

Bordesley Village Primary School and Children's Centre

Emmeline Street, Bordesley Village, Birmingham, B9 4NG

Inspection dates 7–8 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching varies in quality. There are some variations in what teachers expect their pupils to learn. Tasks can sometimes be too easy for some, and sometimes too difficult for others. In some classes not enough time is spent on checking what pupils have learned and understood.
 - Although teachers are well supported and guided by the headteacher and deputy headteacher in developing their skills, some take too long to improve, or do not rigorously evaluate their own practice.
 - Pupils' progress, whilst improving steadily in the last two years, is still not quick enough.
- In particular, the progress of some lower attaining pupils and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has been inconsistent.
- The progress of pupils has been hampered by instability in staffing which, combined with the high numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school in all year groups, has led to a lack of continuity in the learning of some pupils.
 - For some time, the school has been unable to appoint permanent leaders and managers in critical areas such as Early Years, literacy and numeracy. This has held back the pace of school improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The determined and ambitious leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher has led to continuing improvements in the achievements of pupils, in spite of the many barriers to their learning.
- The school is a lively, happy multicultural community, offering a range of stimulating learning opportunities to all of its pupils.
- The achievement and progress of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding are good in reading and writing.
- Pupils are well cared for and safe, enjoy school and behave well. They have good attitudes to their learning, joining with great enthusiasm in the many practical activities provided for them.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality have improved considerably and are better than in similar schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 31 lessons or part lessons taught by 16 teachers.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, members of the management team, two members of the governing body and an officer of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They examined safeguarding arrangements, and other documents including: school development plans and self-evaluation; behaviour and health and safety logs; school policies and a range of pupils' work.
- Inspectors took into account the views of a number of parents prior to the school day, although there were no responses to the online Parent View survey. Inspectors examined 80 parent responses to a recent school questionnaire.
- Inspectors also examined school questionnaires from 30 members of staff.

Inspection team

Rodney Braithwaite, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kevin Butlin	Additional Inspector
Jenny Edginton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bordesley Village Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. The largest groups are of Asian heritage, and there have been a number of recent new arrivals from Eastern Europe and Somalia.
- About three quarters of pupils speak English as an additional language, with nearly a quarter speaking little or no English when they enter the school. Currently, 30 different languages are spoken.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special needs who are supported by school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Just over half the pupils are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, which is double the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times is much higher than average.
- The school has had some difficulty for several years in recruiting staff, especially experienced leaders. The management team is at present receiving temporary increased support in literacy and numeracy through the secondment to the school of two advisory teachers.
- There is a Children's Centre on the school site which is no longer managed by the school. It was not included in the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning so that recent improvements in pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are accelerated, by:
 - ensuring that learning opportunities are matched to the specific needs of each pupil
 - checking that all pupils know and understand what they are supposed to be learning
 - encouraging more recording and extended writing related to all the subjects being studied.
- Widen the distribution of leadership and management responsibilities in the school by:
 - as a matter of urgency, appointing permanent leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and English and mathematics
 - increasing the training and development of other leaders in the school, especially in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- Strengthen the present arrangements for the management of teaching and learning by:
 - encouraging teachers to take greater accountability for the evaluation and improvement of their own teaching
 - ensuring that leaders' development of teachers' skills through monitoring is acted quickly upon so that there is no inadequate teaching, and that most is good or better.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement in English and mathematics continues to require improvement in spite of a rise in attainment in the last two years. This is because standards remain below average by the end of Year 6, with progress not yet being fast enough to close the gap.
- From often low starting points, children make steady progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As they begin to understand English better, some children make good progress in their language and personal and social development.
- This level of progress continues in Years 1 and 2 and attainment continues to rise gently. Over the last three years, standards at the end of Year 2 have risen to just below national levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress for most pupils is that expected although a few pupils who find learning difficult make less than expected progress.
- Progress from Years 3 to 6 has also been improving although not at a fast enough rate to enable all pupils to reach levels expected nationally. The inconsistency in achievement is seen when these pupils made good progress, for example, in English and less in mathematics in 2011, and then the reverse happened in 2012.
- Pupils in all years who find learning difficult, or who are disabled or have special educational needs, make varying progress year on year. More able pupils generally make the progress expected of them. There is little difference in the achievement of pupils who are in the school from the start of their education and those who enter the school partway through their primary education.
- Most pupils from minority ethnic groups, and those who learn English as an additional language, make expected progress, and a few make good progress. Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make better progress than other pupils in English, and similar progress in mathematics. The school has very successfully narrowed the gap in the attainment of these pupils and the other pupils in the school.
- Reading standards are improving although still below average overall at the end of Year 6. The school has much improved its stock of books and has just opened a new library. Younger pupils are making faster progress in their learning of letters and sounds (phonics), as observed in several classes. The recent results in the national phonics screening test for Year 1 pupils were encouraging. Although the number of pupils reaching the expected level was a little below average, many pupils had made good progress from low starting points.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistent enough across all classes. Although little teaching is inadequate, not enough is good or better in order to accelerate the achievement of pupils, who are always eager to learn.
- Teachers have a much wider range of information about the progress of all pupils than in the past. However, the information on how well each pupil is doing is not always used effectively by some teachers in their planning. This leads to them not expecting enough of pupils, with some pupils insufficiently challenged, or being unsure of what they are supposed to be doing or learning.

- Teachers are keen to improve their teaching and appreciate the support and guidance they receive from senior leaders. However, they do not always take sufficient responsibility for evaluating their own skills and, consequently, make the same mistakes again, such as keeping pupils too long on the carpet or giving them tasks not related to their specific needs.
- Where teaching is best, pupils of all abilities are set challenging work, and learning moves on at a good pace. This was seen in a Year 5/6 set in mathematics when pupils had to use word clues to solve difficult problems of number combinations.
- Successful planning partnerships between teachers and carefully deployed teaching assistants also helps good learning in some classes, because all pupils, rather than just two or three groups, are supported by adults.
- Teachers' marking consistently balances praise with specific guidance on how to improve. This helps pupils to be more aware of their learning targets, which many of them can name.
- Teachers make every effort to provide a range of stimulating practical activities across a broad range of much-enjoyed topic themes, such as Kenyan cooking, Romans, and the Eiffel Tower, and contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Written recording and writing on these activities though, is not extensive enough. Although pupils can talk about their learning at the time, this is not always reinforced through their written work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They know how to behave safely, as for example, when observed in many practical topic activities such as cooking and creating air vibrations with balloons. There have been very few exclusions in recent times.
 - Pupils are confident and polite with adults, and always prepared to talk about their learning.
 - Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the Nursery, soon settle in to school routines and activities, in spite of the fact that many have little understanding of English when they start.
 - The school is a lively but safe environment. Pupils behave especially well on the staircases and many narrow corridors in the school.
 - Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are often very excited by their activities, describing them as 'fun learning'.
 - All cultures mix together well and racial comments or tensions are very unusual.
 - Pupils report little bullying, although there are sometimes arguments over who can bat next in the playground. They understand different kinds of bullying but few have an awareness of the dangers of cyber-bullying through mobile phones or the internet. They report that staff deal quickly with any bullying, and that pupil prefects, counsellors and play leaders are also helpful. Pupils mention, particularly, the support they receive from the school learning mentor.
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- There are many effective links with external agencies when specialised services are needed. These support pupils and families in difficult circumstances, especially those new to the country.
- Attendance has improved considerably in the last two years. This is the result of very effective procedures and encouragement introduced by school leaders.
- Although there were no responses by parents and carers online, the school's own recent survey indicates that the great majority are very happy with the way the school manages behaviour.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- In spite of the considerable efforts of senior leaders, there has been great difficulty in appointing leaders in key areas for some time. This has slowed the rate of improvement in the school. The present leadership and governing body clearly recognise the importance of appointing permanent leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage, English and mathematics as soon as possible.
 - The management of teaching and learning, mainly by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, has led to improved teaching. This though is inconsistent, because teachers sometimes fail to act effectively and quickly enough on the guidance they receive.
 - The headteacher and deputy headteacher have risen remarkably to the many complex challenges in this school with, until recently, very few other experienced managers to share responsibilities. They have led improvements in providing a much wider variety of learning opportunities for pupils; they have also introduced a much greater range of continuous analysis of pupils' progress, especially that of the many diverse groups in the school. These improvements show the school's capacity to move forward.
 - In recent months, the management has been strengthened on a temporary basis by the secondment to the school of leading teachers in literacy and numeracy. This is benefitting the school considerably, helping to raise pupils' achievement at a faster pace and enabling teachers to have a better understanding of the different needs of pupils in these subjects.
 - Other subject leaders are beginning to develop their management expertise, and the school acknowledges the need to increase opportunities for their training in, for example, the monitoring of teaching and learning.
 - School self-evaluation is accurate and honest, and supported by convincing evidence. This is helping the school to develop realistic improvement targets.
 - The local authority has been very supportive of the school, particularly in times of difficulty over recruitment. It has made an effective and continuing contribution to improvements in the school.
 - The school promotes equal opportunities effectively. Leaders make sure that a vibrant learning atmosphere is evident throughout the school, and that there is no discrimination through gender, disability, special educational needs or ethnic heritage. This reinforces the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
 - The use of the pupil premium funding is very carefully considered and its impact is closely monitored. The provision of a wide range of extra adult support and new resources has led to
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rapid improvement in the attainment and achievement of these pupils, especially in reading and writing.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Membership of the governing body has changed significantly in the last year, including the appointment of a new Chair. Governors have rapidly gained understanding of the schools' strengths and areas for improvement. The Chair has established a strong working relationship with senior leaders. Governors understand their increased roles in relating school targets to the improvement of pupils' progress and the quality of teachers' performance. They are now linking the analysis of teachers' performance to both pay and promotion. Governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fully in place and that financial resources are used effectively.
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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	103153
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	404856

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Doug Ashford
Headteacher	Alayne Clowes
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2011
Telephone number	0121 6751392
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