

# Hill Avenue Primary School

Hill Avenue, Lanesfield, Wolverhampton, WV4 6PY

## Inspection dates

17–18 June 2014

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

- Achievement requires improvement because standards reached by pupils are lower than they should be from their various starting points.
- The quality of teaching varies too much and this prevents pupils from making consistently good progress.
- Attainment in writing is lower than in mathematics and reading because the teaching of writing varies too much in quality from year to year.
- Marking is not always thorough and does not consistently give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work or give them opportunities to respond to teachers' advice.
- Pupils do not have enough chance to use their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve in their work are not always high enough, particularly for the least able.
- The presentation of work in pupils' books is variable from class to class.
- The recent work of leaders and managers has not had enough time to have a full impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Governors have not been rigorous enough in monitoring and evaluating the performance of teachers so that they can make informed decisions about pay progression.

### The school has the following strengths

- Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children are very-well prepared to start Year 1.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) is taught well, resulting in an improvement in reading.
- The senior leadership team has started to bring about improvements in teaching so there is no longer any inadequate teaching.
- Pupils are well behaved and feel safe and secure in school.
- The funding to increase pupils' participation in sport is being used effectively to raise standards and promote pupils' well-being

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, including some taught to small groups. Six of these were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior leaders, other school staff and a local authority adviser who is currently supporting the school.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their work in lessons, looked at work in their books, listened to pupils read and met with groups of pupils from Key Stage 2.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 responses to the online survey (Parent View) and also a recent survey conducted by school leaders. Inspectors also spoke with a number of parents and carers as they arrived at school. The lead inspector took account of two letters received from parents.
- Inspectors also took account of the 10 questionnaires returned by members of the school staff.
- The team observed the school's work, looked at data about pupils' progress, information about staff targets, records relating to behaviour and safety, as well as documents relating to safeguarding.
- 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 those services.

## Inspection team

David Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Derek Gardiner

Additional Inspector

Kerrise James

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding to support the education of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Around one third of pupils who are from minority ethnic heritages, with the largest proportion of those coming from an Indian background. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is slightly below average, as is the percentage of such pupils supported at school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Over the last two years, there have been significant changes in the teaching staff and a short period of turbulence in the senior leadership team.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - ensuring that the tasks set are not too hard or too easy for pupils and that there is adequate challenge for the most-able pupils
  - improving the quality of teachers' marking so that it consistently informs pupils of how well they are doing and tells them how to make their work even better
  - giving pupils more opportunity to respond to teachers' marking.
- Raise standards, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to develop their skills by attempting longer pieces of writing
  - helping pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects
  - ensuring that pupils get more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects
  - paying greater attention to the presentation of pupils' work, handwriting, grammar and spelling skills.
- Ensure that governors have more rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the performance of teachers, so that they can make better informed decisions about pay progression.

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

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have not been making good enough progress to help them reach the standards of which they are capable. The results of the tests at the end of Year 6 in 2013 show that pupils reached broadly average standards in reading, but were below in mathematics, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling. However, at the higher than expected levels the most-able performed well.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding did not make the progress expected of them at the end of Year 6 in the 2013 tests. They were close to four terms behind other pupils in the school in reading and writing and almost five terms in mathematics. The school has acted quickly to put in extra support for eligible pupils currently in the school, to accelerate their progress. As a result they are now only just over a term behind in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress across Key Stage 1 has not been good enough, although pupils do reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below those typical for their age. They are helped to settle quickly into well-established routines and soon make good progress. As a result, the majority have average attainment by the end of their Reception Year and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Good progress in phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 has come about because the school has carefully focused on improving teaching in this area of learning. Standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check are above the national average because pupils are taught regularly, and practise in other lessons, how to pronounce sounds accurately. Pupils who struggle to identify words are given extra support and more practice to secure their skills. However, standards of reading are average throughout Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The good phonics practice is not fully continued in Key Stage 2, which results in weaknesses in pupils' spelling and grammar when writing.
- School data, lessons observed and work in pupils' books all demonstrate that pupils' achievement has improved during the current academic year. The vast majority of pupils are making the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics and a growing number are exceeding these expectations. However, these improvements are not yet consistently strong in every class in Key Stage 2.
- Improvements to the way mathematics is taught are helping pupils gain a better understanding of basic number calculations. However, pupils are not reaching the standards of which they are capable because, until very recently, they were not given enough opportunity to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The support given to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language ensures that these pupils are making similar progress to others in reading, writing and mathematics. Like their peers, not enough of them make better than expected progress as they move through the school.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because over time it has not ensured that all pupils achieve what they are capable of. A period of changes to staffing resulted in pupils' progress slowing down. However, teaching is now improving and there is none that is inadequate.
- Some teachers do not insist on high standards of presentation in pupils' work. As a result, too much work is untidy, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- Some teachers diligently mark pupils' work and let them know how they can improve it. However, they do not routinely follow this up. Time is not consistently set aside for pupils to correct and improve their work. As a result, the same mistakes continue to be made and learning is not consolidated.
- Effective teaching in the Nursery and Reception supports the children's good learning. The children were seen during the inspection to be excited by the activities they undertook and keen to learn. Adults use the space inside and out well to provide activities that engage the children and meet their individual needs. Relationships are strong. Adults continually interact with the children, paying close attention to their responses in order to move their learning forward.
- Pupils make good progress and enjoy learning when the work interests and challenges them. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson in which the teacher used clips from the football World Cup to engage pupils' interest. They were clear about the purpose of learning, eager to get on with the task and this helped them to produce good quality writing. This practice is not consistent across the school.
- Work in lessons is generally set at the right level of difficulty for the majority of pupils. However, some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve, and work is not sufficiently challenging for the most-able pupils. In a small number of lessons, work is set which is too hard for some pupils and this slows their progress. Work in the pupils' books shows that some teachers do not have a high enough expectation of what pupils can achieve, particularly for the least-able.
- Whilst inspectors saw clear evidence that writing is improving, teachers have not paid enough attention to developing pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. This means that not enough pupils have attained the levels they are capable of.
- Pupils are now being encouraged to write at length, particularly in Years 5 and 6, but this practice is not consistent across the school. In addition, pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their writing skills into other subjects beyond English. This has a negative impact on the standards pupils reach in the subject.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language are ably supported by a dedicated group of well-trained teaching assistants, who know when to give support and when to allow pupils to work on their own.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils****are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Good behaviour starts in the Nursery class where children learn and play purposefully together and behave well. This is because the school has high expectations of both their behaviour and attitudes to learning and how they treat others.

- Staff, leaders, governors and pupils who gave their views say that behaviour is good. While some parents expressed concern about behaviour, inspectors found no evidence of poor behaviour or weak management of pupils by teachers.
- Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to work hard and do their best. This is not always reflected in the pride they take in their written work, as teachers do not always insist on high standards of presentation.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities to act as play leaders at lunchtimes. Older pupils support the younger ones and provide activities to engage them in purposeful play. Pupils say that these activities have made lunchtimes more enjoyable. These roles help to promote pupils' good personal, social, moral and cultural understanding, which is reinforced in lessons and daily routines. The training and equipment for the lunchtime activities has been made possible by the primary school sport funding allocated to the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep safe both at home and at school through their awareness of potential dangers such as talking to strangers. They are well informed about using the internet and mobile phones safely.
- Bullying is rare and the pupils say that they know who to turn to if they have a problem. They know the staff will respond to any concerns they have. Pupils have a good knowledge of what constitutes bullying. They say that it is very rare in the school.
- Pupils' attendance is average and improving quickly. The school makes sure that pupils and parents understand the contribution good attendance makes to learning well.
- There have been a small number of short-term exclusions in recent years, but no permanent exclusions. Reintegration back into school is well managed.
- School records show that incidents of poor behaviour are rare and have reduced significantly in recent years as a result of the school's efforts.

## **The leadership and management**

## **requires improvement**

- The school's senior leaders and governors are determined to bring about improvements and are well supported by teachers in this drive for improvement. However, until recently, the school had not ensured pupils' achievement was good enough. Although the leaders have successfully challenged teachers' previously low expectations, the actions taken so far have not been enough to ensure achievement in English and mathematics is consistently good in all classes.
- The changes that the senior leaders and governors have introduced include appointing some new teachers and subject leaders. During this period, there has been some turbulence in teaching which has slowed the progress of some pupils. The school's more settled staffing is now allowing teaching to improve steadily and this is having a beneficial impact on pupils' progress.
- Leaders' evaluations of the school's performance are perceptive and accurate. They judge the qualities of teaching well and link what they observe in classrooms to pupils' progress. Systems to support teaching are now more effective because they have been more closely linked to performance management.

- Subject leaders, some of whom are new to their role, have already identified what is working well and what needs to improve. Development plans have been written and agreed actions are being implemented. However, some of the initiatives are recent, such as increased opportunities for pupils to undertake problem-solving activities in mathematics and it is too early to judge their long-term impact.
- The school uses its allocation of primary school sport funding well. As a result, this aspect of the school's provision is strong. More Key Stage 2 pupils now have the opportunity to swim. This is due to enthusiastic leadership and teaching, and effective use of specialist expertise. The school's outdoor environment supports this aspect of its provision.
- The school tracks the progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium accurately. The effect of the support is monitored and action taken if pupils' progress is not fast enough. This has resulted in this group of pupils narrowing the gap in attainment between them and other pupils in school.
- Experiences outside the classroom enhance pupils' learning and develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. The cultural backgrounds of different groups of pupils are valued and celebrated, and lead to a harmonious school community.
- Whilst the local authority has given support to the school, in particular helping the headteacher as she has made changes to teaching and implemented new systems, the impact on raising standards has been limited.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- School governors bring a range of skills and experience to the governing body which they update by attending training.
- As a result of good quality information provided for them by the headteacher the governors have an accurate understanding of the school's performance, including the quality of the teaching. However, without support, they do not yet have the capacity to challenge school leaders well enough.
- Members of the governing body are aware of the progress made since the previous inspection, but appreciate that there is a considerable amount of work to do to consolidate and enhance these gains.
- The governors hold the school to account over its spending of the pupil premium to ensure that it is supporting those pupils who are eligible to receive it.
- Governors are involved in the performance management process. However, they do not have rigorous enough monitoring and evaluation procedures in place to ensure that teachers' pay accurately reflects performance.
- The governing body is very supportive of the school, for example over the difficulties faced with teaching. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and pays particular attention to ensuring the safeguarding of staff and pupils at the school. Their efforts have a strong impact on this aspect of the school's work.

## 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>	104326
<b>Local authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	442511

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>	320
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stan Barrett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Suzanne Webster-Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6th March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 558750
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