

Red Hall Primary School

Zoar Street, Lower Gornal, Dudley, DY3 2PA

Inspection dates 24–25 January 2013

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

- Despite some improvements since the school's last inspection, the quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to make sure that pupils achieve well in English and mathematics.
- Marking is not good enough to help pupils improve their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants give pupils too much help at times, instead of encouraging pupils to think hard and do more by themselves.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in different subjects.
- The good system to help pupils who fall behind in their work is only used in Years 5 and 6, so progress in Years 1 to 4 is slower.
- The school's leaders have not spent enough time in lessons finding out what needs to be improved, so the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have not improved rapidly enough since the school's last inspection.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes, where the teaching is good.
- Teachers consistently promote good manners and an understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils behave well and feel very safe in school. Their behaviour in formal situations, such as assemblies, is outstanding.
- Leaders provide good quality support and training for newly qualified teachers, who quickly improve their skills.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 23 lessons. In addition, the inspectors listened to pupils reading and analysed the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and staff.
- The inspector took account of the 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors also met parents informally.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, records relating to behaviour and bullying and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Driscoll, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gwendoline Onyon

Additional Inspector

Frances Millett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most other primary schools.
- All pupils are taught on site. The school does not use alternative provision to support any of its pupils.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or belong to other groups for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The deputy headteacher took on the role of acting headteacher in January 2013. She is supported for two days each week by a consultant who has been working with the school since December 2011. The consultant is partly funded by the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and progress to at least good by making sure that teachers:
 - give pupils more time to think about their work and do it for themselves, and only provide extra help when absolutely necessary
 - write comments in pupils' books that help them understand what they need to do to improve their work, and give them time to read and act on the advice
 - give pupils regular opportunities to practise the skills they learn in mathematics lessons in other subjects.
- Accurately identify the individual pupils in Years 1 to 4 who are falling behind in their work, and take swift action to ensure they catch up and achieve as well as others.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - giving subject leaders more time to observe lessons, to identify the key strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers
 - using the results to give teachers appropriate training, and following it up in future observations to check that the required improvements have been made.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children join the nursery with skills that are a little below those expected for their age. The progress they make has been improving each year since the last inspection and is now good, so in 2012 they started Year 1 with standards that were above average. Previously their standards on starting Year 1 had been average or below.
- Pupils make steady progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and leave the school with average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. They make better progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. Teachers give them many opportunities to develop their writing skills in topic work, but do not have the same approach to mathematics. For example, pupils are not encouraged to practise their mathematical skills in science, even when the nature of the work suggests clear opportunities to do so.
- Boys and girls and different ability groups make similar progress, but it varies between classes and year groups. Some pupils make slower progress in learning to read, for example in Years 1 and 2, because the teacher goes through the tasks too quickly and moves on before pupils are confident in their understanding of the sound that a letter makes.
- Pupils who are supported through the pupil premium make slightly better progress than others. Test results show that there is no difference between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils by the time they leave school. The school's leaders have spent funds wisely on providing one-to-one support for individuals most in need in help and employing a member of support staff to work with families of pupils who have a poor record of attendance.
- Progress is better in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 1 to 4. The school leaders have developed a system for quickly identifying and supporting pupils who are falling behind in their work. This has proved effective in boosting the achievement of such pupils. It is only used in Years 5 and 6 at present, although the school has appropriate plans to extend it to other year groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve in line with their classmates. Teachers often give them work that is closely matched to their ability levels, but some teaching assistants are too quick to help them, instead of letting them have a go for themselves.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teachers plan lessons to build on what pupils already know and understand. However, the lessons are not always as successful as the planning would suggest because of weaknesses in some aspects of teaching.
- Most lessons are planned with tasks of differing levels of difficulty, so there is work that is appropriate for pupils of all abilities. Sometimes, though, the teacher does not give the pupils the tasks quickly enough and they spend too long listening to the introduction to the lesson.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are too quick to help pupils, and do not give them enough time to think about the answer to a question before giving them extra clues. For example, a pupil was asked to identify the subject of a sentence. Before he had time to consider his answer, the

teacher asked, 'Is it the bus or the lady?' and quickly followed this with, 'Who is it, do you think?'

- Teachers mark pupils' work frequently and accurately. Good work is praised, but some comments do not help pupils to improve their work. For example, one comment said, 'Use onomatopoeia in your next piece of writing,' but the next piece did not allow the pupil to do so. Corrections are often pointed out, but teachers do not always give pupils time to read and complete them, and so learn from their mistakes.
- Teachers across the school manage behaviour well. They consistently reinforce the right way to behave. As a result, there is very rarely any need for a teacher to use the school's behaviour policy or even raise their voice in class.
- Teaching is best in the nursery and reception classes. Staff check children's progress frequently and accurately, and use the results to make sure activities build on what children already know, understand and can do in clear and simple steps.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Teachers in the nursery and reception classes establish the ground rules for good behaviour at a very early age. They consistently reinforce routines and teach children to share and cooperate. Teachers in other years have high expectations that such behaviour will be the norm, and it is.
- Pupils are polite and consider others carefully when moving around the school. Their behaviour in formal situations such as assemblies is exemplary. In lessons, they follow instructions quickly and always do as they are told.
- Pupils work hard and want to do well. They concentrate fully when working on tasks that are adapted for their ability, although their attention wanders when the introduction to the lesson goes on a bit too long. They are keen to do their best for the teachers, but some lack confidence and seek reassurance from them too quickly.
- Pupils are very happy at school, where they feel safe and secure. They have great confidence in their teachers to be firm but fair when handling disagreements. Bullying of any kind is exceptionally rare and incidents of misbehaviour are limited to things like squabbles over football. Exclusions are rare, and records show that those excluded do not reoffend.
- Attendance is much improved and is now average. The work of administrative staff and parent support worker employed using funds allocated through the pupil premium has been very effective in this respect. Punctuality to school is good.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has made steady progress since it was last inspected. Improvement has not been good because key weaknesses in individuals' teaching have not been identified and tackled consistently well.
 - Many of the systems for improving the school's performance, such as the training of leaders responsible for key stages, are too new to have made a discernible impact on pupils' achievement. Staff are positive about the changes made and are looking forward to the future.
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- The school's leaders have analysed data on pupils' progress carefully in order to identify those groups most in need of extra support and ensure that no pupil underachieves. However, they have not used the resulting information to focus checks on teaching to find out why some fall behind in the first place.
 - Visits to lessons are too short to clearly identify the key strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Most have been 'drop-ins' of around 10 minutes. This means that leaders have been unable to provide specific training for individual teachers to address weaknesses and improve the quality of their teaching.
 - Newly qualified teachers benefit from much longer visits and receive detailed feedback on how to improve their work. Leaders then check that the areas for improvement have been tackled successfully. The success of this approach is clear in the rapid improvements in their quality of teaching and the better achievement of pupils.
 - The school's planning for improvement has been effective in tackling some areas that were particularly weak at the previous inspection. These include attendance, writing, the education of nursery and reception children, and the skills of leaders responsible for key stages.
 - The local authority has provided good support by funding an experienced consultant to help the school tackle the key issues from the previous inspection.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. They are fully aware of the progress that pupils make and where further work needs to be done. Their view of teaching is realistic because they take more account of the data on pupils' progress. Governors know about how leaders are improving teaching and how good teaching is rewarded. They challenge leaders to explain how weaker teaching is being improved, and keep a close eye on how the budget is allocated. For example, they check that the pupil premium is used appropriately to benefit eligible pupils. They benefit from regular training and make sure that the school meets all national requirements, including those for safeguarding pupils.
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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	103784
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	400656

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	379
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Jones
Headteacher	Wendy Roche (acting)
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 October 2009
Telephone number	01384 813850
Fax number	01384 813851
Email address	wroche@redhall.dudley.sch.uk

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