

# Brandhall Primary School

Edinburgh Road, Oldbury, B68 0ST

**Inspection dates** 6–7 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils have not made consistently good progress since the school was last inspected. Standards at Key Stages 1 and 2 are below average.
- Pupils do not show secure understanding of what they read, including when reading questions in mathematics.
- Too many pupils do not spell words accurately or punctuate their writing well enough. A few do not present their work neatly. Teachers do not consistently address these points in their marking.
- Teachers do not always match work closely to what pupils already know. Sometimes, tasks are too difficult for pupils who struggle and too easy for the most able.
- Pupils who receive extra support because they struggle with their work do not always get enough help in class.
- Not all teachers have a clear enough idea of what it is that makes teaching good.
- Many changes in staffing have made it difficult for senior leader to maintain good teaching reported at the school's last inspection.
- The evaluation of the school's performance by senior leaders is too generous and their judgements do not sufficiently link closely to pupils' progress. As a result, teaching and achievement require improvement.
- Governors have not been quick enough to hold school leaders to account for improving pupils' achievement and school effectiveness.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement because some activities do not engage all children, or do not challenge them enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving, with current pupils showing improved progress. Some teaching is highly effective.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has quickly made improvements. Attainment is rising quickly.
- The school manages pupils' behaviour well. Staff have particular success in helping pupils who have identified behaviour difficulties.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are kept safe while in school.

### Information about this inspection

- In view of the high number of teachers new to the school and the reorganisation of classes due to the recent increase in the school's size, inspectors focused on how leaders had managed school expansion.
- The large majority of the 19 observations of teaching and learning were carried out jointly with the headteacher, the associate headteacher or an assistant headteacher (Early Years Foundation Stage leader and special educational needs coordinator) to assess their ability to check on the impact of teaching on learning.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at the work in pupils' books, including some from the previous school year.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and pupils. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, and the data it collects on pupils' progress. Documents detailing the school's arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed.
- Questionnaire responses from 12 members of staff were analysed.
- Inspectors took account of 24 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.

### Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Watts	Additional Inspector
Edgar Hastings	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. An average proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority) is above average, at around a half.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is around one in seven, which is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is about one in twelve. This is a little above average.
- In 2014, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There has been a rapid increase in numbers on roll since the previous inspection. There are now two classes in each year group, including the Reception Year. Children attend the Nursery part-time.
- As a result of growth, six teachers joined the school last year and three joined during the previous school year. The senior leadership team has been reorganised: the headteacher works four days a week and there is an associate headteacher who works closely with the headteacher. They share responsibility for the school. A number of senior leaders are new to the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the coordinator for special educational needs provision. A number of governors are new.
- A pre-school shares the school site. It is run by the governing body but is subject to a separate inspection.
- The school runs before- and after-school clubs. Both were visited as part of this inspection.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently at least good by:
  - improving teachers' use of information on pupils' previous learning to set demanding work that ensures all make rapid progress, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - achieving a consistent approach to marking and feedback to pupils so that they know what to do next in their learning, what they do well and where they are not doing well enough
  - giving extra help during class work to pupils who struggle with their work, which builds on the effective support given out of class to disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils
  - sharing effective features of teaching with staff so that they all know what makes teaching good.
- Improve pupils' progress and so raise attainment at the end of all key stages by:
  - ensuring pupils develop better reading comprehension skills so that they fully understand what they read, especially questions
  - improving pupils' spelling and their use of punctuation to improve the quality of writing
  - developing better problem solving skills, particularly in mathematics
  - insisting that pupils taking more care in the presentation of their work
  - checking that all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are engaged by activities.
- Increase the impact of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - all governors are sufficiently knowledgeable to challenge senior leaders on the school's effectiveness
  - senior leaders' checks on how well the school is doing take into account all available evidence, that judgements more closely match the school's performance and enable leaders to accurately prioritise the areas in most need of improvement.

An external review of governance, including a review of the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, since the school's previous inspection, leaders have not been effective in maintaining the good quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Due to the high level of staff change in response to the school's growth, school leaders have difficulty in checking teaching and in setting targets to improve effectiveness. This has resulted in a dip in the quality of teaching, and in pupils' attainment and progress in 2014. Now that staffing is more settled, the monitoring of teaching is more effective and teaching is improving so pupils' progress is getting better.
- The school's self-evaluation is too generous and judgements do not accurately reflect the school's current effectiveness. This means it is difficult for senior leaders to prioritise the areas in most need of improvement.
- Changes in leadership at different levels have hampered school improvement in the past. Now that new leaders are established, they are beginning to have impact. For example, improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage have helped improve the percentage of children achieving a good level of development.
- The school has made detailed arrangements for spending the primary sports funding to improve and widen its sporting provision. Funds are directed to increasing pupils' participation in sport during lunchtime, after school and in competitions. Grounds development is planned to improve sporting facilities. There are plans to improve teachers' skills to improve pupils' physical activity experiences in lessons. However, there is no evidence that the school has evaluated or reported on the impact of this spending.
- During the last year, pupil premium funding was not used effectively in helping disadvantaged pupils catch up in reading, writing and mathematics so the gap in their attainment and that of other pupils widened. The funding was allocated to one-to-one support and small group tuition, improving attendance and the self-esteem of qualifying pupils. It is also used to enable all pupils to join in activities for which there is a charge. There is a record of governors recently questioning some of the funds being used to offset the high cost of paying for supply teachers to cover staff absence.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils take on responsibility to develop social skills. They learn about democratic processes through the election of responsibility posts such as prefects. Good social and moral development is shown in the way pupils of different backgrounds get on well and by their good behaviour. Pupils are prepared well for life in multicultural Britain through developing their understanding of lifestyles, customs and cultures that are different from their own.
- Leaders have created a culture of equality and inclusion. There are examples of the school having success with managing the behaviour of pupils who have found it difficult to behave in other settings. This is partly due to the curriculum being interesting and relevant and providing well for pupils' pastoral support and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority has recently graded the school as one requiring improvement. They have been effective in their support through carrying out reviews and making recommendations for improvement, which have had a positive impact on the school. They have further plans to support the school on its journey to becoming good.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance requires improvement. Some governors have recently joined the governing body and some have taken on new roles of responsibility. They have a good idea about the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work, but rely on senior leaders to inform them, as their understanding of assessment data is limited.
  - Governors keep abreast of the performance of teachers, and link pupils' progress to the effectiveness of staff. They set suitable targets for managing the performance of the headteacher and other staff and know how well staff are progressing towards achieving them. They link teachers' pay to the progress of

pupils.

- Minutes of governors' meetings confirm that they do question school leaders over important issues. They take action where needed to ensure that that important issues are resolved.
- Governors ensure statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding. All staff and visitors are vetted. However, some useful information, such as reporting on the impact of the pupil premium funding and the primary sports fund, is not included in the website.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' good attitudes are having a positive impact on their learning and the current improvement in their progress. Pupils speak positively about behaviour. They say lessons are rarely interrupted by poor behaviour. The large majority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire and all staff say that behaviour is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and approach their learning with enthusiasm. Most pupils take care over their work, and books are generally presented in a neat and tidy manner but in other books the presentation is weak. .
- Behaviour at break times and on other occasions is good. Pupils who have found difficulty in settling at other schools behave well here. Pupils play alongside each other harmoniously. Pupils say that the 'playground buddy' scheme helps them make friends and deal with any issues.
- Attendance is improving and, although below average, it is getting closer to the national average. At the time of the inspection attendance was good. Due to the efforts made by the school, there are striking examples of improved attendance for individual pupils and the rate of persistent absence is below average.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff training in respect of child protection is up to date and adults are vigilant. When necessary, staff take appropriate action if they are worried about the safety of any child, including making referrals to outside agencies, or seeking their help.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms bullying can take and know what to do if they ever need help. They say bullying is not a worry for them and there is no threatening behaviour in school. They are confident that, should bullying ever happen, it would be dealt with effectively.
- Pupils are looked after well in the before and after school clubs. There is a good range of outdoor and indoor activities that are well supervised.

## The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching at all key stages requires improvement because it has been inconsistent. As a result, it has not had a good impact on pupils' learning. It has not helped pupils make good enough progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics
- Teachers do not consistently use the information they have on pupils' previous learning well enough to plan work that pupils at different levels of attainment can build on confidently and make good progress. Weaknesses in basic skills in mathematics make it difficult for some pupils who struggle to answer questions confidently. Sometimes, pupils who find the work easy are not routinely provided with harder work to move them on to the next level.
- Marking of pupils' books does not always identify how pupils can improve their work. There is a consistent approach to marking but some teachers miss opportunities to pick up on basic mistakes, such as spelling errors or untidy presentation and so do not help pupils improve well enough.

- Learning support assistants are effective in supporting pupils identified with special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils through the delivery of well organised support programmes. However, teachers do not build effectively enough on this support work in class to ensure the good progress made during these times continues in class.
- Now that staffing is more settled, teaching is having more impact on pupils' progress. However, not all teachers have a clear understanding of what makes teaching good, while others clearly demonstrate a secure understanding of how to help pupils learn.
- Where learning is best, teachers promote an enthusiasm for learning so pupils attempt challenging tasks confidently. They set a good example by modelling accurate speech and neat handwriting. Tidy classroom displays encourage pupils' curiosity and encourage pupils to produce neat, tidy work.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Attainment on entry to the Nursery is varied, but many pupils have skills below those typical for this age, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. At the end of Reception, attainment is below average. Attainment at the end of Reception is best in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. It is weakest in literacy, in particular in writing. Children's achievement therefore requires improvement
- Achievement at Key Stage 1 requires improvement. Although there was some improvement in attainment in mathematics in 2014, overall attainment and in reading and writing was below average.
- A below average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening. Year 2 pupils who did not reach the expected standard, still have some difficulty in reading unfamiliar words. More competent readers show better reading skills and are making good progress, although they still show limited understanding of what they read.
- Data for 2013 were not published, but teacher assessments show that standards were below average. Pupils made progress from low starting points at the end of Year 2 that was not inadequate but required improvement.
- In 2014, attainment at Key Stage 2 was below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils entered Key Stage 2 with attainment that was well below average so achievement, although requiring improvement, was not inadequate.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress does not compare favourably with that of others in school or nationally. For disadvantaged pupils, the gaps in attainment with other pupils at the end of Year 6 narrowed in 2013, but widened again in 2014. They made slower progress than other pupils in school and all pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading, disadvantaged pupils were a term behind others and just over a year behind all pupils nationally. They were a term behind others in writing and just over a year behind all pupils nationally. In mathematics, disadvantaged pupils were almost a year behind others and a year and a half behind all pupils nationally.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is inconsistent, and requires improvement, like that of their classmates. For example, results of the national assessments at Year 6 in 2014 varied, depending on the level of support. Pupils with statements of special educational needs achieved well, those at school action plus made similar progress to others nationally, while those at school action made slower progress.
- Most-able pupils did not achieve as well as they could last year in national assessments. The percentages of pupils reaching the higher level 3 at Year 2 and levels 5 and 6 at Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics, were below average. The achievement of the most-able pupils is improving, although there are still occasions when they do not achieve their best because they are not sufficiently challenged.
- Now that staffing is more settled, the progress that pupils in school are making is improving. They are

now working at levels that match those expected for pupils of their age. The school's assessment information shows current pupils are on track to achieve average standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The percentages of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year increased significantly in 2014, even though it was still below average.

### **The early years provision** requires improvement

- When children choose their own activities, most children stay occupied, but a few do not fully engage in activities and this is not always picked up by adults. This includes some children identified with special educational needs.
- During adult-led activities, adults match tasks well to children's learning needs and ability. However, children's progress is limited, particularly for the most-able, because there are insufficient planned activities to extend learning beyond the task initially provided.
- Children enjoy learning through play. They behave well and work calmly alongside other children, helping and supporting each other. They listen to adults and respond well to questions that deepen their learning. Most stay on task, but the concentration span of a few is short.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage leader also coordinates provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This means that any child who may need extra support is identified and supported from a very early stage.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has had a positive impact on provision. Since taking over, the leader has promoted much improvement, with particular emphasis on developing the outside learning environment. This means that children learn equally well inside and out of doors. They are increasingly ready to start Year 1 by the end of Reception.
- Adults check carefully and regularly that children are safe. Adults are vigilant, yet enable children to learn actively through play.

## 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>	103976
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	444186

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>	450
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lee Maskell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elaine Fitzgerald
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4225336
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