

# Old Hill Primary School

Lawrence Lane, Cradley Heath, B64 6DR

**Inspection dates** 11–12 March 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher and other senior leaders have improved the quality of teaching. As a result, standards in English and mathematics are improving rapidly at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Governors have responded constructively to the review of governance and are now providing effective oversight of the school.
- Although many children join the early years with skills below those typical for their age, especially in language, good teaching means that they all make strong progress and leave ready for Key Stage 1.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress, enabling them to catch up with pupils nationally.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and outside. They take a pride in their work, and their books are consistently well presented.
- The school works tirelessly to engage all parents with their children's learning. This has cut persistent absence and improved pupils' commitment to their work.
- The school keeps its pupils safe. Staff ensure the well-being of those pupils who are vulnerable, and are resourceful in securing professional support from other agencies.
- Teaching is usually good and learning is well organised to ensure that pupils are set work that is sufficiently challenging. Marking consistently tells pupils how to improve their work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school has placed a heavy priority on English and mathematics. Teaching does not always develop knowledge and understanding sufficiently in other subjects.
- Pupils are not always challenged enough to think for themselves and deepen their understanding.
- Teaching assistants working with groups of pupils do not all have the skills to be fully effective in helping them to learn.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 13 lessons, taught by eight different teachers and one higher-level teaching assistant. They also observed pupils working in smaller groups. Six observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors visited form time, and observed children’s conduct at break and lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, other leaders, class teachers, governors and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also spoke with those responsible for alternative provision.
- Inspectors met with three groups of pupils, including two selected at random, and spoke informally with many other pupils. Inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of work in lessons and scrutinised a selection of books in greater depth. They considered data on pupils’ targets and current levels of achievement.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, both electronically and on paper. These included: a review of governance conducted in response to the last inspection; development plans and their evaluations; records of how leaders check on teaching; minutes of governing body meetings; records of visits by local authority officers; policies; and records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- Inspectors took into account the 22 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the school’s records of parental and pupil surveys. They spoke to parents in the playground at the start of the school day. They also considered the 44 responses to the questionnaire for staff.

## Inspection team

Martin Spoor, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Beverly Petch	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Old Hill is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. Children attend the Nursery provision part time in morning or afternoon sessions. They attend full-time in the Reception class.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. One in ten of the pupils are of Pakistani heritage.
- An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A slightly above-average proportion of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium, which is the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care, is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- A very small number of students in Key Stage 2 have recently taken up part-time placements at alternative provision run by West Bromwich Albion Football Club.
- The assistant headteacher joined the school in September 2013.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that teachers regularly take the opportunity to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Improve pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that teachers have a thorough knowledge of the skills and understanding central to each subject so that they can focus on these in lessons
  - making sure that leaders check regularly on the progress pupils make in developing these subject-specific skills.
- Provide more training for teaching assistants, so that all are fully effective in helping pupils to learn.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by the other senior leaders, has consistently set high expectations for pupils' work and behaviour. She has placed an unwavering emphasis on the importance of teaching, making sure that teachers are accountable for the progress of their classes. She has established a nurture room which allows a handful of pupils to improve their emotional and organisational approach to learning without falling behind with their work. Beginning in the early years, she has made sure that parents understand the importance of learning and the part they can play in helping their children to succeed. The result is a community in which enterprising teaching and good behaviour flourish.
- Senior leaders set ambitious targets for individual pupils and monitor their progress carefully. They arrange support promptly for any pupils that are at risk of falling behind. Their judgements about the school are sound and form the basis of a well-constructed improvement plan. They check on the completion of the plan and its impact, and report these to governors. Consequently, leaders are able to amend the plan when required; for example, adjusting a target or a timescale in the light of progress.
- Senior leaders check on teaching closely, set precise and ambitious targets for staff, and accurately evaluate teachers' performance. They use the results to decide on pay rises and promotion. Teachers report that the combination of routine training and the opportunity to witness outstanding practice in other schools has helped them to improve their teaching.
- Subject leaders contribute well to the checking of both teaching and pupils' progress. They are responsible for introducing and monitoring new initiatives to promote reading and develop the teaching of mathematics. However, they have had limited impact on standards in subjects other than English and mathematics. The school has made only an interim response to assessment following the removal of national curriculum levels and no longer-term decisions have yet been made.
- Leaders ensure that teachers follow a consistent and effective approach to teaching literacy and numeracy skills across a wide range of subjects. Pupils' learning is enriched by off-site visits, some of them residential, and pupils were able to identify clearly the educational benefit of these. Primary school physical education and sport funding is spent effectively to extend pupils' learning opportunities. Due to the local prevalence of waterways, the school prioritises proficiency in swimming, as well as the involvement of pupils in after-school clubs and inter-school competitions. The impact is seen in the high proportion of pupils who take advantage of these opportunities and the success the school achieves, for example in gymnastic competitions.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is reflected in very good relationships among pupils, and between pupils and adults. The school ensures that pupils learn to respect different religions and cultures. An active school council has contributed to developments in the teaching of reading and to improvements in play equipment, so that pupils see the value of democracy and the importance of participation in decision-making. Consequently, pupils are well prepared, socially and academically, for secondary school and for life in modern Britain.
- Funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used partly to ensure that they attend regularly and come into class ready to learn. Expenditure also provides additional learning support and, to a lesser extent, training for staff. The effectiveness of this provision and the school's commitment to tailoring its support to individual requirements – for example, by providing translation for those who have newly arrived in the country – represent the strong promotion of equality and tackling of discrimination.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet all statutory requirements. There are strong procedures to ensure all staff pass on any concerns; for example, leaders check daily on records completed by lunchtime supervisors. Staff succeed in gaining the cooperation of other agencies to help vulnerable pupils, including sourcing support from outside the local authority when they believe this to be necessary. As a result, all pupils are well cared for.
- Leaders regularly monitor the progress, attendance and behaviour of pupils attending the alternative provision at West Bromwich Albion Football Club.

- The local authority has provided good educational support for the school, especially in developing the practice of the governing body, checking on academic standards and brokering effective training for staff.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors responded positively to the review of governance conducted following the previous inspection and they are now providing effective oversight of the school. New governors have been recruited. Governors are all much more involved with the school, visit regularly, and report their findings to governing body meetings. They have made sure that they are well trained and well informed. Meeting records show that they ask challenging and detailed questions to the headteacher and other senior leaders about pupils' attainment, the quality of teaching in the school and, in particular, the impact of the pupil premium.
- Governors make sure that the culture of the school promotes respect for people from differing cultural and religious backgrounds. They check that senior leaders comply with all safeguarding requirements, and are vigilant about the risks posed to pupils by the locality. They check on school trips and monitor the safety of the site.
- Governors manage the pay and performance of the headteacher and other staff effectively. They know how the performance of staff is managed and make sure that pay increases take into account teachers' performance in enabling pupils to make good progress. They make sure that the school works within its budget.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers in the early years set high expectations. They work firmly and patiently to establish a calm and purposeful climate for learning. There is a conspicuous growth in pupils' maturity in the older years. As a result, in the very large majority of lessons across the school, pupils are eager to learn and display a good level of concentration. Older pupils have a good understanding of how they can make the best of their education. All pupils take a pride in their written work and present it neatly.
- Pupils show an unfailing respect for adults and for each other. Routines are well established and pupils comply promptly with staff requests. They collaborate effectively during lessons. They respect the school environment and inspectors saw no litter or damage to property.
- The school has established playground 'buddies' and invested in play equipment. During recreational times, pupils from all ethnic groups play happily together. Pupils' behaviour in the corridors and the dining room is sensible and considerate. Pupils and their parents agree that behaviour has improved over recent years.
- The school accurately records pupils' behaviour and logs any major incidents carefully. A very few pupils have used racist names, which the school took seriously and handled sensitively.
- The school is adept at improving the attitudes of the small number of pupils with behavioural needs.
- Very occasionally, when a teacher or teaching assistant does not insist firmly enough on the school's clear expectations of behaviour, pupils become a little inattentive. Pupils confirm that low-level disruption to lessons is rare.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and all parents agree. Staff check the safety of the school site regularly and equipment, including that provided outdoors for children in the early years, is in good repair.
- A few younger pupils mentioned instances of bullying but they acknowledge that the school quickly resolves these. Older pupils can distinguish clearly between 'falling out' and the sustained oppressive behaviour which constitutes bullying. The school holds the Anti-bullying Charter Mark.

- Older and younger pupils are taught through assemblies and designated lessons how to protect themselves from different sorts of risk, including those from the internet and those related to road safety. The school has wisely involved families in these discussions.
- The school works effectively with other agencies to protect vulnerable pupils and, in some instances, their families. This involves being alert to any pupils' exposure to extremist views or risk of exploitation and providing appropriate training for staff. The school checks all staff rigorously prior to appointment and any visitor to the school site.
- Staff pursue pupil absence zealously, fully aware of the links between attendance, safety and academic progress. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are absent persistently has fallen to well below average. Attendance overall is average.
- The school frequently checks that the very small number of pupils attending the part-time alternative provision are safe and making good progress.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is characterised by very good relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom and clear expectations for good behaviour. Teachers generally demonstrate confident subject knowledge and they explain new ideas clearly. From the youngest age onwards, they insist on the correct subject-specific terms.
- Teachers take good account of pupils' prior knowledge and understanding, and set work that is challenging for pupils of all abilities. They check on pupils' progress during the lesson, both through questioning and otherwise, so that they are able to recap or move learning on if necessary. The result is that pupils almost always make good progress, both during the lesson and over time.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is well organised. Groups are introduced to new sounds and texts on the basis of their prior understanding. Consequently, they read with confidence, and use their phonic knowledge effectively to sound out unfamiliar words. Older pupils read fiction and non-fiction regularly at school and at home. Detailed reading logs record their progress.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' writing pays careful attention to spelling, punctuation, grammar and presentation. Pupils are interested in words, and are encouraged to use an appropriately wide vocabulary. They learn to write in a range of genres and know what is characteristic of each one. Teachers make good use of the contexts provided by other subjects to promote pupils' literacy; for example, chickens provided the basis for a piece of explanatory writing alongside learning about the science of living things.
- Teaching in mathematics combines effectively the practice of routine calculations with the development of understanding. Pupils are given opportunities to consider the physical basis of mathematical ideas. Numeracy is promoted effectively in other subjects through, for example, the use of a Venn diagram to record the strengths of different pupils in personal and social education.
- The frequency and usefulness of marking is consistently good. Teachers identify routine errors and how pupils can make more substantial improvements to their work, and pupils respond conscientiously. There is an impressively thorough attention to what individual pupils most need to learn. Homework is varied, and makes an effective contribution to learning. Some pupils have taken the opportunity to produce extended pieces of work in which they take a great deal of pride.
- The school makes good provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This is because it takes careful account of the views of pupils and their parents to plan their learning and acts quickly if such pupils are not making good progress.
- Sometimes, teachers ask questions or set tasks that encourage pupils to think deeply and reflect on their own ideas so they learn very successfully. However, on other occasions, teachers' questioning does not

fully test pupils' understanding and does not stimulate pupils' intellectual curiosity.

- Teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics is focused on presenting pupils with fresh knowledge and exploiting links between curriculum areas. However, this is often at the expense of the skills and understanding which underpin each subject, so that these do not develop sufficiently as pupils progress through the school.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to learning in the school, working with groups of pupils in class and outside the classroom, and leading some learning of phonics. Although many are very skilled and knowledgeable and have excellent relationships with pupils, not all have these skills and expertise, with the result that not all groups receive the same impressive level of support.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school. On entry to the school, children generally have skills and abilities below those typical for their age. Good progress in the early years enables them to catch up rapidly, so that they join Key Stage 1 in line with national expectations.
- Standards of attainment have risen markedly over recent years in the early years and at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They are now average. The proportion of Year 1 pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check also rose to above the national average 2014.
- Information presented by the school and confirmed by the local authority shows that, during the last academic year, pupils in all year groups made at least expected progress overall, and often more than expected progress. This year, progress has improved further in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspectors' observations in lessons and scrutiny of work confirmed these trends.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils ended Year 6 nearly three terms behind their classmates in reading, and one and a half terms behind in writing. In mathematics, they were on a par with their classmates. Disadvantaged pupils left Year 6 approximately one and a half terms behind pupils nationally in reading, one term behind in mathematics, and around half a term behind in writing. Disadvantaged pupils make progress that is at least in line with that of their peers in the school and so are catching up with other pupils nationally.
- There are very few most-able pupils in each year group, particularly in the upper years of Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils attaining the top levels in reading, writing and mathematics increased in 2014, and data supplied by the school indicate that a higher proportion still is on track to attain these levels this year. In lessons observed by inspectors, the most-able pupils made good progress because work set for them took into account the knowledge and understanding they had already attained.
- From their different starting points, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is particularly true in reading, where a new programme has been introduced to meet their needs.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. Although small numbers in some year groups make statistical comparisons unreliable, inspectors saw evidence in books and classrooms of pupils making rapid progress and growing appreciably in confidence.
- Pupils in all year groups demonstrate enthusiasm for books; many stimulated by visits to the local library and meeting with a published children's writer.

### **The early years provision** is good

- On entry to the Nursery, a large majority of the children have weak skills and abilities, particularly in communication and language. They make good progress in the early years and catch up rapidly so that they are ready for Key Stage 1. In the past, the proportion attaining a good level of development had

been below the national average but in 2014 it was in line.

- The early years setting provides a safe and attractive environment, both indoors and outside. Staff promote children’s moral and social education by establishing clear routines and managing the children’s behaviour in a consistent, positive manner. They intervene quickly when they see children who are isolated or who struggle to cooperate. As a result, children play and work together well, and respond promptly to adults’ requests. In the lessons observed, they were all highly engaged in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is good. Adults know the children very well and skilfully encourage them to extend their understanding and abilities. Activities are imaginatively woven around a central theme. For example, Mother’s Day cards and a chalked school patrol crossing in the playground both contributed to the topic ‘People who help us’. Children who achieve particularly well are directed towards taking up challenging activities, including in literacy and numeracy. In more structured sessions, questioning encourages children to reflect and develops their ability to express themselves orally with increasing formality.
- Teachers assess children’s progress frequently and in great detail. Their judgements and the associated evidence are recorded in children’s ‘learning journeys’. These records provide a secure basis for planning the next steps for each individual child. Judgements about children’s progress are checked by the local authority, which has confirmed that they are accurate. Consequently, each child’s learning is constantly well directed.
- Leaders have high expectations. They ensure that staff receive appropriate training and work together as a team. They check that assessments are consistent and identify immediately any child who may be falling behind. Parents are welcome in Nursery and are encouraged at all stages to contribute to discussions about their children’s progress.



## 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>	103952
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	453532

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	240
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pauline Riley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Fenby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 569213
<b>Email address</b>	kylie.raybould@oldhill.sandwell.sch.uk

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