

Oxley Primary School

Ripon Road, Bushbury Lane, Wolverhampton, WV10 9TR

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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

- Pupils' achievement is not yet consistently good. There are variations in attainment and rates of progress between year groups.
- Staff do not develop children's writing skills well enough in the early years. Provision here requires improvement.
- Opportunities for pupils to apply their phonics skills (linking sounds and letters) in writing activities are not taken in Key Stage 1.
- Key Stage 1 staff do not ensure that pupils form letters correctly and can use joined-up handwriting.
- Teaching over time in the early years and in Years 1 and 4 requires improvement. In these year groups, teachers do not always have high enough expectations for pupils' progress.
- In some year groups the most-able pupils are not provided with good opportunities to develop their knowledge and to extend their skills.
- Planned activities in lessons do not consistently enable pupils to build quickly on what they have learned. Not all teachers question pupils well enough to guide or to deepen their learning.
- Leaders have not checked robustly the impact of some recent programmes they are using to reduce gaps in attainment and to accelerate the progress of vulnerable groups.
- Some targets for the performance of staff are not precise enough to help them improve their expertise quickly.

The school has the following strengths

- The new senior leadership team and governors have worked successfully this year to strengthen the school's capacity to drive improvement. The outcomes are evident in improved teaching and rising attainment in Years 2 and 6.
- The school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds mix well together. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils now behave well in all areas of the school.
- Attendance has risen.
- Good relationships with staff and effective safeguarding arrangements ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching through visits to classrooms to check on pupils' learning. On two visits, they were accompanied by the headteacher.
- Some pupils in Year 2 were heard reading. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with school staff, a group of pupils, three members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 questionnaires completed by staff and parents' responses to the school's own recent questionnaire. Too few responses have been made by parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire in the last year for them to be recorded on the Parent View website. An inspector spoke informally to a few parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors checked a range of evidence including: monitoring records; consultants' reports; the school improvement plan; the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; and policies, procedures and practice relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Chaplin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than most primary schools.
- Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis either in the mornings or the afternoons.
- Reception children attend on a full-time basis.
- All other pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club. This provision, managed by the governing body, was included in the inspection.
- About two in five pupils are from White British backgrounds. The remaining pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, which include African, Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Romany. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- Far more pupils than is usually the case join or leave the school part-way through their primary education.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority, is well above average at 64%.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average at 15%.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection the school has had to make some temporary arrangements to replace staff, including those who held leadership responsibilities.
- The Key Stage 1 leader took up post in September 2014. A new deputy headteacher joined the school in January 2015. A new leader of the early years has been appointed for June 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in the early years and in Years 1 and 4, and thereby improve progress and attainment, by ensuring that teachers:
 - give pupils activities that consistently challenge them so that they build quickly on what they have already learned and can do
 - have high expectations for the progress of the most-able pupils and provide them with good opportunities to extend their learning
 - use questioning well to guide and deepen pupils' learning.
- Raise pupils' achievement in writing in the early years and Key Stage 1 by ensuring that all teachers:
 - provide pupils with good models for forming and joining up letters correctly
 - provide pupils with purposeful activities to apply their phonics skills in their written work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that senior leaders:
 - check closely on the impact of new support programmes for vulnerable pupils and use their findings effectively to close all gaps in pupils' attainment and progress
 - always set staff precise targets to help them improve their skills quickly.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- In the past, leadership has not been good enough to ensure pupils make consistently good progress across the school and reach the standards of which they are capable. Although inadequate teaching has now been eliminated and pupils' behaviour is now good, the school has faced some difficulties in recruiting the good teachers and leaders the headteacher and governors want to employ to match their ambitions for the school. Temporary arrangements have been made to cover these shortfalls, but these have not ensured continuity in pupils' learning.
- Until recently, the work of the early years has lacked effective direction. Staff have acted on well-considered guidance, brokered through the local authority, to review teaching in the early years. This is already demonstrating clear impact on children's engagement in their learning.
- In other respects, however, the local authority's work with the school has been too limited in scope to help it drive improvement quickly across the school.
- The school's curriculum is not planned well enough in Key Stage 1 to ensure all activities promote pupils' progress in writing. There are too few good opportunities for pupils to consolidate and apply their phonics skills in writing.
- The school ensures that there is no discrimination, for example, by ensuring that the achievements of new arrivals are celebrated in assemblies. However, it recognises that it must do more to ensure all groups of pupils enjoy the same good opportunities to succeed, as there are variations between year groups in pupils' rates of progress.
- The headteacher has a clear, well-founded understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She analyses information on pupils' progress in detail and this has helped staff target additional support more effectively. The school is well on its way towards full implementation of its preferred approach to assessment following withdrawal of National Curriculum levels.
- Leaders know where support is needed to raise the standards of disadvantaged pupils. They have allocated resources, including staff, to improve rates of progress. These actions have mostly proved successful. However, the school has not reviewed the impact of some recent interventions aimed at accelerating the progress of all vulnerable groups.
- Recent appointments have raised the quality of senior and middle leadership and strengthened the school's capacity for sustained improvement. New staff have improved teaching significantly in key year groups. Initiatives include new approaches to teaching mathematics which have been well received by pupils and are raising standards; another example is the coaching of staff whose teaching requires improvement, which is showing useful impact in Years 3 and 5. However, some of the targets staff are set to develop their expertise are not specific enough to ensure they improve their performance quickly.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The 'young interpreters' scheme builds strong bonds between pupils and supports effectively the speaking skills of pupils who are new to learning English. Annual productions involving pupils with English as an additional language help all pupils to appreciate other cultures and talents. Pupils are taught effectively about British values, for example, through their work in the democratically elected school council. In these ways they are well-prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school has spent the national school sports funding appropriately. It employs Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club outreach workers as sports coaches, leading a wide range of sporting activities. This has increased pupils' participation in active exercise both at lunchtimes and in after-school clubs. Teachers have received suitable training to improve their expertise in teaching physical education and this has encouraged them to set up new clubs for pupils.

- Leaders carry out all required safeguarding procedures when recruiting staff. They follow local authority guidelines in ensuring that key safeguarding policies and staff training are up to date. This includes e-safety training, recently provided by a new governor. They ensure that current government requirements for safeguarding are fully met and that safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have improved their capacity to hold senior leaders to account and are working effectively with the headteacher to improve the school. They now know clearly where weaknesses in pupils' attainment exist and have allocated resources purposefully to tackle them. Their understanding of how well different groups are achieving, compared to similar groups nationally, is well informed and up to date. They can identify some areas where their use of extra government funding has been successful in reducing aspects of disadvantage.
 - Governors have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching; their links to subjects and other aspects of the school's work are intended to give governors first-hand evidence of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.
 - Governors are appropriately involved in managing staff performance, including that of the headteacher. They know the actions that are being taken to improve teaching, including the teaching that requires improvement. They take suitable steps to ensure any salary increases are merited by pupils' performance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Children acquire good habits in the early years and pupils build steadily on this secure foundation as they move up the school. In Years 5 and 6 they demonstrate a clear sense of self-worth and mature behaviours. Year 6 pupils wear blazers, which signify their preparedness to move on to the next stage of their education, with pride.
- Recent improvements in teaching and the rewards system are raising pupils' aspirations and engagement in their learning. Pupils respond well to commendations, such as certificates and medals, for displaying good attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils behave well in all areas of the school, including in the dining hall. Key Stage 1 pupils make full use of the extensive playground at break-times to enjoy active play. They relate very well to each other during play and conversations. All pupils are involved in the available activities, so that no-one is left out. Younger pupils respect and trust adults and are keen to share their experiences with visitors.
- Pupils mostly work hard in lessons. They cooperate fully with staff, who manage them well, so that little time is lost between activities in lessons. Pupils in the older year groups are taking increasing pride in the presentation of their work. They share texts and laptop computers well in their collaborative tasks. On a few occasions, when teachers do not guide pupils' learning well, pupils' work-rate flags.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Community police officers and visitors from national safeguarding organisations visit the school regularly to teach pupils how to stay safe.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and show this in their respectful, considerate behaviour and actions. They report that bullying is rare, and, if it does occur, it is dealt with effectively. Staff, parents and pupils are equally positive about pupils' well-being in school. There have been very few exclusions in the last two years.
- Staff supervise pupils closely to check that they use the wide range of play equipment at lunchtime safely. Pupils make full use of these resources to exercise vigorously and develop initiative by organising themselves into teams for games such as volleyball and skittles.
- Detailed case studies show that the school takes all reasonable steps to support vulnerable pupils under

its care. Records of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times are up to date.

- Pupils' attendance is checked robustly and a range of strategies has been introduced to tackle the low attendance of some pupils, leading to a considerable rise in overall attendance rates last year.
- The educational activities provided in the breakfast club ensure that the pupils who attend have a settled, enjoyable start to the school day.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not ensured that pupils achieve well. Instability of staffing and underperformance in teaching have depressed standards. Most importantly, these factors have resulted in inconsistencies in rates of progress between year groups.
- Weaknesses remain, particularly in the early years and in Years 1 and 4, where expectations for pupils' progress are not high enough, especially that of the most able. Teachers often give pupils work which is too easy. Their questioning checks pupils' understanding of simple, key points, but rarely extends their learning. They do not sequence lesson activities carefully to build on what pupils already know and can do. Sometimes, they do not practise new points with pupils well enough to enable them to succeed in the work they do unaided. Pupils are therefore not moved on quickly enough to the harder work they need to do to ensure good progress.
- Aspects of writing, such as handwriting, are not developed systematically in Key Stage 1, where teachers do not consistently model good handwriting skills. Mistakes in pupils' formation and joining-up of letters are sometimes not rectified quickly enough.
- Mathematical skills are now mostly taught well. Staff have focused successfully on sharpening pupils' calculation and thinking skills. The actions they have taken have increased pupils' enjoyment of mathematics and enabled them to apply their knowledge more confidently in problem-solving and investigative tasks.
- Teachers mostly teach reading skills well and this enables pupils to build up their comprehension skills effectively in Key Stage 2 to help them interpret texts correctly.
- There is clear evidence that teaching is improving, particularly in Years 2 and 6 where good teaching has had a considerable impact this year on raising pupils' attainment in these key year groups.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards at the end of Year 6 improved considerably in 2014 but remained below average. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics matched the national average, but few pupils reached the higher Level 5 in mathematics and writing. Pupils who joined the school in Years 5 or 6 reached lower standards than their classmates, but made similar progress over their time in school.
- Standards in Year 2 have risen to average this year in reading and mathematics, but remain below average in writing, where weaknesses in handwriting, including the forming and joining up of letters, hold back pupils' progress.
- Key Stage 1 pupils have a clear understanding of the differences between letters and sounds. Results in the Year 1 screening check for phonics were above average in 2014. However, teachers often do not provide pupils with well-planned activities to help them reinforce their understanding of phonics quickly in the writing tasks they do on their own.
- Pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, do not make fast enough progress in some year groups, particularly Years 1 and 4. This means they are not able to work at the more challenging levels which reflect higher standards. Gaps in attainment and rates of progress remain between boys and girls in

Year 4.

- In 2014, on average, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were working five terms behind their classmates in mathematics, four terms behind in reading and one term behind in writing. Compared to other pupils nationally, they were over four terms behind in mathematics and three terms behind in reading and writing. Gaps in attainment vary from year to year. Overall, they are reducing as a result of the actions taken by senior leaders and governors and the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is improving.
- The most-able pupils are not given consistently good opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding over a sustained period of time. Sometimes they work below their capabilities in lessons, partly because expectations for their progress are not high enough. However, in literacy lessons in Years 2 and 6, these pupils responded well to the challenging tasks they were given and made fast progress in developing their comprehension skills and understanding of correct terminology. Year 6 pupils enjoy the challenges they are given in their mathematics club.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are now making better rates of progress. Revised arrangements for supporting their learning, more focused approaches to teaching them key skills and an increased range of interventions are contributing to this improvement.
- Standards in Year 6 have continued to rise this year. Current Year 6 pupils are already working about a term above their counterparts last year. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is rising. They now have better opportunities in lessons to practise mental mathematics and to develop their reasoning skills to enable them to solve problems. Pupils' attainment in writing is also improving in Key Stage 2.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The knowledge and skills of children when they join Nursery are below those typical for their age in all areas of learning, especially in literacy, physical development and other aspects, such as self-care. Some children join Nursery at various mid-year points and about one-half of children transfer to other settings at the end of the Nursery year. They are replaced in Reception by children who in some cases have had little pre-school experience, and who take longer to settle and to adapt to the routines.
- These factors, combined with a few weaknesses in teaching, slow children's progress. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development in 2014 was similar to 2013 and just below the national average.
- While children make good gains over time in their speaking, listening and social skills, progress in a few other key areas, such as writing, is slower. Staff do not plan writing activities well enough to engage children in this skill in their play or the work that they do on their own. Consequently, about one-half of children are not fully prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Until recently the early years lacked effective leadership. The local authority, recognising the inexperience of staff and temporary lack of skilled leadership in the setting, has worked closely this year with relevant staff to reorganise teaching. Their consultant's useful guidance and systematic checks on the setting's work have led to considerable improvements. Staff plan more closely together, have adjusted timetables accordingly and record children's achievements regularly. However, they are not using these records purposefully, to focus teaching on the steps children, including the most-able, need to take next.
- Children mostly behave well, both indoors and outdoors. They enjoy the activities provided and show persistence in carrying out tasks. Staff ensure that the indoor and outdoor areas are secure and teach children useful ways to keep themselves safe.

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	104295
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	462596

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	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Dargavel
Headteacher	Lorraine Adams
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2013
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