

Hillary Primary School

Hillary Street, Pleck, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 9BP

Inspection dates

30–31 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the last inspection, school leaders have worked with the local authority and the local teaching school to improve teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Outcomes at the end of both key stage 1 and 2 have improved. Some groups of pupils are now attaining in line with or above national figures in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is now good. As a result, most pupils are now making at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy school and talk with pride and affection about their school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite, considerate and courteous to one another and to adults.
- Governors make an effective contribution to school improvement. They now ask searching questions and challenge leaders on their decisions.
- School leadership has recently widened to incorporate a large middle management tier. This group of leaders is effective.
- Personal development and welfare are embedded in the curriculum and are a strength.
- The curriculum is broad and appropriate for pupils.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is evident through lively displays along school corridors and in classrooms. School visits and educational visitors enhance the curriculum.
- Children in the early years make good progress, and the outdoor environment provides stimulating opportunities for pupils to explore.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use assessment information to identify priorities for their action plans. Some of these plans do not have clear milestones against which to judge progress.
- Pupil progress meetings are thorough, and the school identifies which pupils need further support to make better progress. However, over time, leaders have not evaluated how well actions are working for individual pupils.
- Expectations of pupils' writing, in subjects other than English, are not always high enough. Pupils' attainment in writing is not as strong as it is in reading and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring:
 - that all leaders create strategic improvement plans with clear milestones
 - that leaders monitor the effectiveness of these plans and respond swiftly where action is needed
 - that leaders evaluate work done to boost targeted pupils' progress to check how well it is working.
- Further improve teaching and learning so that pupils' progress continues to accelerate by:
 - sharing the good practice that exists in school, particularly teaching in key stage 2
 - further developing ways in which individual pupils are enabled to make accelerated progress, particularly disadvantaged pupils
 - improving opportunities for developing pupils' writing in subjects other than English, so that standards rise.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school as a community school, which provides a curriculum that enables pupils to become successful citizens of modern Britain. The school serves a diverse community, is well aware of its needs and effectively supports new arrivals from overseas to settle in.
- School leaders have tackled the weaknesses in teaching and learning identified at the previous inspection. The local teaching school and the local authority have supported many aspects of school improvement. As a result, leaders have improved the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Many middle leaders are relatively new to school, but the impact of their work is already evident. These leaders share the headteacher's vision and are committed to continuous school improvement and the development of their individual areas of responsibility.
- The individuals in the leadership team have different skills and attributes, which complement each other and contribute to the school's improvement journey. The team's work has a positive impact on the lives of pupils.
- Newly qualified teachers speak highly of the support that they receive. Their mentor has given them good support to enable them to be successful in their early careers. They spoke positively about the support they have received, enabling them to develop their practice.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning has improved. Current monitoring shows that leaders give teachers useful feedback on how to improve their teaching, which has lifted expectations and classroom practice.
- Pupil progress meetings enable leaders to identify pupils who are progressing too slowly. Leaders ensure that effective support is put in place to help these pupils make better progress. Leaders have not yet evaluated the impact of their actions on the progress of individual pupils.
- School leaders recently revised the way that they organise and teach the curriculum. They have moved from a topic-based approach to subject teaching. As a result of a well-planned curriculum and improvements in teaching, there have been improvements in outcomes. However, the quality of writing in subjects other than English is not always good enough.
- A range of clubs, including yoga, choir and sport clubs, extends the curriculum, and pupils are very appreciative of these opportunities.
- The school uses additional funding well to support pupils who need extra help. For instance, the school uses pupil premium funding to employ a part-time speech and language therapist to support pupils who have specific language needs. Leaders identified that language was an area of particular need for some pupils. Effective screening and intervention by a speech and language therapist have enabled pupils to access swiftly the appropriate support in school. In addition, the school has used this funding to create a nurture room to support pupils experiencing any emotional

difficulties and to provide a safe place for pupils to discuss their difficulties with trained practitioners. Pupils clearly find this a safe haven away from challenges of school life, but it is too early to see its long-term impact on pupils' outcomes.

- Leaders know their school well and use assessment information to identify accurately the priorities for action plans. However, there is not yet a consistent way of measuring progress towards these goals.
- The school uses the sport premium to good effect, engaging the services of specialised sports coaches who are improving pupils' physical skills.
- Parents and carers to whom inspectors spoke are happy with the way that school deals with any problems and feel that they are listened to and that any concerns are sorted quickly.

Governance of the school

- Since the last inspection, the governing body has recruited new members who have a wealth of professional skills. As a result, governance has improved. As part of the support provided to the school, governors received training to improve their understanding of data and their ability to challenge the school.
- Records of the governing body minutes show that the amount of challenge has increased, and there are pertinent questions asked of school leaders.
- The governors understand the school's current priorities and visit the school to observe lessons and speak to pupils. Parent governors provide a good link with the parent body and have provided support to individual parents, particularly new arrivals. In addition, community governors have played a crucial role in ensuring that the school community understands and support the pupils' entitlement to the national curriculum, in its entirety.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff know how to keep pupils safe at school and know what to look for if pupils present any signs that are concerning. Pupils said that they feel very safe in school and they know whom to speak to if they were worried about anything. They feel that everyone gets along well and that children's cultural backgrounds are no barrier to their friendships. They know something of the risks facing them in day-to-day life. However, they were not clear about what to say or do if someone tries to get them to do something that they are not happy about outside of school.
- Safeguarding procedures and checks on staff meet statutory requirements. Governors are trained in safer recruitment and ensure that recruitment processes are robust.
- Staff are up to date with all training requirements and feel confident in dealing with any issues that arise.
- School files for pupils are well organised. Record-keeping is effective, and the designated safeguarding lead has clear systems in place if referrals or additional

support are required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good and improving. There is a clear focus on ensuring that teaching is consistently of a good standard.
- Classrooms are very orderly and well organised, and information on displays supports pupils' learning. Pupils work well with one another and often support each other when solving problems. Behaviour in class is positive and, as a result, lessons run smoothly. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers, and teachers skilfully develop pupils' vocabulary and language skills through their teaching practice.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is leading to increased rates of progress, particularly in key stage 2.
- Assessment is accurate, and teachers use this to plan effective lessons. For the most part, activities challenge pupils to solve problems, reason and explore ideas in more depth. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, all pupils showed resilience in their learning as they explored challenging algebraic problems. During this lesson, the most able pupils acted as peer mentors. They supported other pupils who were finding the problems very challenging and, in so doing, were enabled to articulate their own understanding.
- Generally, teaching assistants support teachers well and ensure that small groups of pupils are supported to learn new concepts or to apply skills that they have already acquired.
- Teachers choose reading materials that match well the pupils' current standard of language capability. This means that pupils can learn the skills they need through an appropriate text level.
- Teachers follow the school's homework policy, and pupils are given home-learning tasks to consolidate their classwork or prepare them for future activities. Pupils understand the purpose of homework, and a large majority of parents believe that their child is set appropriate homework for their age. A small amount of teaching does not offer sufficient challenge for the most able pupils or, at times, teachers' explanations are not clear enough.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn, present their work well and respond positively to teachers' expectations in this harmonious, orderly school.
- The majority of pupils in this school speak English as an additional language. Nevertheless, most pupils are confident and articulate. They speak enthusiastically about educational visits that they have enjoyed and that have added to their educational experience, including visits to a planetarium.

- Relationships between pupils and adults are extremely strong. Pupils are respectful of others, regardless of their background. They see each other positively and support one another. Such cooperation is apparent in lessons, and peer support is used to good effect when appropriate. In these instances, pupils are visibly proud of their contribution to the learning.
- Increasingly, pupils hold greater responsibility in school. Recently, leaders introduced a prefect system to support pupils who have any problems on the playground. This is a positive extension of the way that pupils already support each other.
- Pupils noted that bullying is rare but reported confidence in their teachers' ability to deal with such incidents, if they occur.
- In discussions, pupils said that they received good language support when they first arrived in school from other countries. They also said that it was easy to make friends because everyone made them welcome.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school's work, and lively displays reflect this.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They act courteously to each other and to adults. For instance, they hold doors open for one another and for adults.
- Pupils respond positively to the school's high expectations of behaviour. They have a clear understanding of how to behave well and understand the school's rules, which they said are fair.
- A few pupils sometimes find it hard to manage their own behaviour, but they are well supported. The recently created 'thrive room', for example, provides opportunities for pupils to take time out of lessons and talk to staff about their difficulties or to simply have some time to calm down before returning to class.
- There are very few instances of poor behaviour, and there have been no permanent exclusions since the last inspection.
- Attendance and punctuality have both improved since the last inspection and attendance is now in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in pupils' outcomes, which reflects the improvements made in teaching and learning.
- As a result of targeted action by school leaders, the most recent school assessment information shows strong progress in almost all year groups and all core subjects.
- In 2017, by the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment at the expected and higher standard in mathematics was in line with national figures.

- Pupils achieving at the expected standard in grammar and punctuation were also in line with national averages. The percentage of pupils achieving at the higher standard was greater than that of other pupils nationally.
- Reading outcomes at the end of Year 6 also improved, so that the majority of pupils attained in line with or more highly than national averages.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are a large proportion of every year group. They are making consistently strong progress over time and, in 2017, attained in line with other pupils nationally in both reading and mathematics.
- Science outcomes have improved in both key stages 1 and 2.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has also followed an improving trend and, in 2017, was only slightly below the national average.
- Recent key stage 2 results for writing, however, were not as strong as those for reading and mathematics. These lower writing outcomes affect the overall results. In 2017, combined outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 remain below national figures. However, this was an improvement on 2016 outcomes. Nevertheless, leaders are aware that there is still more work to be done to improve the standard of pupils' writing.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils is improving. However, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is lower than that of other pupils, and school leaders accurately identify this as an improvement priority. They are targeting funding appropriately to support this group of pupils. Disadvantaged pupils have yet to catch up with their peers.
- Outcomes in key stage 1 show an improving trend, but writing has been significantly lower than the national average for the last two years. However, books from current Year 2 pupils show a significant improvement, with the majority of pupils working within age-related expectations.
- Year 6 pupils are confident young people who are well able to articulate their learning and they are well prepared to move to their respective high schools.

Early years provision

Good

- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They are warmly welcomed into a stimulating environment where they are taught well and so make good progress, ensuring that they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Over time, most children enter the school with skills below those typical for their age. The majority of pupils enter the school with very basic language skills. Teachers screen children's language skills on entry to school and plan appropriate interventions, which enable them to make good progress. This year, because of the work done by a speech therapist and teachers, more children are making accelerated progress.
- The outdoor environment is inviting to children, as it is a colourful and well-resourced area. There is a good range of opportunities available for children in the outdoor area to support physical development. Outdoors, adults play alongside children to engage

children and model activities.

- Parents said that communication is good and, as a result, they feel involved in their children's early education and children settle well. Well-established routines enable children to understand the expectations of the day, and children are independent in basic self-care tasks, such as hanging up their coats.
- The early years provision is well led. The early years leader joined the school fairly recently but already can demonstrate that changes made are leading to better progress for children. Children make good progress with their language development.
- There is a wide range of opportunities for early writing activities, and pupils are actively engaged in these activities. In the outdoors, children practise phonic skills and adults support them by intervening and showing them how to sound out and write simple words.
- In 2017, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was lower than the national figure. Too few children were able to achieve the required standard in literacy. However, the school is responding by using a speech therapist in the early years. As a result of this, current assessment information shows that the majority of pupils are making good or better progress.
- Leaders assess children promptly and accurately and use this information effectively by targeting appropriate support. The majority of pupils speak English as an additional language, and the acquisition of language skills is a priority for the school.
- The curriculum engages children's curiosity, and adults provide creative opportunities, which the children clearly enjoy. For instance, the children explored the story of 'Goldilocks and the three bears' and re-enacted this in the outdoor area while other children made clay bowls. During these activities, adults supported children with the development of language well by talking to them constantly, encouraging them to learn and use new words.
- Children have access to information technology and use tablets with confidence.
- Children behave well across the early years setting and children are given encouragement to demonstrate good listening skills, which they respond to effectively.
- Safeguarding in the early years setting is effective, and statutory requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	131511
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10042865

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	685
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Glynis Bant
Headteacher	Ms Lynne Cherry
Telephone number	01922 720812
Website	www.hillary.walsall.sch.uk
Email address	kmahay@hillary.walsall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 February 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a large primary school, which has expanded in recent years to three forms of entry.
- Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis.
- Most pupils speak English as an additional language, and the majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan, is below average.
- Since the last inspection, the school has received support from both the local authority and a local teaching school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum

expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in each year group, including in the Nursery and Reception classes. Some of these lessons were jointly observed with school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work across the range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 2 reading.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, governors, subject leaders and pupils.
- A range of documentation and policies were scrutinised, which included the school's self-evaluation, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, assessment information and the minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to the quality of teaching and the school's website, including information about extra-curricular activities, trips and visits.
- Records, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding were reviewed.
- Inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's pupils' online survey and Parent View.

Inspection team

Susan Lowry, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Michael Appleby	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Butlin	Ofsted Inspector

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