

Delves Junior School

Bell Lane, Delves, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 4PU

Inspection dates

20–21 March 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the standard of education provided by the school has fallen. A period of unsettled senior leadership resulted in a lack of focus and direction. This has had a negative impact on many aspects of the school's work.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. Teachers' expectations are not high enough and tasks are not always well matched to pupils' needs. When this happens, some learning time is lost and pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- Learning support assistants (LSAs) are not always used effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Until recently, pupils of all abilities and from across the school have made too little progress. As a result, pupils have not achieved as well as they could in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The roles of the wider leadership team have not been sufficiently developed in order to have an impact on raising standards.
- Pupils do not always present their work well. There is no consistent teaching of handwriting.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. However, pupils have limited opportunities to apply their reading, writing and mathematics skills across a range of subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting executive headteacher and acting head of school have brought stability to the school and share a strong drive and determination to provide the best possible education for pupils.
- There are now new systems and processes in place to support all aspects of school life. These are resulting in stronger, more consistent teaching and all groups of pupils are beginning to make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff and pupils are responding positively to the many changes.
- Pupils generally behave well. They are friendly, polite and proud of their school.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive and caring. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe and that they enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is supported well. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for life as citizens in modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that outcomes at the end of key stage 2 for all groups of pupils are at least in line with those seen nationally by ensuring that:
 - a greater proportion of pupils make good or accelerated progress from their individual starting points
 - pupils of all abilities are consistently challenged and tasks are closely matched to their needs
 - time in lessons is used productively
 - teachers check pupils' understanding in lessons and intervene quickly to help them improve or to move on
 - the quality of presentation in pupils' books improves
 - pupils apply their reading, writing and mathematics skills across a wide range of subjects
 - LSAs are used effectively to support pupils' progress.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - establishing a permanent senior leadership team
 - embedding the many systems and processes that have been recently introduced
 - further developing the wider leadership team to ensure that they use their skills effectively to improve all key aspects of the school's work
 - ensuring that the newly federated governing body holds leaders stringently to account for all aspects of the school's performance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- In recent years, the school has experienced a period of change and instability in its senior leadership. This has resulted in a decline in the quality of teaching and learning across the school and a drop in the rates of pupils' progress and their outcomes. Staff morale and the standards of pupils' behaviour also fell.
- An acting executive headteacher and an acting head of school are currently leading the school. They demonstrate a drive and determination to provide the best possible education for all pupils. Despite their relatively short time in post, their leadership has resulted in substantial positive changes. Many new systems and processes have been put in place and raised expectations are starting to bring about improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes. However, for many of these improvements, it is too soon to see evidence of strong and sustained impact.
- The acting executive headteacher has high expectations for everyone and there are now clear performance management systems in place to help staff ensure that improvements are made and targets are achieved. Staff value the open and honest feedback that they receive from senior leaders and the increased opportunities that they have to access effective training, both in and out of school.
- Assistant headteachers, year group leaders and subject leaders are now clear about the areas for which they are accountable. They are increasingly involved in monitoring the progress pupils are making and checking the quality of teaching. However, for many leaders, this is a new aspect to their role and these processes have not yet had time to have a full impact.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the national curriculum. The curriculum is based around a series of half-termly themes that link a number of subjects together. Opportunities for pupils to apply their reading, writing and mathematics skills across a range of subjects are currently too limited.
- Trips, visitors and extra-curricular clubs enhance the curriculum and help to bring it to life. For example, Year 6 pupils talked animatedly about a recent visit to the Dudley Canal Museum as part of their topic on the Industrial Revolution in the Black Country. Year 4 pupils are looking forward to a theme day based on their topic of ancient Greece. Pupils benefit from specialist French and music teaching. During their time in school, all pupils are taught to play a musical instrument.
- Leaders and staff make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Fundamental British values, such as democracy and tolerance, are taught alongside the school's three rules, which are 'be kind', 'try your best' and 'show respect'. Pupils also learn about a range of different faiths and cultures. To support this aspect of the curriculum, the school has recently introduced regular opportunities for pupils to debate and then vote on key topics. Recent subjects include 'Will you ever become a vegetarian?' and 'Should smacking your child be illegal?' As a result of these many opportunities, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school is developing secure systems in relation to pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Pupils can access a wide range of

interventions that target social and emotional needs, as well as providing academic support. The impact of additional support on pupils' progress is now being tracked more carefully. LSAs now receive regular training to enhance their effectiveness in the classroom. During the inspection, some LSAs worked well in class or with small groups of pupils, asking effective questions to clarify or deepen understanding. However, this was not consistent and, in some cases, learning opportunities were missed.

- Increasingly, leaders are developing the way in which the pupil premium funding is spent so that disadvantaged pupils are supported effectively and have opportunities to take part in all that the school has to offer. The wider leadership team has a growing awareness of the barriers to learning and the challenges that this group of pupils face. As a result, maximising the progress of disadvantaged pupils is a high priority across the school.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to improve pupils' participation in and enjoyment of sport. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports clubs, events and competitions against other local schools. Training for staff is helping to ensure that the quality of PE teaching across the school is improving.
- During the inspection, staff spoke positively about the many changes that have taken place in recent months. They now feel more valued and part of a stronger team. They are positive about having more opportunities to work with and learn from others, both within school and in the local area.
- Outcomes from the school's survey of parents and carers, and parents spoken during the inspection, were overwhelmingly supportive of the new leadership team and the changes that are taking place in school. However, the small number of responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were more mixed, with some parents expressing concerns about bullying. During the inspection, inspectors did not find any evidence to support these concerns. Some parents did acknowledge that, while their responses might be negative, these did not reflect the current improvements that they could see happening in school. The school is providing more opportunities for parents to get involved in their children's education through workshops and parents' forums.

Governance of the school

- A new chair of governors was elected in July 2017 and an external review of governance was completed in September 2017. As a result, the governing body clarified its responsibilities and strengthened its role in both challenging and supporting school leaders. Link governors now undertake review visits to understand more fully the impact of developments in school, for example the effective use of pupil premium funding.
- Governors are now better able to hold senior leaders to account for pupils' progress. The records of governing body meetings reflect this increased focus on pupils' progress.
- Governors value the support that they have received from the local authority in recent months. They have a clear understanding of the progress that the school has made under the current leadership and they acknowledge that there remains much to do. In order to secure the leadership of the school and further enhance the quality of

education for all pupils, the governing bodies of both Delves Junior and Delves Infant Schools have recently voted to enter into a hard federation.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding within the school and staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. As a result, the school is a safe environment for pupils and they are well cared for at all times.
- Policies relating to keeping children safe have been reviewed to ensure that all requirements are fully met. New systems for recording concerns have been introduced. Safeguarding training takes place regularly and is well matched to the needs of all staff. All staff have undertaken training in combating radicalisation and extremism.
- The safeguarding team maintains the required confidential records and, when appropriate, the team shares information with relevant external agencies. Leaders are persistent when concerned about a pupil's welfare and follow up concerns as necessary. Leaders have a clear understanding of the local context affecting the school.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all adults appointed to work at the school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. They are taught how to keep safe online. Pupils are confident that any issues raised will be quickly resolved.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Over time, the quality of teaching and learning across the school has been inconsistent and teachers' expectations have been too low to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. Teachers have not made effective use of assessment information and much of the information that has been available has been inaccurate. Since the arrival of the acting executive headteacher and acting head of school, any further decline has been halted, new systems to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have been introduced and improvements can be seen. However, the quality of teaching and learning remains too variable.
- The use of assessment in school is now much clearer and more focused. The information generated is more useful because there are now comprehensive systems in place to check that it is reliable. These monitoring systems to moderate teachers' assessments involve leaders at all levels, external advisers and colleagues from other schools. The acting executive headteacher has also introduced regular meetings to discuss the progress of individuals and groups of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Teachers within a year group now plan and work closely together. They plan lessons to stimulate pupils' interests and encourage positive attitudes towards learning. Teachers benefit from sharing subject knowledge and expertise, and lessons focus sharply on the expected standards. Teachers in some year groups carefully adapt activities to meet the specific needs of pupils in their class. However, this is not consistent across

the school and, as a result, activities are not always well matched to pupils' needs. Sometimes, the work set is not challenging enough and pupils spend time on tasks that they can already complete easily. On other occasions, the work is too difficult and pupils struggle to complete the task. Teachers and LSAs do not always pick up these difficulties quickly enough and, therefore, learning time is lost.

- Where teaching is less effective, the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- Teachers and LSAs use questioning effectively to clarify and deepen pupils' understanding. Across the school, classrooms are welcoming environments and there are strong relationships between pupils and adults.
- Reading has rightly been identified as a key priority for improvement. Pupils and adults demonstrate an enthusiasm for reading and all pupils now read regularly with a teacher. Additional opportunities to read with an adult are provided for targeted pupils. The school's reading books have been refreshed and there are now appropriately challenging and inviting books available for readers of all ages and abilities.
- Leaders have introduced a new approach to the teaching of reading and writing across the school. There is now a greater focus on reading and there is more consistency between classes in each year group. However, pupils now have fewer opportunities to write at length. Leaders are aware of this weakness and they are looking to introduce opportunities for pupils to write more frequently across a wide range of subjects. The quality of writing in theme books is not of the same standard as that seen in pupils' literacy books.
- The standard of presentation in pupils' books is variable. The school does not have a consistent policy for the teaching of handwriting.
- Mathematics books show that pupils are making steady progress in the basic skills. However, teachers need to be more aware of what pupils can already do because too many pupils are completing similar tasks and the most able pupils are not being moved on to more challenging areas quickly enough. Pupils, especially those in Years 5 and 6, are being given more opportunities to develop skills in reasoning, justifying their thinking and problem-solving.

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 polite, happy and confident. They show positive attitudes to learning and are proud of their school. They have generally coped well with the introduction of new systems and approaches to teaching. As one older pupil said, 'Most things have changed, for the better, but some take time to get used to.'
- Each classroom includes a range of displays to support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements. Regular celebration assemblies acknowledge pupils' successes, whether they are for academic achievement, effort, behaviour or attendance.
- Pupils have opportunities to make a contribution to school life and the wider community, for instance taking part in events to raise money for charity. Pupils have

the opportunity to take on a range of school-wide responsibilities, such as being a school council representative. Older pupils can also take on roles such as mathematics ambassadors or librarians. Pupils take these roles seriously and are proud to undertake them. These opportunities are helping to prepare the pupils well for the next stage in their education.

- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand what bullying is and the various forms that it may take. They are clear that incidents of bullying in school are rare and they are confident that an adult will deal with any concerns quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The behaviour observed throughout the inspection was generally of a high standard.
- A new behaviour policy has been introduced. It is simple, clear and well liked by both staff and pupils. Pupils spoken to said that the new system is fair and motivates them to behave well. It is too soon to be able to demonstrate how much behaviour has improved but everyone spoken to was clear that behaviour has improved. The acting executive headteacher and acting head of school have introduced new procedures at lunchtime that encourage pupils to mix with pupils from other year groups.
- Behaviour in classrooms is generally of a high standard, with most pupils being keen to learn. Occasionally, pupils lose focus if the level or the pace of the lesson is not right for them. This can affect the progress that they make.
- Although levels of school attendance are in line with the national average, school leaders are taking action to improve them further and good attendance has a high profile across the school. For example, parents regularly receive personalised letters detailing their child's attendance. Classes and individual pupils are rewarded for high levels of attendance. Leaders track attendance carefully and promptly follow up any absence. They are alert to the possibility of children going missing from education and work with external agencies to minimise any risk.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors agree that, over the last three years, pupils' outcomes have not been good enough. Pupils' progress across key stage 2 has been poor and was well below that seen nationally in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016 and 2017. Progress in reading has been particularly poor.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average in 2016 and 2017. The proportion of pupils attaining at the higher standards fell below the national average in 2017. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were very similar to the outcomes achieved by other pupils in school but were low compared to other pupils nationally.
- Until recently, school-based data was inaccurate and misleading. This has, however, been addressed and, along with a new tracking system, arrangements to check the reliability of assessments are now robust. Staff expectations are rising. Teachers are

now more aware of the standards that pupils should be reaching, based on their previous attainment.

- Information for current pupils shows that more pupils are working at the standards expected for their age than previously and all year groups are making more rapid progress than they have in the past in reading, writing and mathematics. School information also shows that disadvantaged pupils are improving at a slightly faster rate than other pupils in most year groups.
- More pupils are on track to achieve at the higher standards, especially in Year 6.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are starting to make more rapid progress from their starting points. However, due to poor progress over a long period, there is still a lot of ground to make up.
- There are no significant differences in outcomes between pupils from different ethnic groups.

School details

Unique reference number	104170
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10042897

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denise Reece
Acting Executive Headteacher	Amanda Arnold
Telephone number	01922 721 112
Website	www.delvesjunior.com/
Email address	postbox@delves-j.walsall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 September 2013

Information about this school

- Delves Junior School is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school has three classes per year group from Year 3 to Year 6. The majority of pupils transfer to the school from Delves Infant School.
- The acting executive headteacher, who is also headteacher of Delves Infant School, has been in post since September 2017. The acting head of school, who is on secondment from a local junior school, has been in post since January 2018.
- Following a consultation period, the governing bodies of Delves Junior and Delves Infant Schools have recently voted to enter into a hard federation. This will create one governing body for both schools, formalising the links between the schools. The acting executive headteacher has been appointed to the substantive post with effect from April 2018.

- Around one third of pupils are of White British heritage. The majority of pupils are of Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. However, across the school, a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds are represented.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average, although very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those who have an education, health and care plan, is broadly average.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2017, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 16 lessons. Several other lessons and small-group sessions were observed during shorter visits to lessons. A member of the school's leadership team joined an inspector on many of these observations.
- Inspectors met with pupils and listened to some pupils read. They looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils formally and informally. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around the school, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the acting executive headteacher, acting head of school, assistant headteachers, other leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, school performance data and the school's website.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through 20 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and over 100 responses to the school's own survey of parents. Inspectors also spoke to parents on the first day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tracy Stone	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Turner	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018