inconsistencies remain. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They create a positive atmosphere for learning. Cooperation, consideration and respect are some of the qualities promoted. The inspection questionnaire showed that most parents and carers feel their children are well taught.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Children have good opportunities to explore and learn independently. Children's language skills are effectively promoted by all adults through prompting and questioning. They enjoy the wide range of interesting activities. While the outdoor learning area is limited, good use is made of it and the nearby wooded area.

Most lessons in Years 1 to 6 have a clear purpose, and so pupils know what they are expected to learn. The teaching of basic skills is developing well. There is a good and regular programme for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). However, there is not a clear and consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting. The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is effective. Teaching assistants usually provide good support for those who need it. The marking of pupils' work is helpful and constructive. Teachers provide praise and useful comments help pupils improve.

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In the most successful lessons, teachers' strong subject knowledge and enthusiasm inspire the pupils. High expectations of learning and challenging tasks engage the pupils and sustained their interest. Pupils are engaged, productive and make good gains in their learning. In a good Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils made good progress in solving perimeter problems because a range of challenging and interesting activities were well matched to pupils' needs. All groups including the more able were challenged and extended. Pupils were fully engaged and worked well independently.

Where teaching is less effective, tasks are not well tailored to pupils' different needs so they are not sufficiently challenged and the pace of learning slows. Occasionally, the purpose of the lesson is not effectively shared with the class and so pupils are not sure about what they are expected to learn.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupil's behaviour and safety are good. The school has maintained and built on the strengths identified in the previous inspection. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage feel safe, behave well and grow in confidence. In Years 1 to 6, behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Records of incidents show that behaviour is typically good. Pupils consider that most pupils are well behaved most of the time.

Almost all parents and carers who completed the questionnaire believe that their children feel safe at school and that they are well looked after. Pupils confirmed that they are safe and are very well looked after by staff. Most parents and carers stated that behaviour in the school is good, that lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour and that bullying is dealt with effectively. However, a few parents expressed concern in these areas. Pupils show a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including persistent name-calling and cyber-bullying. They know the steps to take to prevent bullying. The school has clear and effective procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, including bullying, should it occur. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is very rare. Highly effective action has been taken to raise attendance from low to above average levels. The appointment of a home-school link worker has made a considerable contribution to improving attendance.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher, key leaders and staff are firmly focused on raising achievement and driving improvement. All key leaders are fully engaged in monitoring and improving their areas of responsibility. Positive action taken by leaders and managers has resulted in the raising of attainment from low levels and an improving picture for teaching. A parent commented, 'The school has made good progress over the last couple of years and has introduced new ways of learning which my children are enjoying'. There are clear procedures for the monitoring and development of teaching but practice is not yet consistently good. New teachers, particularly the newly qualified, receive effective coaching, mentoring and support. Professional

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development and training are well linked to areas such as assessment, teaching and writing, the school's main improvement priorities. The school has shown a good capacity to improve.

Leaders and staff are developing a creative curriculum. Steps are being taken to strengthen provision in writing. There are interesting links between subjects which add meaning and enjoyment to pupils' learning. About a dozen pupils benefit from the well-organised before- and after-school provision.

Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily and is not better because of variation in pupils' progress between key stages. Discrimination is effectively tackled. The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's ethos is positive and pupils show considerable care and respect for others. They demonstrate a good understanding of different cultures and faiths within the community.

The engagement with parents and carers is positive. The survey indicates that parents and carers are pleased with the care and education provided for their children. They appreciate the school's efforts in helping them to support their children's learning, particularly in literacy. Parents and carers are also pleased with the good online resources and blogs via the school's website which support learning at home and involve them in the process.

A number of the members of the governing body are new and are developing well in their role. They are enthusiastic, supportive and most show a good understanding of the school's performance. This enables them to provide constructive challenge and hold the school to account. All safeguarding requirements are met.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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](http://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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.**



11 July 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Bearwood Primary School, Smethwick, B66 4HB**

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school, giving us your views and showing us your work. Bearwood is a satisfactory school. It is making good improvements. These are the main strengths:

- You have positive attitudes to learning and say that you enjoy school.
- Attendance has improved to above average.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress.
- Your achievement is improving because of improvements to teaching.
- You get on well with others and behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- You feel safe at school because teachers and other adults take very good care of you.
- The school is well led by your headteacher and she is well supported by other senior leaders, staff and governors.

We have given your school two key points for improvement.

- We want you to reach higher standards by the end of Year 6, especially in writing. We have asked that you are given even more chances to write long pieces and to apply your writing skills in other subjects.
- In some lessons, tasks should be more carefully matched to your needs so that you are fully challenged and engaged, particularly for those who find learning easy. At times, you could be given more opportunities to plan and organise your own work rather than completing teacher-produced charts.

We hope you will all continue to work hard, particularly on your writing. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts  
Lead inspector

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