

Frederick Bird Primary School

Swan Lane, Coventry, West Midlands CV2 4QQ

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2019

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' development plans lack precision. They do not focus sharply enough on what needs improving. As a result, leaders' actions to improve teaching and raise standards are not as successful as they could be.
- Older pupils have some gaps in their learning as a result of historical weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Current pupils are steadily catching up, but the least able and most able pupils sometimes do not achieve as well.
- The quality of teaching across the school is not consistently good. While teachers' use of assessment is improving, it is not used consistently well by all teachers to identify and address gaps in learning.
- Not all pupils attain as well as they should in reading. This means that some pupils leave primary school not fully prepared for the demands of secondary school.
- The curriculum, while engaging, does not demand enough from pupils in some subjects to enable them to acquire a good depth of understanding.
- Leaders and governors do not check carefully enough on the use of pupil premium funding to ensure that it is making a positive difference to the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is not personalised enough to enable pupils to make the best possible progress from their starting points.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils show high levels of respect and empathy for others. The school prepares pupils effectively to be responsible citizens in today's global society.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons. They look after each other on the playground. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Leaders have been successful in raising pupils' rates of attendance.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. A nurturing environment and good-quality learning experiences ensure that children achieve well.
- Provision for pupils with English as an additional language, especially for those who are new to English, is strong. This helps them to make good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders:
 - identify with greater precision in action plans what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards
 - include clear, measurable criteria in action plans to help leaders and governors to evaluate the effectiveness of their work on raising standards
 - embed the school's revised approach to assessment across the school so that all teachers use it consistently well to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning
 - tighten the procedures for checking on and evaluating the use of the pupil premium funding to ensure that it is used effectively
 - support teachers to plan learning experiences in all curriculum subjects that build progressively on previous learning and allow pupils to develop a depth of understanding.
- Improve the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND so they make at least good progress from their starting points by ensuring that:
 - teachers and other staff receive the necessary training to understand these pupils' specific needs
 - teachers set work that is more closely matched to pupils' specific needs, taking into consideration objectives in education, health and care (EHC) plans where appropriate
 - teachers act promptly on advice from external specialists to support pupils best.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan and set work that meets the needs of all pupils, especially the least and most able pupils, to enable them to make strong progress
 - regularly check on pupils' understanding and deal with misconceptions quickly as they arise.
- Improve the teaching of reading so that all pupils attain well by ensuring that:
 - teachers support pupils more effectively to develop their fluency
 - teachers provide reading material that is appropriately matched to each pupil's ability, especially for the most able
 - all teachers promote reading for pleasure consistently well.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management should be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors identify appropriate, broad priorities for school improvement. However, their action plans do not show clearly how improvements will be brought about or the intended impact on pupils' outcomes. As a result, leaders cannot easily evaluate how successful their strategies are in raising achievement.
- Staff report that, since the start of this academic year, leaders have provided greater freedom for teachers to be innovative with their planning and delivery of lessons. They say that this has raised staff morale and helped to engage more pupils in their work. However, in a few instances this has led to less rigour in teachers' planning of appropriately challenging tasks for pupils.
- Leaders do not do enough to ensure that all pupils with SEND receive the support they need to make good progress from their starting points. Leaders' limited guidance about how teachers should adapt learning and use advice from external professionals means that pupils, including those with EHC plans, do not receive enough personalised learning support. Also, some staff lack knowledge about different aspects of SEN.
- Leaders introduced a new assessment system at the start of the academic year. Teachers are developing their confidence in using this system, and some are not yet using it to its full potential to pinpoint and address gaps in pupils' learning. Phase leaders use assessment information to identify pupils who have fallen behind in their learning. An increasing number of these pupils benefit from tailored programmes to help them catch up.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a breadth of experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding. However pupils, particularly the most able pupils, are not challenged enough in some subjects, and therefore do not achieve as well as they could. This is because teachers sometimes do not ensure that learning over time develops a good progression in knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of trips, visitors and extra-curricular activities, including sports. Pupils benefit from these events, which help to enrich their learning and make it more memorable. Leaders spend the physical education (PE) and sports premium funding appropriately. This contributes to raising teachers' confidence in the teaching of sport and PE and increased pupil participation rates in competitive sport.
- Leaders receive a substantial amount of funding for disadvantaged pupils. This is largely spent on strategies that support all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Leaders and governors have less clarity about the direct impact that the funding has on disadvantaged pupils because monitoring systems are not well developed.
- Phase leaders work hard to develop an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the year groups for which they are responsible. Phase leaders are beginning to use their knowledge to offer teachers targeted guidance and support. This is helping to improve the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have successfully established a school culture where pupils value individual

differences and show respect for one another. Carefully planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development help to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.

- The majority of parents and carers speak positively about the school. They believe that their children are looked after well and are safe in school. Parents say that staff are approachable and willing to help them out with any worries or concerns.
- Leaders ensure that good arrangements are in place for children who are looked after. They oversee each pupil's personal education plan, to make sure that targets are appropriate and contribute effectively to a pupil's personal and academic progress.

Governance of the school

- Recently, there have been several changes to the composition of the governing body, including the appointment of a new chair of governors. This has brought about a much-needed fresh impetus to governance and a re-evaluation of governors' roles and responsibilities. Governors are committed to supporting the school's further improvement. However, their ability to hold leaders to account is sometimes hampered by the quality of improvement planning and the lack of measurable criteria by which governors can judge success.
- Governance is improving. Governors have a better understanding of the school's work because they now explore with leaders the reasons why pupils achieve the outcomes they do. Governors visit the school to see at first hand how it is progressing with its priorities. Following visits, they share informative reports with all governors, identifying specific actions to take forward where appropriate. Governors are now challenging leaders more effectively about the impact of their work. This is contributing positively to the pace of change.
- Governors monitor the school's finances. However, they do not have a clear enough oversight of how the pupil premium funding is spent to best support disadvantaged pupils. This is partly due to the school's pupil premium strategy lacking measurable criteria that governors can use to hold leaders to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff at Frederick Bird are caring and place a high priority on pupils' well-being and safety. They look after the pupils well and encourage them to share any worries they may have. Pupils are taught about personal safety. They have a good understanding about a range of safeguarding issues, including knife crime, road safety and protecting themselves when online. Pupils say that teachers keep them safe at school, and inspectors agree.
- As a result of effective staff training, staff have a good understanding about their responsibilities in relation to keeping pupils safe from harm. When staff have concerns, they report these to school safeguarding leaders without delay. Rigorous records are kept securely. There is appropriate sharing of information within school and with other agencies when necessary.

- Relationships with parents are strong. Staff work closely with vulnerable families and offer timely support when it is needed. This includes working with other agencies and organisations in the best interests of the child.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- A mixed picture in the quality of teaching across the school means that not all pupils make the progress that they should. While overall the quality of teaching is improving, some inconsistencies remain in how effectively teachers adapt learning tasks and provide guidance to pupils, especially lower-attaining pupils.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of reading have not been addressed sufficiently well to ensure that all pupils achieve the best possible outcomes. Teachers' emphasis on developing comprehension skills is helping pupils to make more sense of what they read. However, teaching in some classes is not focused enough on supporting pupils to read with good fluency. In addition, sometimes reading books do not offer enough challenge to the most able pupils. This slows progress.
- The teaching of phonics in key stage 1 is improving. Teachers use assessment accurately to determine and teach the specific sounds that pupils need to learn. A few pupils, notably the lower-attaining pupils, do not get enough opportunities to read regularly and develop their fluency. However, in other classes, teachers monitor pupils' reading very closely to ensure that they do read regularly.
- Despite efforts to make learning fun and capture pupils' attention, in many subjects teachers pitch their teaching to pupils of middle ability. As a result, the most able pupils are sometimes not expected to think hard enough. In other classes, where work is more closely matched to their needs, the most able pupils report that the work is 'just right' for them.
- Teachers sometimes assign teaching assistants to help lower-attaining pupils or pupils with SEND access similar work to the rest of the class, rather than setting work that is more suited to their specific needs. This means that pupils struggle because they do not have the prior knowledge to enable them to succeed easily.
- Where the quality of teaching is stronger, teachers carefully align work to pupils' needs, and pupils give thoughtful responses to teachers' probing questions. In these cases, teachers' ongoing assessment ensures that they correct misconceptions quickly, enabling pupils to succeed and make good progress.
- Teachers are thorough in their organisation of lessons and try to maximise time for learning. They usually select carefully-chosen resources which aid pupils' understanding and help to foster interest in the subject matter.
- Pupils who arrive at school with very limited or no knowledge of the English language are supported very well. They benefit from being withdrawn for some targeted work. This helps them to develop confidence and begin to grasp the English language quickly.
- The teaching of mathematics is more effective than in the past because teachers provide pupils with clear guidance and regular practice to consolidate their understanding and grasp essential basic skills. Increasingly, teachers get pupils to think mathematically and explain their reasoning.

- Pupils say that teachers are helpful in lessons. Regular encouragement from teachers and respectful relationships in the classroom support pupils' learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Effective personal, social, health, and economic education (PSHE) lessons help prepare pupils well for navigating life beyond school. Pupils speak knowledgeably about how to keep themselves healthy by taking regular exercise. They also understand the dangers of drugs, smoking and alcohol because they have been taught well about these topics.
- Pupils understand different world religions. They show respect towards those with religious beliefs and those of no faith. Pupils maturely debate current affairs in the media and learn how to express their opinions constructively.
- Teachers are quick to respond to the rare instances of any form of discrimination. For example, teachers helped pupils to understand about different types of relationships when a homophobic word was used.
- Teachers provide a range of rich experiences to extend pupils' SMSC development. For example, through the teaching of music, pupils gain a great sense of accomplishment and enjoyment. This is especially evident in group singing, where pupils' passion for music really shines through and creates a strong sense of unity. Year 6 pupils benefit from an annual residential visit to Dol-y-Moch, a country house within Snowdonia National Park. Pupils develop skills of teamwork and build resilience as part of their adventurous outdoor activities.
- Leaders ensure that effective arrangements are in place for transition from primary to secondary school. Good liaison with secondary school staff enables pupils to be better prepared for key stage 3.
- Pupils experience a range of enrichment activities to help raise their aspirations about future careers. For example, older pupils participate in the 'into universities' programme, where they spend time visiting a university, thinking about their future careers and what higher education might offer them.
- An active school council, with members elected by peers, meets regularly. They make democratic decisions to improve the school, such as resolving issues about playground football.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They settle down to tasks quickly in class and follow teachers' instructions, rarely needing reminders. Low-level disruption is rare. Occasionally, pupils become disengaged when the work set is too hard for them.
- Following a significant increase in exclusions last academic year, this year has seen a marked reduction. Leaders manage the few instances of pupils demonstrating very

challenging behaviour well. Issues are resolved quickly, with the support of parents when necessary.

- Pupils say everyone gets along well at school, and this is clearly evident. A happy atmosphere pervades the school, where pupils look out for each other and build good friendships. Instances of bullying are rare, and when they do occur, they are sorted out quickly by adults.
- The school is a calm, orderly environment. Good levels of staff supervision ensure that behaviour is checked regularly. Pupils enjoy each other's company on the playground, taking turns in games and on the climbing frame, and keeping active.
- This academic year, leaders have focused on improving pupils' presentation, and while it is becoming tidier it remains a little inconsistent in some classes. This is more a reflection of teachers' expectations than pupils' efforts.
- A concerted effort by leaders to improve pupils' attendance has paid dividends. This year, there has been a significant decrease in the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. Current attendance is now broadly in line with the national figure.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Typically, by the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress from their starting points in reading is average when compared with the national picture. However, too few pupils attain the expected standard in reading before they leave primary school. Pupils' progress over time is usually much stronger in writing, although this was not the case in 2018, when it dipped.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as other pupils, partly because the pupil premium funding is not evaluated sufficiently well to check that planned approaches have the desired impact. In 2018, disadvantaged pupils' progress in reading at the end of key stage 2 was significantly below the national average. Less than half of these pupils attained the expected standard to ensure that they were prepared for the demands of secondary school.
- The progress of current pupils, although improving, is not yet consistently good. However, work in books and the school's internal assessments show that an increasing proportion of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are making more rapid gains in their learning because needs are better catered for. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English make good progress as a result of effective intervention.
- The proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 have been below national averages for the last few years. However, the progress of current pupils is generally strong as a result of better teaching.
- Although pupils' books indicate that teachers provide work of varying levels of difficulty, the most able pupils are still not being consistently challenged. For instance, some of the most able pupils are not introduced to challenging texts with complex plots. Consequently, not enough of these pupils go on to achieve the higher standards at the end of key stage 2.
- Some pupils with SEND make strong progress in their learning because teachers know

precisely what support a pupil needs, and provide it. Others do not make good progress because learning is not tailored sufficiently well to help them overcome their difficulties.

Early years provision

Good

- Many children begin school with skills and knowledge below, and some well below, those typical for their age. Despite this initial barrier, teachers have high expectations and carefully plan and provide activities that enable children to learn and achieve well. Over time, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of Reception, although it still remains below the national figure.
- The early years leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They are clear about the most important priorities to improve the early years because they are based on accurate self-evaluation. They lead a large team of staff well, keeping the focus on children's well-being and achievement. However, there is no written action plan with clear success criteria in order to judge the impact of leaders' work.
- Staff in the early years have created a calm, purposeful environment that is conducive to effective learning. The language-rich environment encourages children to try out their newly-learned literacy skills. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes show self-confidence, a desire to explore their surroundings and to interact with each other.
- While outcomes for disadvantaged children lag behind those of others, current children are making good progress. This is because teachers plan specific support that meets their individual needs. For example, staff provide more regular opportunities for children to read to an adult in school. This is making a positive difference to their achievement.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff ensure that teaching groups are appropriately targeted to support effectively the learning needs of all children, including those with SEND. Staff use many strategies successfully to develop children's language through modelling and rehearsing. However, sometimes adults do not seize the moment to extend children's critical thinking in role play when the opportunity arises.
- The well-resourced outdoor learning environment lends itself well to providing plenty of opportunities for children to play and explore. Children often select their own materials and resources, and use these to invent their own games and challenges. This promotes children's understanding of cooperation and teamwork well, in addition to developing their negotiation skills.
- The teaching of early reading, including phonics, is generally effective and supports the children's good progress. However, occasionally a few staff do not model the correct letter-sound correspondence with enough care, and this hampers children's ability to blend letters together successfully. Leaders place a high priority on developing an interest in reading, and this is evident in the learning environment. Children are keen to read.
- Children's writing develops well during the early years as a result of teachers' direct instruction about how to create simple sentences, form letters accurately and hold a pencil correctly. Children take up the many opportunities to write for a range of

purposes, and get plenty of practice to consolidate skills learned. This supports their progress well.

- Parents value the school's efforts to involve them in their children's education. Events such as 'Reading Wednesday' allow parents to understand a little more about how their children learn at school and how they can be supportive at home. Parents commented on their children's eagerness to share at home the skills they have learned at school.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective and follow the same procedures as the rest of the school.

School details

Unique reference number	103695
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10083949

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	865
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lauren Brown
Headteacher	Paul Tuffin
Telephone number	02476 221 920
Website	www.frederickbird.coventry.sch.uk
Email address	admin@frederickbird.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2018

Information about this school

- Frederick Bird Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school. A new headteacher started in post in September 2018.
- The proportion of pupils supported with an education, health and care plan and those who receive SEN support is below the national average. A much larger than average proportion of pupils are disadvantaged.
- The school serves a community of pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with English as an additional language account for three-quarters of the school's population. The school does not have a religious character.
- The chair of governors took up her post in January 2019.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed lessons in all year groups and across a variety of subjects, including English and mathematics. Several observations were carried out with senior leaders. Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of pupils' work across several subjects. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading habits.
- Inspectors talked to pupils during lessons and at breaktimes to gather their views about school, their safety and learning. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils to talk about their experience of school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders and phase leaders to discuss the school's actions for improvement and the curriculum. They also talked to other staff, including newly-qualified teachers, to gather their views on teaching and learning, leadership and safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors met with the school's adviser from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) to draw any useful conclusions. Inspectors gathered parents' views at the start of the school day and considered three free-text responses.
- The inspection team took into account a wide range of information including the school's development plan, safeguarding documentation, school policies, the school's website, pupils' assessment information and leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning.

Inspection team

Tim Hill, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tracy Stone	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Hinton	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Ferguson	Ofsted Inspector

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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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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