

Brickhouse Primary School

Dudhill Road, Rowley Regis, Sandwell B65 8HS

Inspection dates 12 – 13 February 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Standards have risen rapidly over the last three years due to the effective leadership of the headteacher and governors.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching has improved and methods to check on and extend teaching skills are being successfully used by school leaders.
- Teachers plan interesting learning, which often enthuses pupils. Work is carefully aimed at the needs of groups, including those with special educational needs, so that they make good progress.
- Pupils talk confidently about their school and are enthusiastic about the opportunities it gives them. They behave well and feel safe in school.
- The school is at the heart of its community. Relationships with families are strong and the extensive and positive work with parents has a good impact on the attitudes and behaviour of pupils.
- The school knows itself very well and this means that improvements are based on the needs of the pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not as many pupils make good progress in mathematics as they do in English.
- Occasionally, teachers do not check carefully enough to make sure all pupils understand new learning.
- The more-able pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes are not always stretched enough in reading and writing.
- At times, marking of pupils' work is not followed up for them to make rapid progress. Teachers do not always make sure that pupils correct words that they should have spelt accurately.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 18 lessons. In addition, they observed some small-group teaching and saw how pupils who needed extra help were supported. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ books and the information recording their progress. They also examined a wide range of documents and policies, including about keeping pupils safe, and plans for school improvement.
- There were discussions with pupils, teachers, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the Parent View website for any information to be displayed but inspectors were able to speak to parents at the start of the school day and to some either attending a workshop or volunteering in school.
- Inspectors also considered views expressed in questionnaires completed by school staff.

Inspection team

Jenny Edginton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christopher Parker

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and fewer speak English as an additional language than in most schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or pupils with a parent in the armed services) is almost double the national average.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils to learn at places away from the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils making good progress in mathematics by:
 - checking that all pupils fully understand new learning by carefully questioning them at key points
 - adapting learning to respond to pupils' misconceptions in mathematics.
- Make sure that more-able children in the Nursery and Reception are stretched enough to make faster progress in reading and writing.
- Use marking more effectively to speed up pupils' progress by:
 - making sure that teachers' guidance for pupils on how to improve their work is always followed up
 - highlighting and correcting words that pupils should have spelt accurately.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with considerably less developed skills than expected for their age. By the end of the Reception Year they have made good progress in all areas of learning but many have not acquired the skills and knowledge expected at the start of Year 1.
- While children's social skills develop well and they speak with greater clarity and confidence, their progress in reading and writing is not quite as fast. The emphasis placed on developing their personal qualities sometimes holds back more-able children who are capable of making faster progress in reading and writing but who do not always have access to suitably demanding activities.
- By the end of Year 2, after continuing to make overall good progress, standards are broadly average. Standards have been rising over time.
- There is a similar picture of improvement by the end of Year 6. Standards are broadly average. Almost all pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, they achieve better in English than they do in mathematics. This is because of the careful and detailed planning of good teaching which has improved pupils' writing rapidly.
- This year, pupils are continuing to make good, and often very good, progress throughout the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are doing particularly well. They say that this is because they are challenged in lessons. The school's approach to making them think harder and solve problems in lessons is helping to raise their achievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do well in lessons and in smaller groups where they are given extra help in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language also achieve well because staff make sure the learning is adapted to help them understand new words and take a full part in activities.
- The pupil premium is used to provide extra staff to teach pupils in smaller groups and give individual help. Its impact on eligible pupils' progress is carefully analysed. Performance information shows that in 2011 pupils known to be eligible for free school meals left the school about six months behind the others. In 2012, because of the extra support they received, they almost achieved as well as their peers and the gap closed considerably in both English and mathematics.
- Older pupils enjoy reading widely and recommend books to their friends. The younger readers are enthusiastic and use their good knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) to read unfamiliar words. Pupils develop skills across a range of subjects and enjoy their achievements, especially in singing, where they perform to local acclaim.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching helps different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, to make good progress and achieve well over time. Teachers aim high and their well-planned lessons build on what pupils already know to develop their understanding.

- Teachers adapt their approach if pupils find something difficult. On occasions, teachers do not question often or well enough to check that pupils fully understand their work. Consequently, progress in a few mathematics lessons is not as fast as in those where learning is modified to make sure pupils make good progress.
- Good relationships help pupils join in confidently when staff make learning interesting and enjoyable. Reading and writing are taught consistently well. Staff use additional small-group support effectively to reinforce and extend learning for those identified by their teachers as needing extra help.
- Adults who help the teachers are well prepared and organised. They enhance teaching and learning both in lessons and in the groups they lead, such as for those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium. This extra support is matched to individuals' needs and the effect on their progress is carefully checked to make sure that it helps them to make good progress.
- Marking has improved to some extent since the last inspection, although further development is needed. Teachers make it clear to pupils how they can improve their work. However, some of the comments they make are not followed up, which reduces their benefit. Most marking helps pupils to improve the way they write sentences and punctuate them but is not as effective in improving pupils' spelling.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are very positive about school and behave well. They are keen to learn and older pupils respond very well because they say they find the teaching 'pushes' them to do their best. There are good relationships between adults and children.
 - The few pupils who find it difficult to concentrate in lessons are effectively supported by staff to understand what is required of them and to make sure that their learning is not affected. There have been no exclusions for the last two years.
 - Very few concerns were expressed by pupils, parents or staff to the inspectors about bullying. The school runs an effective anti-bullying programme and pupils say that incidents are rare and dealt with rapidly. They know about different types of bullying such as cyber bullying.
 - Pupils feel safe in school and have a good understanding about personal safety. Pupils frequently work alongside their parents in workshops that the school runs and have recently dealt with themes such as learning about finance and e safety. The school runs family learning sessions and can point to examples where this has made a big difference to the behaviour, attitude and progress of children.
 - Pupils have good manners and are polite when walking around the school. In class, pupils are friendly and helpful both to adults and to each other. The positive values promoted by the school are evident in pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
 - Attendance has improved over the last three years and is now broadly average. The school works hard to see that this improvement is maintained and uses many approaches both to help families get their children to school and to make sure that pupils want to learn.
-

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders, especially the headteacher, are passionate about their school and have clear plans to make sure pupils' achievement continues to improve. The impact of the steps they have taken, so far, are clearly evident in the improved standards pupils reach by the end of Year 6.
 - Senior staff have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. Their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses results in well-focused action plans to build on the improvements they have achieved in the last few years.
 - There are good systems to check on the quality of teaching. Teachers receive robust targets to improve their performance, which are followed-up regularly. Leaders develop teachers' skills through coaching and training. These have been very effective in making sure pupils make good progress in English, but there is still work to do in improving their progress in mathematics.
 - The local authority has been supportive and has helped the school to improve through asking searching questions of leaders.
 - The wide range of subjects and topics promotes pupils' progress and positive social attitudes. They have plenty of interesting activities both during and after school. These include residential visits in Year 2 and Year 6, music, drama and sport.
 - All aspects of safeguarding meet requirements. The school makes sure that all pupils are given equal opportunities and that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
 - The school fosters good relations with parents. Almost 40 parents volunteer to work in school, including reading with pupils and running a tuck shop. Many more attend family-learning workshops with their children. The parent support advisor runs courses in literacy and numeracy at GCSE level for parents.
 - Staff from a local college also visit the school to run childcare courses for parents. Parents are extremely positive about the impact these opportunities have on both themselves and on the attitudes of their children towards learning.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has improved rapidly in recent years. All governors attend regular training and accept responsibility for the work of the school. As the Chair of the Governing Body says, 'Good accountability goes both ways'. Governors are now effectively challenging the school to raise standards further through setting robust targets for the headteacher and other staff. They know about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, and how this compares with all schools nationally. All governors have specific responsibilities and all visit the school to speak with pupils, parents and staff. The Chair understands the school and its challenges very well. Through careful and constructive use of finance, governors make a positive difference to the school. They make sure that the pupil premium funding is spent to close the gap in attainment between eligible pupils and the others. All decisions are carefully considered in the light of their cost and measured for impact. Governors understand the links between pay and pupils' progress and are rigorous in holding everyone accountable for their performance. They know how to reward good teaching and how to tackle any underperformance.
-

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	103936
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	400674

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	Governing Body
Chair	Phil Matthews
Headteacher	Paul Newby
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2010
Telephone number	0121 5591629
Fax number	0121 5593766
Email address	headteacher@brickhouse.sandwell.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

