

Holyhead Primary School

Holyhead Road, Wednesbury, WS10 7PZ

Inspection dates

4–5 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Some recently appointed subject leaders have not fully developed their skills to have the impact intended on raising standards.
- Teaching is not consistently good across the school and limits the progress pupils make, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Teachers' marking does not have the impact it should in improving pupils' work because pupils are very rarely required to respond to and follow the guidance they are given.
- Not all pupils reach the standards they could in reading, mathematics and, especially, writing.
- Writing skills are not well developed because pupils are given tasks which do not challenge and extend the most able or build sufficiently on pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils do not write enough, so they are not able to practise their skills to make better progress.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not good because too much time is wasted on activities that do not help the children to make progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and the governing body are having a positive impact on securing improvement in teaching, achievement and leadership. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving and standards are rising.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn.
- Attendance improved considerably in 2014 to be broadly average.
- Pupils' progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6 because teaching is more effective in these years and pupils make good and, sometimes, better progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 12 lessons and part lessons. The headteacher joined each of the inspectors in one of their visits to lessons.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and scrutinised samples of their work.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during a meeting and at break times.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher, the subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The online survey (Parent View) could not be analysed because too few parents responded but inspectors took account of the parents' responses to the school's own questionnaire. Informal discussions were held with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- The 12 questionnaires received from staff were analysed.
- A number of documents were examined by the inspectors, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan, and data related to pupils' attainment and progress. They also looked at information regarding attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Shahnaz Maqsood, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Karen Davies

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holyhead Primary School is smaller than the average-sized school.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, Nursery provision is part time and Reception is full time.
- About two in every five pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with the biggest group being Bangladeshi. One in four pupils speak English as an additional language. This is an above-average proportion.
- About two in every five pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care. This proportion is well above average compared with schools nationally.
- Just over one in four pupils are disabled or have special educational needs, which is a proportion above the national average.
- The headteacher has led the school for four years, two years as seconded headteacher, before becoming substantive headteacher in September 2012. New subject leaders were appointed in September 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school is part of a cooperative trust, which consists of 10 local schools. This school has its own separate governing body, members of which sit on the trust board. It is also part of the Wednesbury Teaching School Alliance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently at least good across the school by ensuring that:
 - tasks and activities build on pupils' prior learning and challenge the most able, in particular
 - marking helps pupils to improve their work, and teachers check that they act on teachers' feedback and guidance so they make more progress.
- Raise pupils' achievement in writing and make sure that all pupils make good progress by:
 - giving pupils more frequent opportunities to write
 - having high expectations of what pupils can achieve at all times.
- Strengthen leadership by developing the skills of subject leaders so that they take more responsibility for improving achievement and teaching in their subjects.
- Improve the achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring every opportunity is taken to extend their learning and avoid any waste of time in class.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have overseen a decline in the school's overall effectiveness since its last inspection.
- Subject leaders are now beginning to identify what is done well and what needs to improve in their subject areas but they have not fully developed the skills they need to evaluate teaching accurately in relation to the progress all groups are making. Consequently, they are not supporting senior leaders well enough in raising achievement, and action does not always follow quickly to assist pupils who fall behind with their work.
- Until recently, the headteacher was overgenerous in her judgement of the effectiveness of teaching. Currently, she uses a range of information, such as data on pupils' progress, work in books and lesson observations, which provide a more accurate profile of performance. Consequently, weak teaching is now correctly identified and support is provided for staff who need to improve their practice.
- Leaders and governors have had success in creating a school where all pupils are safe, valued and work together in a harmonious social environment. Discrimination is not tolerated and pupils are encouraged to respect others; for example, in assemblies where moral values are strongly endorsed.
- The introduction of a creative curriculum is providing more meaningful and exciting learning opportunities. Greater emphasis is rightly placed on improving writing, but it is still the case that pupils have too few opportunities to write. The wide and varied range of learning opportunities contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They gain knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths, cultures and beliefs through a programme on 'values'. They are well prepared for life in modern British democratic society.
- The school has analysed in detail the needs of disadvantaged pupils to maximise use of the pupil premium funding. The support provided is currently proving more effective in ensuring better progress and attainment for these pupils. This is because the school is now better able to identify the specific learning needs of these pupils and target the support accordingly. As a result, the gaps in attainment in the current Year 6 are much smaller than in 2014.
- The school uses the sports premium to improve pupils' healthy lifestyles and well-being. The funding provides a variety of sporting activities for the pupils, such as gymnastics and swimming. Specialist coaches are improving the skills of pupils and staff. A member of the governing body regularly runs a football club, which is extremely popular and very much enjoyed by the pupils.
- The local authority has increased its support for the school this year due to the decline in results. A representative visits regularly and works closely with the headteacher and governing body. Partnerships with other institutions are also helpful in the drive for better teaching and achievement.
- Adult classes, such as Zumba, mostly attended by parents, are run on the school premises by an outreach worker. These classes help in the school's work to involve parents who are otherwise hard to reach. With increased confidence, some of the parents have begun to volunteer in the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Having previously overseen a decline in the school's overall effectiveness, the governing body is now a positive force driving improvement in the school. Governors have a good understanding of how well pupils achieve. They have received training in the analysis and interpretation of data on progress and attainment. Consequently, they set challenging targets for the school to reach, but also support the headteacher with her work to improve teaching and achievement.
 - Governors are aware that the governing body has previously been too slow in tackling weak teaching and underachievement. Governors now have a clearer picture of the quality of teaching and they scrutinise the impact of management of staff performance to ensure purpose and action are helpful to securing better teaching. They know the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Teachers' pay increases

are linked directly to pupils' performance and the governing body withholds pay rises when the targets set for teachers are not met.

- Governors monitor safeguarding procedures and ensure that they meet requirements.
- Finances are well managed and governors check the use of both the pupil premium and sports fund. They closely monitor the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others to confirm that support is well directed. They continue to check the current progress of disadvantaged pupils and are rightly convinced it is improving because they have confirmed that the previous attainment gap is closing.
- Governors are fully committed to ensuring all pupils have equality of opportunity. They actively promote tolerance and oppose discrimination. When governors joined pupils on a visit to Kingdom Hall, a place of worship for Jehovah's Witnesses, they were impressed by pupils' respectful behaviour in a place of worship different from what they knew.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are eager to learn in lessons. Even when they are set work that is not sufficiently challenging, pupils continue to persevere and try their best.
- The school's strong focus on promoting its values has ensured that all pupils, including those with previously challenging behaviour, respect all staff and appreciate the importance of achieving well. This is reflected in the positive attitudes to learning seen in lessons.
- Pupils are polite and hold doors open for visitors. They are caring and enjoy taking on responsibilities. For example, Year 6 pupils look after Reception class children at lunchtime and help staff bring them inside from the playground.
- Pupils share positive relationships among each other and with adults. Pupils respond positively to the dedicated staff at lunchtimes.
- The school has worked to improve behaviour. Behaviour is well managed and exclusions have reduced since the previous inspection.
- Occasionally, pupils' work is not well presented in books.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school has implemented the most recent requirements to keep pupils safe. Access to the school is secure and all staff are carefully checked prior to appointment.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying. They state that bullying is rare and, when it occurs, they are confident that teachers will deal with it quickly and effectively.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe while using the internet, playing in the park and crossing the road.
- Attendance was well below the national average in the previous inspection. Strong focus by the school and the work of the attendance officer employed by the trust have ensured a rise in attendance which has risen to be broadly in line with the national average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not enable pupils to achieve as well as they could. Writing, in particular, is not taught well. Pupils do not write and reinforce their skills in order to make better progress because teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in

written work. Pupils have too few opportunities to write in different subjects.

- Sometimes the work set does not challenge the most able, or is too difficult for some other pupils. This limits pupils' progress. Work undertaken does not always build on what pupils already know and so it does not take their learning forward rapidly.
- Teaching is currently improving pupils' progress in mathematics. Teachers give focus to developing both pupils' skills in calculation and broader mathematical topics. Consequently, the pupils are able to use a range of strategies to solve mathematical problems, although in some cases the use of repetitive sums does little to deepen their understanding.
- Teaching ensures better learning and progress in reading than in other subjects. Books chosen for the pupils not only match their reading abilities, but also their interests. Consequently, they are motivated and learn more successfully.
- There is effective use of questioning, by both teachers and teaching assistants, which helps staff to know how well pupils understand the work in hand. However, teachers do not always apply what they gather from questioning to determine future learning priorities for pupils.
- Teachers mark books regularly, but not all staff follow the school's marking policy. The advice given to pupils does not always give sufficient guidance on how they should improve their work or demand a response from them. As a result, pupils do not improve their work as rapidly as they should.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive, creating a calm learning environment where pupils are keen to learn.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- In 2014, there was a decline in attainment from the previous year and many pupils in Year 6 did not reach average standards, particularly in mathematics. Standards in writing were behind national results. Even though pupils made rapid progress in Years 5 and 6, many could not catch up and reach higher standards because of the slow progress made in previous years.
- Attainment declined at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 and was below the national average, particularly in writing. Attainment in reading and mathematics was broadly average.
- The most able are not challenged consistently well across the school. The school is targeting the most-able pupils to reach the higher levels through working in small groups and this practice has had some impact; the proportion of Year 2 pupils attaining the higher Level 3 or above in 2014 was ahead of national performance in reading and mathematics, although it was behind in writing. However, fewer Year 6 pupils matched national standards for the attainment of the higher Level 5 or above in any of the three subjects in 2014.
- Although there is, currently, evidence of better teaching and progress in reading, in 2014, the proportion of Year 1 pupils who reached the expected national standard in phonics (sounds and corresponding letters) was below the national average.
- Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils in both Years 2 and 6 are currently achieving better standards than the results gained in 2014.
- The special educational needs coordinator is identifying the learning needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs more precisely. As a result, the support provided is well thought out to improve their learning and, although their progress still requires improvement, they are currently

making better progress this year than in the recent past.

- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to that of others in the school. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in Year 6 was about four and a half terms behind others in the school in mathematics, over three terms behind in reading and five terms behind in writing. They were similarly behind pupils nationally in all subjects. However, many pupils in this group had significant additional learning needs which slowed their progress. Current school data and evidence in pupils' books indicate that gaps in attainment are closing between disadvantaged pupils and those of their peers in school.
- Pupils of minority ethnic heritage and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well once those who need to have acquired the necessary language skills.
- The school has introduced an online reading scheme aimed at encouraging pupils, especially boys to read. Books chosen by the school take into consideration the interests of the pupils so that they enjoy reading. For example, Year 6 pupils enthusiastically acted out the play, *Three Mistakes and a Monster*. Pupils make better progress in reading than other subjects.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children join the school with skills and knowledge broadly typical for their age. However, some are not confident with communication and use of English. By the end of the Reception Year, most do not reach a good level of development in all areas of learning and are less well prepared for entry to Year 1 than most children. The children's learning is not moved on quickly enough for them to meet targets across all the main areas of learning.
- Too much teaching time is sometimes wasted at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions, and children do not get down to learning quickly enough. Learning also slows when adults do not intervene in children's activities enough to extend learning. Consequently, progress slows. For example, at the beginning of an afternoon session observed, 15 minutes were spent by children not engaged in any meaningful activity during registration before they went to assembly.
- Leadership of the early years provision requires improvement because it does not ensure consistently good teaching. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not robust enough to ensure that it improves rapidly and all children make good progress.
- The children behave well because their social skills are well developed. Routines are established and children play and learn amicably together. There are good procedures for keeping children safe and parents are rightly convinced their children are safe at school. They say they leave their children each morning confident that they are happy, safe and well taken care of, and they are right to do so.

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	103927
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	448257

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mavis Hughes
Headteacher	Sandra Rex
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2009
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