

Hob Hill CE/Methodist (VC) Primary School

Armitage Lane, Brereton, Rugeley, WS15 1ED

Inspection dates	12–13 March 2014		
Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- School leaders, including governors, manage teachers' performance well. Their evaluations of the quality of teaching are accurate.
- Leaders' good guidance and support for teachers have improved teaching, learning and achievement across the school.
- Staff work well together. They all understand the part they play in ensuring pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Pupils achieve well. The help they receive from staff makes them real partners in their learning and helps them to see how they can improve it.
- In Nursery and Reception, the high emphasis placed on speaking clearly and communicating with others enables children to make at least good progress.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- Attendance is above average and pupils thoroughly enjoy learning. They told inspectors that learning is the best thing about school, and that, 'Harder challenges make things get easier.'
- The governing body knows the school well. It supports the school effectively but also challenges it to do better.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to increase the proportion of pupils making better progress than that expected nationally.
- Occasionally, the most-able pupils are not given hard enough work to do.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills in different subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons. Senior leaders joined inspectors in three of the observations.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, sampled guided reading sessions and sessions where pupils were being taught phonics (letters and the sounds they make), and examined the work in pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior and subject leaders, and groups of pupils.
- A discussion also took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the data the school collects on pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, and a document outlining the school's own judgements about how well it is doing.
- Documents detailing the school's arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection, were also reviewed.
- The team took account of the 42 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and the school's own parent survey. Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents directly to gain their views at first hand.
- The 18 responses to the questionnaire for staff were also considered.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of these services.

Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jenny Edginton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding, known as the pupil premium, is broadly average. This funding in this school is for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A privately run before-and-after school club operates on the school site. It is inspected separately.
- There have been several staff changes since the previous inspection, and particularly in the past eighteen months.
- The school works in partnership with two local high schools to extend the curriculum for more-able pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching across the school, and increase the proportion of pupils making better-than-expected progress, especially in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring the most-able pupils are given suitably demanding work to do at all times
 - increasing the opportunities pupils have to use and extend their mathematical skills in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school in Nursery with skills below those expected for their age. They quickly learn to read, write, do mathematical work, speak and listen to each other and adults, and gain a wide range of learning and personal skills that prepare them well for their work in Year 1.
- The results of the Year 1 phonics screening check were well above the national average last year. Pupils use their phonics skills well to help them read and spell. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading.
- The good progress made by pupils currently in Year 2 means that their work is already ahead of what the same year group achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 last year. The upward trend of recent years is continuing well. The pupils' rapid recall of number facts, and their ability to use them to solve problems that require more than one calculation, is particularly impressive.
- Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress from when they were in Year 2. Their attainment is already virtually at the level of attainment gained, nationally, at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013. More pupils are working at the higher levels, and more are making better-than-expected progress than in the past. The most-able pupils achieve well but, occasionally, some are not given hard enough work to ensure their progress is the best possible.
- Pupils enjoy writing and they write well. They learn, step by step, how to build their writing up. For example, pupils in Year 2 have the skills to compose narrative text using speech marks and other punctuation accurately. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 are able to improvise and act out scenes that deepen their understanding of different characters before attempting to write a play script.
- Displays around the school, and the work in pupils' books, demonstrate the pupils' good progress across a range of subjects. Pupils use their literacy skills well in all subjects, but their mathematical skills less so, although some use is evident in, for example, science.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as that of other pupils. Teaching and support staff help them by making sure pupils understand each phase of learning before moving on to the next.
- It is not possible to make reliable comparisons between how well the few Year 6 pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium attained in comparison with other pupils in 2013 without identifying individuals. Eligible pupils currently in school are making good progress because the school is using the funding effectively to provide additional support to enable them to do well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers typically give pupils challenging work. They are well informed about how well pupils' are progressing by checking their understanding of the learning intended. Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well from Nursery onwards.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent throughout the school. Staff instil in the pupils a desire to learn and do well, and pupils respond accordingly. The impact of good questioning is evident in lessons in deepening pupils' understanding and the response expected from pupils from teachers' marking of their books explore and extend pupils' thinking and spur them on to learn more.
- Pupils' response to teachers' guidance from marking, and teachers' further response to pupils' improvement of their work take place in virtually all subjects and help pupils to make faster progress. Pupils are expected to heed what teachers say and do their corrections. They are given time to do these things and they do them well.
- Pupils are stretched by the work they are given and they understand the different levels they might reach in each piece of work. Therefore, they can see where their learning is going, and can aspire to the highest level. Where there is any misunderstanding, learning is quickly restructured to address it, and pupils are told why.
- Good account is taken of the targets set for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. These pupils, and those who are eligible for the pupil premium funding, often have good additional support, in and out of classrooms.
- The school is increasingly providing its most-able pupils of all ages with additional support. These pupils learn successfully in most situations, including with their own and other age groups, including at a local high school. However, the work in pupils' books and that done in lessons show that these pupils are, occasionally, not moved on to harder work as soon as they could be.
- Imaginative teaching is evident in the often impressive quality of pupils' work in their books and in displays, as well as in lessons. For example, pupils created sculptures in the style of Henry Moore after using their bodies to create different shapes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils, staff, governors and the majority of parents say this too. Pupils understand and follow the rules they have helped to draw up to ensure that they all behave in a way that lets everyone learn. Currently, attendance is above average.
- Incidents of less-than-good behaviour diminish as pupils get older. This is because pupils subscribe to the 'Be Hob Hill' approach and work hard to make the school a place where everyone respects everyone else.
- Bullying is rare. There have been no incidents this year, although some are recorded from previous years. Pupils know what bullying is, what forms it can take, and what to do should they know of or experience any. Pupils say, and the school's records show, that any bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders ensure that access to the school building is well controlled and all staff are rigorously checked for their suitability before they are appointed. Pupils are involved in assessing risks and identifying hazards from an early age. Their good understanding of how to use the internet safely is supported by their involvement in drawing up, and keeping up to date, rules for e-safety.
- Pupils are mature in their assessments of their school and their role in it. Copying the staff, they are reflective and supportive of each other. They appreciate the different systems that help them in this, for example, 'buddies' and playground helpers, and opportunities to make suggestions through the school council. They are very proud of their school.
- Pupils love learning and they rise well to the challenges they are given. The Year 2 pupils' spontaneous response to being told they were all going to be working at the higher Level 3 in an aspect of mathematics was a joy to see.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about sport and exercise, and know they are important for good health. The numbers participating in sporting and exercise activities have doubled in the past year as more pupils have become involved in the increased range available to them with the help of the primary schools' sports funding.

The leadership and management are good

- All leaders, including governors, are determined that pupils will achieve well. Despite several recent changes in staffing, they have kept the school moving forward and kept strong teamwork among the staff.
- Senior and subject leaders check teaching and learning frequently. Both levels of leadership do so well. Their evaluations are accurate and the guidance given helps teaching to improve. Areas for improvement are followed up with carefully selected training opportunities, and further checks to ensure that improvement has taken place.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. It informs school-improvement planning, the targets set for teachers as part of managing their performance and, ultimately, the ambitious targets set to increase pupils' learning.
- Staff rise to the high expectations their leaders have of them. They reflect on their own practice, adjust it to help pupils make better progress, and teach pupils to do the same with their work. The school listens to its pupils and the pupils appreciate this.
- Learning opportunities are helpful to pupils' progress, and give them the learning challenges needed for them to achieve well. However, mathematical learning is not strongly reinforced across all subjects. The good range of learning opportunities available to pupils across all subjects is enriched by visits, visitors and a wide range of well-attended after-school activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well. The good links with schools in different localities in this country and abroad help pupils to understand and respect different faiths and cultures, as do the very strong links with the local community, and especially the two churches to which the school is affiliated.
- Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current government requirements and all training is up to date. The school successfully promotes equality of opportunity and teaches pupils that discrimination of any sort is wrong.

- Sports funding is being used effectively to improve staff skills and confidence through training to offer access to new sports and physical activities, and to increase the school's participation in competitive sport. Pupils are thoroughly enjoying the new avenues open to them.
- The local authority has had little input into the school because it judged it to be a 'low risk' school. Through its risk assessment in the autumn term, which was based on an analysis of data rather than first-hand information, it judged the school to be in need of greater support, and moved it into the 'medium risk' category. This change was not communicated to the school and no additional support was given.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Pupils' progress is at the forefront of everything the governing body does. Governors understand data on pupils' achievement and use the information effectively to challenge the school to increase the rate of pupils' progress. They check that priorities are being met, ensure financial controls are in place and have made sensible decisions about how pupil premium and the sports funding are being used. They know the impact these initiatives are having on pupils' progress and on their participation in sporting activities.
 - Governors review the headteacher's performance and check that the management of the performance of all staff is carried out properly. They support the headteacher in making decisions about staffing, including when those decisions are difficult, and ensure that teachers' pay is justified by their competence in enabling pupils to achieve well.
 - They use their wide-ranging expertise effectively to hold the school to account. They gain the information that enables them to do this from the headteacher's comprehensive reports, from their own visits to classes and from meetings with the staff to whose subjects or aspects they are linked.

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	124291
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	431517

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Ely
Headteacher	Ben Preston
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2009
Telephone number	01889 256145
Email address	office@hobhill.staffs.sch.uk

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