

# Brierley Hill Primary School

Mill Street, Brierley Hill, DY5 2TD

## Inspection dates

6–7 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Since the last inspection, too few pupils have been challenged to reach the levels they are capable of in English, particularly in writing, or mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Current pupils are making better progress, but progress is still not good across Key Stage 2.
- Teachers do not always use information about what pupils already know and can do effectively to make sure that work is not too easy or too hard for different ability groups.
- Although pupils are usually eager to learn at the start of lessons, this enthusiasm is not always sustained.
- Leaders and teachers regularly review how well pupils are progressing, but not yet rigorously enough to quickly identify any underperformance and tackle it.
- Attendance is below average. The school has a good understanding of the reasons for this, but the actions taken to raise attendance have not had a sustained impact.
- Until recently, the governing body has not held leaders sufficiently to account for pupils' performance.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Leaders, including the governing body, are now working more effectively with teachers to help pupils make better progress. As a result, standards are beginning to rise.
- Good teaching of early reading skills contributes to above-average standards in reading by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. Positive relationships between adults and pupils help to ensure that they feel safe in school.
- Pupils get on well with each other, valuing each other's opinions and ideas in lessons.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, five of which were observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, a local authority adviser and staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. They also spoke with parents and carers.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school. They looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress. They also looked at the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Lawley

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Brierley Hill is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is double the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to raise the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care, and pupils with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school does not meet 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?

- Make teaching consistently good or better, particularly in writing, by:
  - stretching pupils, especially the more-able pupils in Key Stage 2, to achieve more
  - ensuring teachers make expectations clear for pupils, so they know precisely what they need to do to be successful and how to make further improvements to their work.
- Sharpen the work of school leaders to improve pupils' progress by:
  - using information about progress and attainment to ensure that teachers make learning challenging for all groups of pupils
  - making sure that governors have the skills and information they need to challenge the school's performance effectively.
- Improve attendance by making clear to parents the importance of attending regularly, and the impact of absence on achievement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- In recent years, pupils have not reached high enough standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school. Progress has not been strong in Key Stage 2, particularly in writing. The situation is improving this year, but not yet enough to ensure good achievement. More-able pupils do not make the progress they should.
- The school is aware that the work the pupils are set is not always sufficiently challenging. It is now making better use of information about how groups of pupils are progressing and this is having an impact on achievement.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from very low starting points. This rate of progress continues through to Year 2. This is because the school makes good use of information about how well pupils are achieving and effective partnerships with pupils' families to help staff plan and teach challenging activities.
- Some pupils struggle in reading their books and do not gain as good an understanding of the text as they might.
- Pupils are now making better progress in Key Stage 2. In 2013, boys performed less well than girls in reading, writing and mathematics. Current rates of progress are more encouraging, with boys beginning to close the gap on the performance of girls. Leaders and teachers are more aware of current rates of progress and better teaching is beginning to drive up standards. As a result, the school is on track to meet floor standards in 2014 after narrowly missing them in 2013.
- Leaders have made changes to the way subjects are taught in order to encourage certain groups of children to make more rapid progress, an example being the development of work around Harry Potter in Key Stage 2. However, pupils are capable of making faster progress. They do best when teachers make it clear to them how they can improve their work.
- There are effective checks to monitor the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Where extra support and guidance is needed, this is provided quickly to keep the pupils on track in their learning. Even so, the current rate of progress for this group of pupils is similar to that of other pupils in the school due to the general weaknesses in teaching.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium are now making better progress when compared with other pupils in the school. The school has used this funding well. Pupils benefit from clear, well-thought-out support. In 2013, the Year 6 test results show that eligible pupils were between two and three terms behind their classmates in writing and mathematics, and more than three terms behind in reading. Current data show that eligible pupils are catching up with their peers throughout the school, and they are on track to perform better in this year's assessments.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies too much. It does not challenge all groups of pupils consistently well, particularly the more-able pupils in Key Stage 2. This is the case in both English and mathematics.
- In writing, teachers do not always make clear to pupils what they need to do or which specific

skills they need to develop, and how.

- Teachers have thought about how to make their lessons more interesting; for example, by developing how science is taught in Key Stage 1. Pupils state they enjoy such changes. However, teachers often set work that is too easy for some of the pupils.
- Where marking and feedback are focused on helping and challenging pupils to improve their work, this leads to pupils making better progress. However, the impact of marking varies throughout the school. Where it is effective, clear targets for improvement are set and followed up to make sure that pupils benefit.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1 read well, using their phonic knowledge to sound out new words. In Key Stage 2, pupils enjoy their reading, valuing the range of books available to them.
- Pupils get on well with each other and with the adults in the school. These relationships help to create an environment where pupils value each other's contributions in lessons. Pupils are ready to learn from the start of every lesson. While they say they value feedback from their teachers, they also know when the work is too easy for them.
- Teaching assistants contribute effectively to pupils' progress. They skilfully decide when to step in to help pupils without doing too much for them; for example, selecting probing questions that encourage pupils to think for themselves. Good examples were seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where adults showed that they were skilled in knowing how and when to engage with the children.
- Teachers are becoming more accurate in making judgements about how well pupils are learning. Teaching is most effective when teachers use this knowledge to skilfully ask questions that challenge pupils, both in their thinking and in their responses.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Pupils' attendance rates remain below average. School leaders are aware of reasons for this, and their recent work with families to improve attendance from previously low levels has had some impact but not yet enough. The school does not effectively communicate its concern to all parents; for example, via its website.
- Pupils conduct themselves well. However, behaviour requires improvement as pupils do not always demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Though they are keen to learn at the start of lessons, their enthusiasm sometimes flags during the course of the lesson. Pupils show greater pride in their work when they are challenged more.
- Pupils are courteous. This is evident both around school and in lessons. Pupils are proud to be part of the school, wearing their uniform with pride. Staff can be seen reminding pupils when their uniform is not worn appropriately. This supports pupils being ready to learn at the start of lessons.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils understand how to stay safe, including when using the computers and the internet. They are responsible young people and look out for each other. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements set out in government regulations.

- Some parents and pupils expressed a few concerns around bullying, and school records show that such incidents have been logged and monitored. Pupils feel confident in staff dealing with any incidents that may arise, leading to pupils feeling secure in the school.
- Pupils' support for each other contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They show mature levels of responsibility, being proud of each other's achievements.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- School leaders, including governors, are keen to improve the performance of the school and are now demonstrating the ability to improve standards. However, they know that they have not yet done enough to promote good achievement.
- The headteacher and two assistant headteachers use suitable systems to manage the performance of staff. They use information gained from monitoring lessons, together with national guidance and relevant job descriptions, to agree goals for teachers. The governing body ensures that teachers' pay and promotion are linked to this process. However, leaders are not explicit in identifying precisely which pupils need to make more progress, or by when.
- Staff now understand more clearly that when pupils are not making the progress they should, or when actions are needed quickly to ensure that pupils are kept on track. Staff are now looking more closely, for example, at different ability groups and how they are progressing when compared with similar groups nationally.
- Subject leaders support teachers in making judgements about how well their pupils are progressing. Their advice is beginning to have an impact on the way in which teachers plan lessons and the work they set for their pupils.
- The local authority has a working knowledge of the school. It has arranged support through a headteacher from another school who is a Local Leader of Education. This has helped school leaders hold teachers to account. This change to leadership gives a sharper focus on improving teaching but these changes have yet to make a sustained difference.
- The school is yet to plan how it uses its sports funding.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body wants all pupils to achieve better than they currently do, and is exploring how to develop its committee structure in order to have a sharper focus on pupils' progress. The recommendation for an external review is seen as a way to both support and challenge this process.
  - Records of meetings show that governors know the key strengths and weaknesses in teaching and achievement. However, they are not challenging leaders enough to make sure that pupils make better progress. For example, they are not clear about the distinction between different groups of pupils when discussing current rates of progress.
  - Governors have agreed to use additional funds from the pupil premium to provide more teaching to take place in small groups. They are aware that eligible pupils are now making better progress as a result.

## 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>	103776
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	434617

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Geoff Lawley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Teresa Allport
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 July 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 816980
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 816981
<b>Email address</b>	info@brierley.dudley.sch.uk



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