

# Hurst Hill Primary School

Paul Street, Hurst Hill, Bilston, WV14 9AJ

## Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' work and do not plan sufficiently to make sure that it is set at the right level of difficulty and suitable for every pupil's need.
- Pupils' achievement in writing in Key Stage 1 is not as good as it should be. Teaching is not ensuring that pupils make consistently good progress throughout this key stage.
- Some pupils do not come to school as often as they should. This hinders their progress. A high proportion of these pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Pupils are not allowed enough time to respond to teachers' comments about their work in their books and this is slowing down their progress.
- Good examples of lesson planning are not shared across the school.

### The school has the following strengths

- Since the headteacher's appointment 18 months ago, she has taken a strong lead in driving change and has started to make notable improvements. She has a strong presence in the school and is very well respected by the staff and the pupils.
- The good or better teaching that is going on in the school is ensuring that pupils are starting to make good progress.
- The pupils behave well and say they feel safe. They are polite and show respect to each other and adults.
- Parents say they like being invited into school during the day; for example, to see their children perform in assemblies.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 17 lessons taught by 11 different teachers and one teacher from an outside agency. Three of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also examined pupils' work with the headteacher to assess pupils' progress. During lessons, they looked at books, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff, pupils, a governor and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at assessment information, attendance data, the school's improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation, a wide range of policies, and governing body documentation.
- There were 54 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection. Inspectors spoke to some parents about the school and also received written correspondence. Inspectors examined 15 questionnaires about the school completed by members of staff. All these views were considered by the inspectors.

## Inspection team

Steven Cartlidge, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Linda Rowley	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Barnfield	Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (extra funding from the government for pupils in local authority care and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is low. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need, or who are receiving support through school action plus, is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2.
- An after-school provision and pre-school operate on the same site.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

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

- Strengthen teaching to ensure that all pupils make good progress by:
  - increasing teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve so that they can help them to reach their potential
  - ensuring that when teachers mark pupils' work they give clear points on how to improve it and then allow pupils time in lessons to read, understand and follow the advice they are given
  - giving older pupils more opportunities to become involved in evaluating their own work.
- Ensure that all Key Stage 1 pupils make at least good progress in writing by:
  - reviewing the way writing is taught so that each sequence of lessons builds on the previous work done by pupils
  - sharing, with all teachers in the school, the good practice that is taking place in the upper school and which is leading to accelerated progress.
- Improve attendance rates, particularly among those pupils who are identified as persistently absent so they are at least in line with national averages by the end of July 2013, by:
  - making sure that all parents appreciate the importance of their children's regular attendance and the impact that absence has on pupils' progress and attainment
  - further supporting families who struggle to get their children to school regularly
  - developing an effective reward system to encourage pupils and families to improve their attendance.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because performance over time has been variable. In 2012, pupils' attainment in Year 6 was below average in English. It was broadly average in mathematics. Previous weaker teaching in Key Stage 2 led to slower learning and pupils did not build on the good start made in earlier years.
- Children join Reception with skills and abilities broadly in line with those expected for their age and they leave at the same level. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is sometimes not as good as it should be because activities are not hard enough for the children and they quickly become bored.
- The amount of progress made by different year groups is variable. Too few pupils exceed the expected rate of progress because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1. Here, some pupils struggle with the quality of their work because they are not first shown a good example to work towards. However, in contrast, the pace of learning accelerates in the older year groups and most Year 5 and 6 pupils are making considerably better than expected progress.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium, particularly in Year 5, is less than other pupils in the school and less than similar pupils nationally. In 2012, these pupils were about six months behind similar pupils and the equivalent of more than two terms behind their classmates. However, current school data shows that this gap is narrowing in both English and mathematics. The additional funding is being used to restructure the teaching arrangements and improve pupils' attitude to learning. This is ensuring that these pupils are now starting to make better progress.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs reflects the inconsistencies in the progress made by all pupils. They make the best progress when adults who work alongside teachers support individual pupils using a range of approaches.
- The structure and content of pupils' writing in a range of subjects in lower year groups is not developing well enough. As a result, too many pupils, particularly the more able, are not making enough progress. The school is working with a local authority consultant, focusing upon writing that is more structured and builds on the previous work done by pupils in Year 1. More-able pupils in Year 2 are being offered 'booster' classes to improve their writing.
- New staff in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in the past year are ensuring that the school can confidently show that more of the work in pupils' books, particularly in English and mathematics, is showing good and accelerated progress. In the recent Year 1 phonics screening, which checks pupils' understanding of the sounds that letters make, pupils did well.
- Improvements introduced during the past year are strengthening the quality of teachers' marking. Some pupils, particularly in Year 5 and 6, are increasingly taking good account of the comments teachers make about their work and using the guidance to improve. This is not consistently applied across the whole school and time is not always allowed for pupils to fully respond to their teacher's suggested improvements.

**The quality of teaching****requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is too variable. In lessons that require improvement, there is often too much teacher-led talk and pupil progress is hindered because many become distracted and fidgety. Also, in these lessons, pupils, when allowed to work by themselves or in groups, can lack understanding of what it is they need to do. This was the case in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, where pupils were measuring lines. Had they been shown a good method to do it first, it would have helped them to understand and learn more successfully.
- Not enough has been done to share across the school the examples of good teaching that is taking place in some classes. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, benefit from good and outstanding teaching that inspires and motivates them so that they want to learn. For instance, children demonstrated excellent progress explaining probability in a mathematics lesson because they were challenged to apply probability rules to a real-life situation such as the probability of winning the jackpot in the National Lottery.
- In classes where teachers have high expectations, pupils' workbooks show that they are now reaching higher levels of attainment, particularly in English and mathematics. The most effective teaching is enthusiastic and easily captures and holds pupils' interest. In these lessons, pupils are encouraged to have a go for themselves. They are given more opportunities to become involved in their own assessment and to rise to a challenge. As a result, they work well in groups and learn from each other. These opportunities are missed in some classes.
- As a result of the pupil premium, the school has been able to maintain a learning mentor post. The impact of the funding is helping those pupils to begin to narrow the gap between their attainment and the overall national average. The successful narrowing of this gap reflects leaders' determined approach to ensuring equal opportunities.
- Staff training for teaching assistants now means that they are being deployed effectively because they are involved in teachers' planning and know exactly what they have to do in the classroom. They provide good support to those pupils who need extra help.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils****requires improvement**

- Attendance has improved in the past three years but is still slightly below the national average. This is because some pupils, often those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, miss too much school.
- The school is working hard to improve this situation and has introduced a new set of measures to focus again on the importance of attending school every day. For example, it is now contacting parents and carers on the first day of any unexpected absence. Leaders are aware, however, that more work is needed to encourage regular attendance, support families who struggle to get their children to school, and to make clear to families the impact that absence has on their children's progress and attainment.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions increased in the last academic year because of poor behaviour in the classroom and inconsistent approaches to behaviour management. The headteacher introduced a new behaviour and anti-bullying policy at the start of this academic year and this has already had a positive impact by reducing significantly the amount of fixed-term exclusions. During the inspection most pupils behaved well at all times, both in the classroom and outdoors.

- Pupils say they feel safe in school and in the playground. The school library is now open at lunchtime and older pupils have been appointed as prefects for playground duty. Both initiatives have also improved behaviour at playtime and at lunch. Pupils admit, however, that behaviour can be poor in a classroom if the normal teacher is away and a supply teacher is used as a replacement.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet or when using mobile phones for sending messages. They know, for example, how important it is to keep passwords secret. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have also attended a local 'Safeside' initiative, providing them with a range of understanding about keeping safe at all times.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are a strength of the school. Most pupils are keen to learn and concentrate well in lessons. Pupils will often listen carefully and are eager to answer their teacher's questions. Older pupils contribute confidently to discussions. For example, in one Key Stage 2 lesson, a pupil successfully chaired a debate on how to analyse an argument.

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- The leadership and management require improvement because the actions taken by the new leadership team have had insufficient impact on raising standards over a sustained period.
- In addition to the headteacher, several senior leaders are only recently in post. The leadership team has drawn up plans to improve the quality of teaching and to make sure that all the pupils make good progress. It is still early into the plan but already it is clear that improved teaching is resulting in improved rates of progress, as can be seen in a range of pupils' books.
- There are still areas where weaker teaching remains. Senior leaders are aware of this and are providing appropriate support and training.
- The headteacher has considerably strengthened the way in which teachers are appraised for their performance and does not allow staff to be rewarded unless they are successful in helping pupils to make at least good progress.
- The school improvement plan is based on a fair analysis of what works well and what is needed to raise attainment. For example, in the section on raising standards in writing and in mathematics, there are comments about why these have not been good enough in the past and making it clear to individual teachers and the staff as a whole the reasons why pupils have not done well enough.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In a whole-school assembly attended by many parents and observed during the inspection, Year 3 and 4 pupils explained what they had learnt about Judaism. Elsewhere in the school there are good examples of artwork on the corridors and in classrooms. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and visitors at all times.
- The local authority has until recently been actively involved in supporting the school. Since last autumn, however, the local authority has felt that the school is now in a much stronger position and has withdrawn its intense focus to one that is a much lighter touch.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The Chair of the Governing Body has been in post since October 2012 and has met regularly

with the headteacher. The governing body now has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas needing improvement, including the pay and performance of teachers. Governors successfully question and challenge the headteacher and set demanding targets for the future performance of the school, based on their secure understanding of data. The school's budget is kept under tight review, with extra funds for disadvantaged pupils being monitored carefully. The governing body ensures that safeguarding policies and procedures meet all requirements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103825
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	400662

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	320
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Ridney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Dingle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 February 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818845
<b>Fax number</b>	N/A
<b>Email address</b>	info@hurst-hill.dudley.sch.uk

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