

Bantock Primary School

Aston Street, Penn Fields, Wolverhampton, WV3 0HY

Inspection dates 19–20 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too few pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics because, until recently, not enough was expected of them by teachers.
- Although teaching has improved this year, its quality is not yet consistent enough to make sure pupils achieve well. There is too little good or outstanding teaching.
- The quality of marking varies from excellent to inadequate. Comments do not always provide clear enough guidance to help pupils improve their work.
- Not all pupils' written work is well presented and some contains too many careless mistakes.
- The most-able pupils do not always make as much progress as they should because teachers do not give them hard enough work.
- Some pupils are still catching up lost ground from past underachievement and lack the skills they need to reach higher levels.
- Although senior leaders have provided secure interim arrangements during staffing changes, some subjects have not had permanent leaders to monitor whether standards are high enough or whether pupils are making enough progress.

The school has the following strengths

- This is a very harmonious school where pupils' wide range of cultures is celebrated.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start because they receive exciting activities to develop their skills.
- High-quality teaching in Year 6 helps these pupils to make rapid progress.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. They feel safe and are proud of their school.
- The headteacher is a strong leader and has been the major driving force behind the improvements that have been achieved in a short space of time.
- The governors provide good-quality support. They are not afraid to challenge the school in order to bring about further improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, five of which were observed with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, representatives of the governing body, including senior and subject leaders. There was also a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also looked at the school's own parental questionnaires and spoke informally to parents and carers to gain their views.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan, policies, information about pupils' progress and attainment and records of how the school sets targets for teachers to improve their work. They looked at child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Kath Campbell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christopher Mansell

Additional Inspector

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Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bantock is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Three-quarters of pupils have English as an additional language.
- A high proportion of pupils are supported by pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported at school action and a below average proportion are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- A much higher than usual number of pupils joins or leaves the school at different times during the year.
- There have been many changes of staff, including at senior level, since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the governments' current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- During the 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 carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching and increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by making sure teachers:
 - consistently demand the best of their most-able pupils, so that they do not waste time doing work that is too easy for them
 - share and learn from the outstanding practice that exists within the school
- Increase the proportion of pupils making good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school by making sure that:
 - pupils build up basic skills as they move through the school so that they are not prevented from gaining the more advanced skills they need to reach higher levels
 - teachers insist that written work is of a consistently good standard and well presented, with no careless basic spelling mistakes
 - teachers consistently provide information about how to improve when they mark pupils' work
 - subject leaders develop the skills they need to know whether standards are high enough and whether pupils make enough progress in their subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement of pupils from all ethnic backgrounds requires improvement because, until recently, not all pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly the most-able, made enough progress. Over time, attainment has been too low in Key Stage 1 and well below average in Key Stage 2 because too few pupils reached average and higher levels.
- Children start the Nursery with low levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. Early language, literacy and social skills are particularly weak. Despite making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, not all children reach the expected levels of understanding for their age by the time they move into Year 1.
- Attainment in reading and writing is rising but is not yet at average levels when pupils leave. Reading has been given a higher profile and the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) has improved. As a result, younger pupils, including those who do not have English as their first language, have greater confidence and are more able to work out unfamiliar words. Pupils of all ages now read more regularly at home and in school. Older pupils, in particular, enjoy reading greatly. Their positive attitudes towards learning play a strong part in the recent improvements seen in their progress. However, some pupils, including those from ethnic minorities in all year groups, still lack the skills they need to reach higher levels.
- Strategies to develop pupils' confidence to write at greater length by using skills more widely in different subjects have proved effective. There are examples of good quality writing in, for example, pupils' history work. However, there are also examples of pupils not producing a high enough standard of work, with some producing work that is untidy or with careless spelling. The progress of some pupils is also slowed by their lack of basic spelling skills.
- Raising attainment in mathematics remains a priority for improvement. The school has put many new initiatives in place, including, for example, providing greater challenge for the most-able pupils and making sure pupils acquire secure basic calculation skills. Some initiatives are showing good results but others are too recent to show their full impact on attainment.
- Although some pupils are still catching up lost ground, increasingly there is an upturn in standards. More pupils are on track to reach average and higher levels and, across the school, more pupils are achieving well. The progress of more-able pupils is also improving. Pupils in Year 6 make outstanding progress because they receive teaching of the highest quality.
- Adults are beginning to make sure that barriers to learning are removed more quickly. The school is closing the gap between its least-able pupils and the rest. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils because they receive good quality support that helps them to succeed.
- The school has used its pupil premium funding effectively to give eligible pupils more support in their learning. In 2012, these pupils were two terms behind others in English but in line in mathematics. In 2013, the gap in English closed completely; indeed, pupils eligible for pupil premium funding in Year 6 achieved better standards than other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school uses its sports funding to positive effect on pupils' achievement. Specialist sports coaches work alongside teachers to develop their expertise. Football coaches run after-school

clubs to develop pupils' competitive skills. Pupils greatly enjoy these activities. They contribute much to pupils' well-being and healthy lifestyles as well as to their improved competence in sport.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there is still too much variation in its quality and not enough good or outstanding teaching.
- The work seen in pupils' books and in lessons provides clear evidence that some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Some pupils produce good quality work, others present work poorly and make the same mistakes over and over again. During a period of staffing instability at the beginning of this academic year, many pupils did not make enough progress. Although the rate of learning accelerated during the spring and summer terms, some pupils are still making up lost ground.
- The quality of marking, though improving, is not good in all classes. Pupils are not always clear about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. While teachers generally give pupils clear guidance about what they need to do to reach their next target, on occasions, some of the most-able pupils receive too little information about how to improve.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught well. Staff are particularly good at developing children's early language skills. They take every opportunity to talk with children, especially those who have English as an additional language, about their learning. The good ratio of adults to children makes a strong contribution to the quality of children's learning.
- The teaching of writing and mathematics is improving because teachers are starting to assess pupils' levels of understanding with much greater accuracy than in the past. This is leading to faster progress because teachers increasingly provide work with the right level of challenge so that pupils do not waste time doing work that is too easy.
- In lessons where there is a high level of challenge, learning is impressive. A good example of this was seen in a Year 6 mathematics session. Pupils made marked gains in their mental calculation skills because activities, such as identifying number patterns, were interesting and challenging. Pupils were highly motivated to succeed because they enjoyed their work. They accurately assessed how well they had understood at the end of the lesson and everyone felt confident that he or she had made very good gains in their learning.
- Pupils with particular needs, especially those who speak English as an additional language, are helped to make good progress through well-targeted individual support. Adults who help disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make sure these pupils understand their work, and this is helping them to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have experienced many staffing changes this year and yet have retained their enthusiasm for learning and a determination to do their best, even in unsettling times.
- Staff have successfully created a positive climate for learning. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and pupils want to do well because they enjoy their work.

- Nearly all pupils behave well in class and around school. They are keen and eager to improve. Their positive attitudes to learning have a strong impact on their good personal development.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop good social skills right from the moment they first enter the school. They work and play together with high levels of enjoyment because learning is fun. They share, wait their turn and co-operate well with each other.
- Bantock is a harmonious school where pupils from different cultures get along well together. In discussion, pupils talk knowledgeably about each other's cultures and show great respect towards each other. They regularly welcome new pupils into their class, offering them care and friendship.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good. They appreciate the variety of activities on offer, the out-of-school clubs and the way in which they are rewarded for doing well. They value the way in which staff praise them and this makes them want to do even better.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Pupils are confident they will be listened to if they have any concerns and that what they say will be taken seriously. They are very aware of how to keep safe, including when using computers and the internet.
- In discussion, pupils know, and the school's reports show, that incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils are well informed about the different kinds of bullying and say that the few incidents that do occur are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Although attendance is not yet at national levels, it is improving. Staff monitor attendance relentlessly to ensure that pupils who may be at risk of falling behind attend more regularly than in the past.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has been particularly successful in raising pupils' performance in a short period of time, despite having to manage challenging staffing difficulties. Staff feel well supported by the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Senior leaders have set about raising attainment as a matter of urgency. They have introduced major changes to the way in which they track pupils' progress and identify potential underachievement. They have focused attention very firmly and with increasing success on improving the quality of teaching. They are good role models who mentor and work alongside colleagues. Although increasing, there are not yet enough chances for staff to learn to improve their practice by observing the best teaching in the school.
- The checks carried out by senior leaders on the quality of teaching are detailed and thorough. Teachers have been made far more accountable for the standards achieved. Pupils' progress is monitored with greater precision and senior leaders make sure teachers only receive a pay increase if targets for improvement are met.
- Although effective interim arrangements have been put in place, some subjects, such as mathematics, are without permanent leaders. The school is aware that the development of subject leaders is a priority and has appointed new staff who will take up responsibility for leading specific subjects in September 2014.

- The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and have played a strong part in raising the quality of education for the school's youngest pupils. Leaders who provide support for pupils at an early stage of acquiring English and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make sure these pupils get the support they need to succeed. They provide effective extra help on an individual or small group basis.
- The learning experiences the school provides make a positive contribution to pupils' good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Opportunities to participate in activities such as the school choir add greatly to pupils' enjoyment. Strong emphasis is placed on pupils' personal development and, to this end, a good range of visits, visitors and out-of-school activities are provided to broaden pupils' understanding of the wider community and to celebrate the different cultures that exist within the school. There are many examples of literacy and numeracy skills being effectively developed in different subjects, such as in some good-quality history work on Britain in the 1950s.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors are positive about the school and are becoming increasingly involved in their children's learning, particularly in helping them with their reading.
- The primary sports funding has been used effectively to provide, for example, new sports equipment and greater opportunities for pupils to learn to swim. The school has also acquired funding to develop the school grounds in order to increase sporting activities so that more pupils have a chance to get involved.
- Although the local authority has recently appointed a new school improvement officer, who has quickly established a good working relationship with the headteacher, in the past it has not always provided effective support and or challenge the school sufficiently about pupils' attainment or low attendance. Leaders are using this new level of support to improve their checks on pupils' achievement and teaching quality. The governing body has found the central training for governors valuable and appreciated the local authority support in the appointment of a new headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body is experienced and knowledgeable. She is well informed and supportive of the school. Governors monitor the work of the school through, for example, looking at information about pupils' achievement and challenging leaders about whether standards are high enough. Governors know that attainment is improving, albeit from a low base. They keep up to date with training and make sure that the school meets all statutory and safeguarding requirements. They support the headteacher in taking difficult decisions, particularly about making sure teachers are not rewarded unless their targets for improvement are met. They keep a careful check on how effectively pupil premium funding has been used to close the gap between the attainment of these pupils and others.

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	132197
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	442581

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catrin Lester
Headteacher	Harvinder Sarai
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2012
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