



Hurst Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103825
LEA Dudley
Inspection number 277002
Inspection dates 9 November 2005 to 10 November 2005
Reporting inspector Andrew McDowall HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Paul Street
School category	Community		Hurst Hill
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Coseley Bilston, West Midlands WV14 9AJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01384 818845
Number on roll	450	Fax number	01384 818846
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Jon Paine
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Joy Powell

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 9 November 2005 - 10 November 2005	Inspection number 277002
-----------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a large primary school situated in Coseley in Dudley. The children come mainly from the immediate area, which consists of mixed housing with average levels of social deprivation. The proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average as is the number learning English as an additional language. When the children start in the Reception classes their skills and knowledge are typical of children this age. The school is fully accessible to children with physical disabilities. The number of children who have learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The school provides before and after school care for the families needing it.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing and governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

This is an ineffective school. Overall, the standard of education provided by the school is inadequate.

Although standards and progress in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory, the children in Years 3 to 6 make very slow progress in English, mathematics and science and achieve standards well below their capabilities. Over the past four years the standards in Year 6 have fallen from above average in 2001 to well below average today. Hence, the school's overall effectiveness and value for money are inadequate despite the positive views of the parents and children. The leadership of the school has recognised that standards are too low but has not done enough to bring about the necessary improvements.

The quality of teaching in the school is unsatisfactory. Many lessons are mundane and fail to provide exciting opportunities for the children to learn. Nevertheless the children behave well in classes and around the school. The school does not check the progress of children carefully enough. Consequently, the work that is set for the children is sometimes too easy or too hard for them and as a result they make less progress than they should.

The leadership and management are inadequate. The school has a clear view of its own performance but does not take decisive action to improve things. The school sets ambitious targets but fails to reach them because assessment at all levels is weak.

The personal development of the children is good. They are increasingly involved in supporting each other in the playground and the great majority say they enjoy school. The quality of care provided by the school is satisfactory. All the staff work hard to meet the medical and physical needs of individual pupils but the guidance children are given on what they need to do to improve is inadequate.

The school has known about the low standards but has not been successful in developing robust management systems to improve things and there is no track record of improvement. Consequently, the capacity for improvement is inadequate.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science throughout the school but particularly at Key Stage 2 by improving all aspects of assessment to ensure the teachers plan lessons that provide work at the right level for children of all abilities.
- Improve the quality of teaching by setting clear expectations of what the school wants to see happening in classrooms and establish robust systems to check that all staff are following school guidelines.
- Improve the management systems for tracking the

progress of the children as they move through the school and ensure decisive action is taken where progress is not good enough. • Involve the children more in assessing their own work and setting targets for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

The children in this school underachieve and are capable of making much greater progress than they do. By the time they leave the school, standards in English, mathematics and science are significantly below average. The school sets ambitious targets but fell well short of meeting them in 2005. Standards have declined steadily over the last four years.

When they start school most children have levels of skills and knowledge that are average for children of this age. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning in the Nursery and Reception classes, and are suitably prepared to enter Year 1. Children of all abilities continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress all children make in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory.

Unsatisfactory teaching and inadequate assessment procedures have prevented the school from stemming the decline in standards that children reach at the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The children's personal development is good. They are well behaved and have positive attitudes to school. One said, 'It's a friendly school and I enjoy coming to it'. Children develop good relationships with each other and with a range of adults. If any bullying occurs, they are confident that adults will deal with it quickly and fairly.

The children's spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Whole class discussion sessions and targeted support for individual children provide good opportunities for social development. These activities allow time for the children to reflect and share how they feel with others. Children know the importance of keeping fit, healthy and safe. This is reflected in the large numbers that take part in the good variety of after school sporting clubs.

Attendance is satisfactory overall. The majority of children have good attendance. The reason the school's attendance rate is just below average is because some parents take their children on holiday in term time. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are good and the school works closely with parents where there are difficulties.

Children are encouraged to have a voice in the running of the school and to take on responsibility. This is exemplified by the student council. They suggested the appointment of playground leaders from Year 6 to improve behaviour and social skills at lunchtimes. Children are positively involved in the local and wider community through

links with the church and other activities. Children have sufficient basic skills in English and mathematics to cope with the work they are given, but standards of work should be higher.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. This is the reason standards are falling in the school.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, but occasionally there is lack of challenge, and expectations are not high enough for some pupils to do even better. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In these years, the teachers do not know enough about what the children can do and what they need to do next to improve. As a result, some lessons are too challenging and at other times, expectations of what the children can do are too low.

In some lessons, teachers spend too long giving children information and too little time is devoted to allow them to discuss, investigate and learn independently. Teaching assistants are deployed satisfactorily but are not always used to best effect in some lessons to support teaching and learning.

Procedures for assessing the progress children are making are unsatisfactory. The teachers do not regularly check what the children have learned in order to set clear targets for improvement. Children are not yet involved in assessing their own work and marking does not give enough advice on how they can improve. Satisfactory guidance is given to those children identified as gifted and talented. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities have not always been identified early enough to plan adequately for their support, but this is now satisfactory.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum in the school is satisfactory. The school covers all the work it should. All subjects and areas of learning receive an adequate allocation of time so that pupils experience a full range of activities as they progress through the school.

The coordinators are now beginning to check the quality of planning, but there is still a lack of exciting and motivating experiences to engage children's interests fully. This is particularly the case in Years 3 to 6, where some children say 'some lessons are boring'. In addition, there is insufficient challenge in many lessons and this prevents children of all abilities from extending their learning.

The children are offered a good range of well attended out of school clubs and visits, including a residential trip in Year 6. Such occasions promote children's personal development well. They learn about their role within the wider community and are involved in charity events to help others. For example, they are involved in deciding

activities for 'mufti-day' to raise funds for Children in Need. Citizenship and health and safety are promoted well by visits from emergency and other public services.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support offered by the school are satisfactory overall. The procedures for child protection are in place and children feel safe and secure in school. The staff are vigilant in their care of vulnerable pupils. The arrangements for the care of pupils with medical disabilities and for general first-aid are outstanding. The children receive good individual guidance on their personal and social needs but more could be done to improve the quality of guidance they receive on the progress they are making in their work. The parents express strong support for the school in the way it looks after their children.

Breakfast and after school clubs are well established and provide a good level of care. The self-esteem groups are successful in raising the confidence of children who need reassurance of their own abilities. This has a positive impact on behaviour in the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The leadership and management of the school are inadequate. The school's view is that it is satisfactory but this is not the case because the school does not take effective action to improve what it knows to be weak. The systems for checking how the school is doing are not robust and although the leadership does state what it wants to see happening in the school, not enough is done to check that all staff are following school policy. The school has now produced a programme outlining the monitoring activities it plans to undertake in the coming year. This more rigorous approach needed to be established sooner to tackle the weaknesses in the school. It is too soon to say if this programme will bring about the improvements needed to raise standards in the school.

The leadership has been successful in boosting the confidence of specific children to enable them to feel better about themselves and have a more positive attitude to school and learning. The school is currently undergoing a redecoration and refurbishment programme that is being well led by the headteacher. This is having a positive impact on how people in the school feel about working in the building. This work has contributed to making the school the welcoming environment it is for children and parents.

The school recognises that it needs to improve standards as a matter of urgency. However, the plans that are in place are not sufficiently focused on this objective and the school is not clear on how it will measure the success of its actions. For example, the school devoted considerable time to improving writing in 2004 but the results in the national assessment tests for 11 year olds continued to fall. The quality of teaching and the way the teachers mark the children's work are too variable and are unsatisfactory overall. The headteacher has not taken decisive action to improve this inconsistency even though she has been aware of it for some time. The leadership of

the school has not had systems in place to enable it to have a clear view of the progress every child is making. Consequently, slow progress has not been identified and tackled. This is a major weakness and is a key factor in why the school has been ineffective in raising standards.

The school is effective in the way it consults parents and children and takes appropriate action to address the issues raised. For example, it has changed the way in which homework is organised as a response to parental views.

The governors are very supportive of the school and want the best for the children. They attend training and have a satisfactory committee structure in place. However, governance of the school is unsatisfactory because they have not been proactive enough in challenging the school to improve the standards reached by the children.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The Children Hurst Hill Primary School Paul Street Hurst Hill Coseley Bilston WV14 9AJ

11 November 2004

Dear Children

I would like to start by saying a big 'thank you' to everyone for being so nice to us when we visited your school. Everyone we spoke to was really helpful.

These are the things we liked about your school:

- We think you all behave well and we like the way you look after each other and are kind to each other when someone is feeling sad or lonely in the playground.
- We think the staff at the school care about you and look after you well when you are feeling ill or need help.
- We like the way your school is being decorated and improved to give you better rooms to work in.

Although you like your school we think it should be doing better in some important areas:

- In some classes in Years 3 to 6, we think the lessons need to be more exciting and the teachers need to set the right work for you to do. If they do this you will enjoy the lessons more and will get better at your work.
- We think the teachers need to check how you are improving in English, mathematics and science. Some teachers need to mark your work better and let you check your own work yourself before you give it in.

Other inspectors will be visiting the school from time to time to see how you are getting on. I am sure you will all help the school to improve by doing your best every day.

Yours sincerely

Andy McDowall HMI