

Inspection of Hawbush Primary School

Hawbush Road, Brierley Hill, West Midlands DY5 3NH

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils believe in the school's values of fairness, perseverance, hope, resilience and respect. Pupils enjoy their forest school sessions and working together. Pupils know what bullying is. They have confidence that adults would help them sort it out. Pupils feel safe in school.

Staff are ambitious for pupils. They show commitment to the pupils and the local community. The school provides high-quality care for pupils who need emotional support. Pupils behave well most of the time.

Staff are looking for ways to extend pupils' experiences. Pupils are looking forward to restarting clubs and welcoming visitors. For example, some have recently started school council, junior leadership team and working with community police.

Despite these positive features, pupils do not achieve well enough. Leaders know the attributes they want all pupils to have by the time they leave the school. However, leaders have not identified exactly what pupils need to learn in subjects such as history, science and art and design. The curriculum lacks ambition and is not well organised in some subjects. Leaders have prioritised improving pupils' mathematics. However, due to weaknesses in the teaching of early reading, some pupils do not learn to read fluently or confidently.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The quality of education is not good enough. Leaders are beginning to think about how to organise and deliver their curriculum so that it supports pupils' learning and development more effectively. For example, in mathematics, leaders are clear on the small steps that pupils need to learn to be successful.

The teaching of early reading is not secure. Some staff do not have the skills to teach phonics well because training has not been effective. Adults do not always appropriately model the sounds letters make. Pupils struggle to remember and use their previous learning. Pupils do not use letter sounds to help them write well.

In some subjects, teachers have insufficient guidance about what to teach. Curriculum plans in these subjects do not clearly identify the knowledge and skills pupils will learn. Teaching in these subjects does not sequence learning well enough to help pupils build on what they already know or prepare them for future learning. Some teachers have not had sufficient training to help them teach the curriculum well. Pupils have a poor recall of their science and history work.

Leaders have not consistently checked that subject plans are delivered effectively. This does not help leaders have an accurate understanding of the areas to improve in the school. For example, plans to learn about key artists have not enabled the pupils to know more and remember more about these artists.

Leaders are ambitious to broaden pupils' horizons. They make sure that pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. Other areas of the curriculum teach pupils about democracy. Leaders have also prioritised pupils' understanding of mental health. They have secured additional support for those who need it. Pupils generally behave well. Sometimes they lose focus when the curriculum does not meet their needs fully.

Leaders have procedures in place to manage attendance. However, low attendance and high persistent absence rates have continued since summer 2021, when all pupils were expected to return to school. This is a barrier to pupils making progress through the curriculum.

Teachers understand the difficulties that pupils with special educational needs/and or disabilities (SEND) have with their learning. This is especially so in the school's specially resourced provision. The individual attention and care that these pupils receive meets their needs well. This means that the pupils engage in learning where they may not have done so before.

The early years curriculum is well thought out. Skilled adults help children to learn and acquire language. There is a high focus on this, and children rise to the challenge. They can talk effectively with a partner by the time they reach Reception Year. Relationships are strong and children get off to a good start because the adults understand the steps to develop learning. Children who have had little pre-school experience or have SEND are well supported. However, due to weaknesses in the teaching of reading, children do not do as well as they could.

Governors have ensured that the school operated well during the COVID-19 pandemic. There has been less attention on their evaluation of the school's quality of education.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They say leaders support them well. Staff value the help they get to keep a positive work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that there are clear arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They train all staff so that everyone knows what to do if they have concerns about a child. Staff are alert to any signs that a pupil may be at risk. They report concerns quickly. Leaders' records help to ensure that pupils and their families get the support that they need when they need it.

Additional staff provide well-being support. Leaders have also invested in external services to help pupils.

Pupils learn about keeping safe, including how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The reading programme is not effective for all pupils. Leaders need to ensure that the teaching of phonics is precise and consistent. Leaders also need to ensure that all adults, routinely and accurately, help pupils use their phonics knowledge to write well.
- In some subjects, the curriculum is not well sequenced. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum plans for all subjects show teachers the knowledge that pupils should learn and when. Leaders must make sure that teachers have the necessary subject knowledge to develop the curriculum effectively.
- Leaders have not checked how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum. As a result, leaders do not know whether pupils are learning the planned curriculum. Leaders need to check how well the curriculum is delivered so that they can implement training and support where necessary.
- Governors do not have a full picture of the schools' strengths, weaknesses and priorities for improvement. This makes it difficult for them to support and challenge leaders effectively. Governors need to make sure they have the necessary information to proactively hold leaders to account.
- Pupils' attendance is low. This reduces the time available for learning. Leaders need to ensure they rigorously apply the school's systems to challenge pupils' absence so that attendance levels rise, and fewer pupils are persistently absent.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	103820
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10201048
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joyce Carter
Headteacher	Rob McConomy
Website	www.hawbush.dudley.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school now offers provision for two-year-olds.
- The school manages a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This provision caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.
- Inspectors were aware that a serious incident had previously occurred at the school while a child was in the care of staff employed by the school. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the incident were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other leaders and members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentary evidence. This included the school's plans for improvement and the work of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, science and art and design. Inspection activities included discussion with curriculum leaders, scrutinising curriculum plans, lesson visits and discussion with both teachers and pupils about learning.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day and gathered their views. Inspectors considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors took account of the responses to the survey for staff.
- Inspectors also considered the school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEMH.
- Inspectors met with the school's designated safeguarding leader to check that safeguarding procedures and processes were effective. Inspectors also checked the single central record to ensure that the required recruitment checks on staff have taken place.
- Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes and as they moved around the school.

Inspection team

Richard Kentish, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Barry Yeadsley

Ofsted Inspector

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