

Hurst Hill Primary School

Paul Street, Hurst Hill, Bilston, WV14 9AJ

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils' attainment and their progress by the end of Year 6 have been inadequate and well below national expectations for the last three years.
- There is too much variation between the achievement of different groups of pupils. The gap between pupils eligible for the additional pupil premium funding and others remains too large.
- Teaching is inadequate. Opportunities are missed to ensure pupils' gaps in understanding are identified and addressed.
- Behaviour and safety are inadequate. Poor behaviour is not tackled systematically. Isolated pockets of bullying are not managed urgently and effectively. Exclusions and persistent absences remain too high.
- School leaders and the governing body have not managed improvements systematically. As a result, progress in improving teaching and behaviour has not been fast enough.
- Relationships with a small group of parents have broken down. Consequently, they lack confidence in the leadership of the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start to their education and achieve better than children nationally.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 who completed the check on how well they can link letters and sounds attained better than pupils nationally in 2013.
- Pupils enjoy participating in sporting activities and art work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place during the week of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 and inspectors did not observe any lessons in Year 6 because pupils were involved in external tests. Twelve lessons and four parts of lessons were observed. Four lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors walked around the school observing behaviour in lessons and break times. Inspectors listened to groups of pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff, pupils, parents and carers, members of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- The views of the 92 parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, were considered. The results of 23 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors analysed data about pupils’ performance and progress. They reviewed a range of documents, records and development plans. These included minutes of the governing body meetings, staff performance management targets and records on safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and exclusions.

Inspection team

Michelle Parker, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Alwyne Jolly	Additional Inspector
Edgar Hastings	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Hurst Hill Primary is a larger than average primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional funding provided by the government for looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2.
- After-school provision and a pre-school centre operate on the same site.
- The headteacher was appointed in 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of all groups of pupils so that it is at least good and pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is at least in line with national averages by:
 - setting appropriately challenging progress targets for all groups of pupils each term and holding teachers to account for ensuring they are met
 - monitoring teaching and providing clear feedback to teachers that enables them to improve their practice
 - ensuring the school's information on the attainment and progress of groups of pupils is accurate and revised half termly so that governors, school leaders and teachers have a clear and timely understanding of the performance of all pupils so they can monitor and take action to improve it.
- Improve learning and behaviour in and outside of lessons by:
 - ensuring the school's good behaviour policy is applied consistently across the school and that exclusions, instances of bullying and low level disruptive behaviour are reduced.
- Work with parents and external agencies to ensure all pupils benefit fully from the opportunities provided by:
 - working effectively with external agencies and parents to ensure the level of persistent absence is reduced to be in line with or below the national average
 - improve communication with parents so that all parents have confidence in the leadership of the school and know how to help improve their child's learning at home.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.
- An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Too few pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. The attainment and progress of pupils have been significantly below national expectations for the past three years.
- The rate of improvement for pupils eligible for the pupil premium has declined over three years in mathematics.
- The school's own progress information shows a slight improvement in the proportion of pupils making expected progress from January 2014, particularly in Year 6. However, it is too early to judge whether results in the end of Key Stage 2 tests will be an improvement on previous years.
- Children join Reception with skills and abilities broadly in line with those expected for their age and make at least expected progress.
- In Year 1 pupils' progress stalls because they are not engaged sufficiently in their lessons.
- Progress across the school is too varied. It is weak in Years 1 and 5. The proportion of pupils in Key Stage 2 making expected progress in reading is slightly greater than in writing and mathematics. However, attainment in all subjects remains too low.
- Progress for the most able pupils is inadequate, despite the implementation of support strategies. Pupils do not have a sufficiently secure grasp of basic literacy and numeracy skills to tackle higher-level work or extend their learning and understanding further.
- The progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is inadequate and is weakest in Year 5. In 2013 by the end of Year 6 pupils eligible for the pupil premium were two and half terms behind their peers in reading, three terms behind in writing and five terms behind in mathematics. There is little evidence to indicate that extra funding is being used effectively to improve pupils' performance in mathematics.
- The progress of pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs is variable across classes and year groups, but overall, it is inadequate.
- Pupils have gaps in their understanding of English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 and consequently are poorly prepared for their next stage of education.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teachers who joined the school in September 2013 are beginning to show an impact on improving pupils' learning and progress. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching across the school is too variable. It is particularly weak in Year 1 and Year 5.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. The opportunities for encouraging early writing and number skills prepare children well for Key Stage 1. However, children's learning is not built upon sufficiently in Key Stage 1.

- In Key Stage 1 basic work on sentence structures and spelling is weak. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Too often teachers do not take sufficient account of the needs of the most able pupils. Insufficient opportunities are provided for them to achieve at higher levels. Because work is too easy these pupils lose interest for the whole of the lesson. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson the teacher worked slowly through a problem on the board to indicate a link between angles and algebra. Pupils who had already grasped the idea were not able to tackle the problem for themselves. This stalled their progress in the subject.
- Booster groups for the most able pupils, taught by teachers from outside the school, improve their literacy and numeracy in Year 6. Class teachers complement this work well in lessons. However, these pupils have gaps in their knowledge of reading and writing which limit their ability to tackle more demanding work that is above the age-related level (Level 5). For example pupils do not make correct inferences when reading more challenging texts.
- In some lessons, the work tackled by pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs was at times too difficult and limited their progress. The support programmes the school is using to improve pupils' number and reading skills in Year 6 are helping to increase these pupils' their understanding of de-coding and use of number to solve problems.
- Sometimes boys dominate teachers' questioning. For example, too often, in these lessons, boys shout out and quieter pupils are not given the opportunity to answer. Boys fidget and pupils' attention drifts off because too long is spent on tasks and the pace of learning is too slow.
- The teaching of reading is becoming more systematic and guided reading is building upon pupils' understanding of letters and sounds. Adults listen to pupils reading more frequently and pupils are provided with a choice of books that they find interesting and appropriately challenging, especially the most able readers. Older pupils stated that their reading helped them to improve their writing.
- Teachers have benefited from the support provided by external consultants to improve pupils' writing. Pupils are beginning to write at greater length and opportunities to use technical vocabulary are beginning to increase. However, younger pupils do not have a sufficiently secure understanding of sentence structure.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and thoroughly. However, pupils do not always make the corrections to spellings or other improvements to their work that the marking has indicated. The advice teachers provide in marking sometimes includes misspelled words and does not identify misconceptions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are inadequate

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Pupils stated that behaviour was not good in the lower year groups in some lessons and particularly during mathematics. In Year 1 classes, a minority of pupils disrupt the learning of others. In other lessons where activities are too easy or too difficult, there is too much low level disruption. In these lessons, pupils' attitudes to learning are poor and they are slow to settle. Higher up the school pupils' behaviour is managed more effectively. The majority of pupils like their teachers and want to be successful.
- Behaviour at break times is too boisterous and this leads to disputes and name-calling. Girls complained that the boys' games of football dominated the play areas and left them with nothing

to do. Pupils stated that the provision of new play equipment at lunch times has improved behaviour.

- In Year 6, pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work. Handwriting is neat and they give thought to the layout of their work. Further down the school, good presentation is not encouraged enough and work is missing in some books.
- Younger pupils stated that some instances of bullying had not been dealt with quickly. A few parents echoed these concerns. A small minority of pupils said they did not feel safe at school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Attendance has improved, but those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium have the lowest attendance, and it remains well below the national average. Persistent absences have increased and the school does not take sufficiently urgent action to follow up these absences. Exclusions remain higher than the national average.
- The school has acted quickly to address parents' concerns to ensure that the site is secure at all times.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders at all levels have been slow to address the decline in pupils' achievement. Instability in staffing has hampered improvements. The impact of staff training has been reduced because of staff turnover.
- Senior leaders' evaluation of the school's work is inaccurate. The school's information about pupils' performance does not provide a reliable picture of pupils' progress. Targets for pupils' progress and attainment are not sufficiently challenging. Consequently, the gains children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not built upon sufficiently rapidly as pupils go through the school.
- Leaders do not hold teachers to account for the progress of groups effectively enough because procedures for setting targets for teachers are not sufficiently robust. This has reduced their effectiveness in tackling weak teaching.
- Initiatives that have the potential to make a difference are not evaluated accurately and so adjustments to improve their impact cannot be made. The new behaviour management policy has not been monitored. Consequently, senior leaders cannot determine trends and patterns in behaviour.
- The team of middle leaders are beginning to improve teaching and learning in their areas. As yet they have not made sufficient impact in improving pupils' attainment and progress across the school.
- Leaders have developed a more imaginative curriculum for September 2014. They have appropriately trialled their thematic approach.
- Pupils' awareness of other faiths is good. Music and art provide rich experiences that develop pupils' cultural understanding. However, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement because pupils' capacity to cooperate with one another and support each other's behaviour and learning is not developed sufficiently.

- Leaders have used local authority consultants to work effectively alongside staff, especially the newly qualified teachers.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- Strained relationships between leaders and a small group of parents distract leaders from improving teaching and learning. These parents have not communicated their concerns to the local authority. The majority of parents' views were positive about the school.
- The school should not make further appointments of newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The effectiveness of the governing body is limited because the progress information the members receive from school leaders is not sufficiently clear and accurate. Governors come into school regularly and meet with the headteacher. They are passionate about the school and keen to be effective. They have restructured the governing body and have had training on the role of governors
 - Governors ensure that the school's budget is kept under review. They monitor the spending of extra funds into the school such as the additional funding for sports which is used well to increase pupils' participation in sports. Governors check on pupils' participation in sport activity and the impact it has on developing healthy lifestyles. They also monitor the impact of funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium but cannot evaluate its impact effectively.

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	103825
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	446704

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Ridley
Headteacher	Caroline Dingle
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2013
Telephone number	01384 818845
Fax number	n/a
Email address	info@hurst-hill.dudley.sch.uk

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