

Rounds Green Primary School

Brades Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 2DP

Inspection dates

9–10 April 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment is rising but is not high enough, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Teaching is too variable across the school. Sometimes, work is not well matched to pupils' ability, particularly for lower-ability and higher-ability pupils.
- Mathematics teaching does not enable pupils to gain a deep enough understanding of important concepts. Pupils' weak mental recall of facts also hampers their progress.
- Some weaker readers' books are not appropriately matched to their reading ability.
- Not enough focus has been placed on developing pupils' accuracy in letter formation, handwriting, punctuation and spelling.
- Sometimes, teaching assistants are not deployed to have the fullest impact on pupils' learning.
- Not enough work has been done to evaluate the impact of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Pupils' conduct at social times is not as good as it is during lessons.

The school has the following strengths

- The interim headteacher has galvanised the school community. Parents, carers, pupils and staff are in full support of her ambition for the school.
- Despite unavoidable and frequent staffing changes, leaders and governors have removed the deep-rooted inadequacies in leadership, teaching, safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Senior and middle leaders are having an increasingly successful impact in their areas of responsibility, improving pupils' outcomes.
- The chair of governors has provided strong support to leaders and has helped to shape an effective governing body.
- The teaching of reading has improved considerably. Pupils enjoy reading challenging books and their comprehension skills are starting to improve.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills develop well across different foundation subjects, such as history and physical education (PE).
- Pupils' personal development is very well considered. They have an exceptional understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Leadership in the early years is very effective. All staff have high expectations and, as a result, children make strong progress.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain improvements to teaching and raise pupils' attainment by:
 - making sure that work is closely matched to pupils' ability, particularly for lower-ability and higher-ability pupils
 - developing pupils' mental recall of calculation facts
 - improving teachers' mathematical subject knowledge, so that they are able to help pupils develop a deep understanding of important mathematical concepts
 - giving greater attention to developing pupils' accuracy in letter formation, handwriting, punctuation and spelling
 - supporting teaching assistants to have a more effective impact on pupils' learning
 - ensuring that all weaker readers' books are matched appropriately to their reading ability.
- Further improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - making sure that provision for pupils with SEND is monitored for the impact that it has on pupils' learning and progress
 - continuing to embed the systems for managing behaviour, so that pupils' conduct is appropriate at all times of the school day.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The interim headteacher's vision and determination has been an integral part of the improvements in the school over the past two years. There have been a high number of unavoidable staffing changes and difficulties recruiting high-quality staff. In the face of these challenges, the headteacher has addressed the deep-rooted and serious weaknesses in the school. Staffing has gradually become more settled and the capacity of other leaders has been well developed.
- Previously, a significant proportion of pupils, parents, carers and staff did not have confidence in the leadership of the school. This has been turned around and there is now a sense of positivity and togetherness across the school community. Parents' comments to inspectors included, 'The school has come a long way and has been transformed.' Pupils are also optimistic about the school's future and a comment typified this view: 'It has really improved and is going to go through the roof.'
- It has taken time to develop the quality and capacity of leadership, which was very weak in the academic year 2016/17. Several new leaders have started at the school and existing leaders have received better support. Leadership responsibilities are now delegated, and the pace of improvement has quickened. Senior and middle leaders take the initiative, are committed and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders evaluate the school's effectiveness accurately. They have clearly identified the most important priorities and have a focused plan to address the remaining weaker teaching. The school improvement plan is precise and the measures for success in the plan enable leaders to check if they are on track with their intentions.
- Systems for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching are effective. Lesson observations and scrutiny of books help teachers to receive precise feedback on how to improve. Teaching has not improved as rapidly as leaders would like in some parts of the school. However, frequent changes of staffing have hampered this improvement. Nevertheless, teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. Teachers new to the profession have received effective support and continue to make improvements to their classroom practice.
- Teachers' assessments are now more secure. Leaders use test information to validate and strengthen the accuracy of teachers' assessment. They analyse assessment information well and use it to identify pupils who need more support. Leaders and staff hold meetings to discuss the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. These conversations are valuable and enable staff to check how well pupils are doing.
- The pupil premium plan and the analysis of its impact is thorough and increasingly effective. Leaders have implemented actions within the plan more effectively this academic year. For example, they have recognised that teaching assistants have not received enough training and guidance to support disadvantaged pupils in class. As a result, several training sessions have taken place this term. While it is too early to show the impact of some of the newer strategies, there is evidence that disadvantaged pupils' attainment is rising in some subjects and year groups.

- Phonics is well led. Leaders carry out regular assessments of pupils' progress in phonics. Teachers use this information well to arrange groups matched closely to pupils' ability and to put in place additional support.
- Despite the need for leaders to focus on improving English and mathematics, they have continued to develop the wider curriculum. They have given thoughtful consideration to making the curriculum relevant and enjoyable. Foundation subjects have been carefully planned to consider progression in skills, knowledge and understanding. During the inspection, pupils spoke knowledgeably about particular topics. For example, they had a good understanding of chronology in history.
- The PE and sport premium is used effectively to improve teaching and opportunities for pupils. One striking success is the improvement in swimming standards. Several years ago, the proportion of pupils able to swim twenty-five metres by the end of Year 6 was low. Leaders took the decision to put in additional swimming for weaker swimmers and standards have risen considerably. There has also been a good focus on providing staff with training and lesson plans to support their delivery of PE. Pupils enjoy the range of sport clubs and competitions that the school has put in place.
- Leaders have highly effective systems for monitoring and analysing behavioural incidents. They know exactly which pupils require additional support and when it is needed. Behaviour in lessons has improved considerably. While leaders have had some success improving behaviour at social times, it is still not as good as it should be.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with SEND has been fragile during this academic year. Some procedures are effective and working well. For example, leaders link effectively with external agencies and carefully plan the support for pupils with SEND. However, leaders do not have a deep enough understanding of the impact of the support on pupils' learning and progress.
- Support from the local authority has been effective. Leaders have appreciated the support that the authority has provided for teaching and learning. The local authority responded well to the autumn term monitoring inspection by increasing the leadership capacity for the spring term.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has improved and grown in its capacity to oversee the work of the school since the previous inspection. The chair of governors, who is national leader of governance, has been a significant part of the improvements seen in the school. He combines well with other governors to challenge and support the senior leadership team.
- Members of the governing body are enthusiastic and committed. They make good use of meetings and visits to the school, so that they can successfully understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are aware of where outcomes are not high enough and where teaching is not yet good.
- The chair has an excellent oversight of safeguarding in the school. He delivers training to staff and works with leaders to check that all arrangements for safeguarding are in place.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The culture for safeguarding is excellent and a strength of the school. The serious safeguarding weaknesses that existed at the time of the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Leaders have left no stone unturned. The quality of training for staff has had a positive impact on staff's understanding of safeguarding. The designated safeguarding leads are quick to follow up concerns and make referrals. The vigilance of leaders and staff keeps pupils extremely safe.
- Leaders take the 'Prevent' duty very seriously and have raised awareness of the associated risks among staff, pupils and parents. Older pupils have specific lessons to learn how to seek help if they come across inappropriately extreme views.
- Safety is taught well in the curriculum. Pupils have a superb understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of the different types of bullying and how to keep safe online. They know how important it is to seek the help of a trusted adult if they are concerned about something. Pupils learn about safety in school and on school trips. Year 6 recently attended a centre where many different aspects of safety are taught.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Deep-rooted inadequacies in the quality of teaching have been gradually addressed since the last inspection. The pace of improvement has been hampered by the amount of unforeseen staff changes and the difficulties of recruiting staff. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching is improving and, as a result, pupils' attainment is rising.
- Some weaker teaching remains. Where this is the case, the work planned for pupils is not matched well to pupils' ability. Sometimes, lower-ability pupils do not receive the support that they need, and higher-ability pupils are not challenged enough.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving but is still not good enough. Too many pupils cannot recall facts about mental calculation efficiently. This slows down their progress in mathematics and limits some pupils' confidence in the subject.
- Teachers' mathematical subject knowledge is not strong enough, so when they teach new concepts, some pupils are left confused. Teaching does not make good use of resources, such as pictorial representations, to help develop pupils' understanding. Teachers provide opportunities for problem solving and reasoning, but some pupils do not have the basic skills or understanding to succeed.
- The work in pupils' books shows that their letter formation, handwriting, punctuation and spelling do not develop consistently well. Sometimes, teaching does not have high enough expectations and pupils' work lacks accuracy. The approach to handwriting is successful in some classes but not in others. However, pupils are receiving regular opportunities to write at length and in different contexts across the curriculum. Some pupils are also benefiting from teachers' high-quality demonstrations of writing.
- The teaching of reading has improved considerably and there is now a positive culture for reading across the school. Pupils enjoy reading engaging and age-appropriate whole-class texts. Follow-up activities are generally challenging and help pupils to show

their understanding of the text. This approach has been particularly successful in helping pupils to develop an extended vocabulary.

- In relation to individual reading books, most pupils' books are appropriately matched to their reading ability. However, some lower-ability pupils are trying to read books that are too challenging, and they come across too many words that they find difficult to read.
- Phonics teaching in the early years and key stage 1 is good. Staff have secure subject knowledge and teach new sounds accurately and confidently. Pupils split new words up into different sounds and blend them together to read the words successfully.
- There are other examples of stronger teaching in the school. Where this is the case, teachers' questioning is effective and allows pupils time to think deeply about their learning. Furthermore, in these cases, teachers have high expectations of pupils.
- Teaching assistants are yet to have the fullest possible impact on pupils' learning. Historically, they have not been given the training that they need. Leaders have started to address this, but some of the additional training has only just begun. There are some areas where teaching assistants are working more effectively. For example, their delivery of phonics has improved in key stage 1.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Work to develop pupils' understanding of safety is exemplary. The anti-bullying ambassadors help to raise awareness of the different types of bullying and how pupils can stay safe from bullying. Consequently, pupils have a clear understanding and know exactly what to do if they see or experience bullying. Leaders bring visitors into school and arrange trips to further deepen pupils' understanding of safety. For example, recently, a police officer was in school to help teach older pupils about the dangers of extreme views, knife crime and drugs.
- Leaders and staff work hard to make sure that there are different ways that pupils can express their views or seek support in school. The school council is effective and members appreciate the responsibility they are given. Pupils value the worry boxes in school and the friendship benches outside, and these provide a way for them to express any concerns that they may have.
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute very well to pupils' personal development. This is the case for all pupils but particularly for pupils with complex needs. The support work that is carried out for families is very effective and gives some parents good guidance and signposting to external services.
- In recent years, the level of pupil mobility has been increasing. For example, this academic year, twenty-six pupils have joined different year groups and thirty-one have left. Some pupils arrive at the school with complex needs or speaking little or no English. Leaders and staff manage their admission effectively and help pupils to settle well into school life.
- Pupils also enjoy a range of wider enrichment opportunities. They have a good

understanding of other faiths and religions. Some pupils went on a school trip to visit a Gurdwara when learning about Sikhs. Pupils enjoy attending a good range of extra-curricular clubs, and the brass band performed at a local event.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The inadequate behaviour that existed previously has been addressed. The behaviour policy is generally used consistently, and pupils have a good understanding of the sanctions and rewards. Pupils' conduct is positive, and they work hard in the majority of lessons. Occasionally, when teaching is not strong, some pupils' concentration wavers and there is some low-level disruption.
- Most parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed that pupils behave well. This view is a significant turnaround since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils are polite and show respect for their school and others. They work well together in teams and are keen to share the things that they are proud of.
- While leaders have partially improved behaviour during social times, there are still some pupils who do not have the self-control and good behaviour that is seen during lessons. Sometimes, staff do not intervene quickly and effectively to ensure that this behaviour is addressed. There are now more activities for pupils outside, including playground games and equipment. Many pupils enjoy these activities.
- Attendance is managed well. Leaders have effective strategies for both supporting and challenging parents to make sure that pupils attend regularly. The new reward systems are proving successful. During this academic year, the overall attendance rate has risen significantly when compared to last year. Persistent absence has also decreased.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information show that attainment is rising, albeit slowly in some parts of the school.
- Recent improvements to the teaching of reading have helped to improve outcomes for current pupils. Last academic year, outcomes were not good enough at the end of key stages 1 and 2. For example, at the end of Year 6, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected and higher standards were low compared to the national averages. The school's assessment information and the work in pupils' books show that reading outcomes are now moving in the right direction.
- Mathematics outcomes are not improving as quickly as those in reading, particularly in key stage 2. From the academic year 2016/17 to the year 2017/18, attainment rose at both key stage 1 and key stage 2. However, this rate of improvement has not been sustained and mathematics attainment for current pupils is too low.
- There is a mixed picture for outcomes in writing. Pupils are writing at length across the curriculum and applying newly learned vocabulary well. However, sometimes, pupils do not apply their letter formation, handwriting, punctuation and spelling accurately in their writing.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are inconsistent. In some year groups and subjects

their attainment is improving. However, where teaching is weaker, some disadvantaged pupils' attainment is not rising quickly enough.

- The most able pupils do not receive a consistently high level of challenge in lessons. This is restricting the proportion of pupils who are attaining at greater depth at key stage 1 and the higher standard at key stage 2.
- Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding generally develop well across the foundation subjects. For example, well-planned progression in history enables pupils to build an understanding of chronology. Pupils enjoy answering key questions as their curriculum topics develop. For example, in Year 5, pupils answer the question, 'Why did Henry create his own Church?' when learning about the Tudors. This approach is helping pupils to remember more.
- The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was low last academic year. Teaching has improved in this area and current pupils in Year 1 are progressing well.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader has worked closely with staff to transform the quality of provision in Nursery and Reception. Outcomes have risen recently, and the early years is now a strength of the school.
- Central to the success of the setting are the excellent relationships that staff have with children. Adults support children's social and emotional development extremely well. Children are happy, settled and motivated to learn.
- The quality of teaching is good because staff take the time to plan interesting and challenging activities for children. They use assessment to plan learning that is specific to children's interest and needs. Staff work well alongside children and ask good questions to challenge them and push their learning on.
- There is a strong focus on developing children's basic skills. Phonics is taught well and there is a well-established approach to teaching handwriting. Children are motivated to apply their phonics well in written work. Their letter formation and handwriting develop well over time.
- A good focus on the characteristics of effective learning helps children to understand how to be successful. Staff have aligned different characters from famous stories to the different learning behaviours.
- The provision in Nursery has improved significantly during this academic year. Staff's high expectations enable children to get off to a strong start.
- Leadership in the early years has been central to the transformation of the setting. Leaders have developed staff expertise and helped to create a sense of teamwork across the early years. Staff are motivated and have high expectations for the children.
- Outcomes are rising quickly. Last academic year, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development improved significantly compared to the previous year. The work in children's books and the school's assessment information show that this improving trend is continuing. Outcomes for disadvantaged children and for boys are particularly strong.

School details

Unique reference number	103980
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10056386

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	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Craig
Interim headteacher	Helen Heap
Telephone number	0121 552 1910
Website	www.roundsgreen.sandwell.sch.uk
Email address	helen.heap@roundsgreen.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- Thirteen out of the possible seventeen ethnic groups are represented at the school. This is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is similar to the national average.
- The interim headteacher has been in post since the spring term 2017.
- After the last inspection in 2016, an academy order was issued, and an identified academy sponsor was named. However, the conversion process has not progressed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 32 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with three groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at social times and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the interim headteacher and other senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with two members of the local governing body. He also met with two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: assessments and records of pupils' progress; the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance; records of how teaching is monitored; and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors evaluated the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with the free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also evaluated the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.

Inspection team

Matt Meckin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Helps	Ofsted Inspector
Collette Higgins	Ofsted Inspector

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