

# Brownhills West Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104206
<b>Local Authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	308541
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rajinder Harrison

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	169
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Hipwell
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Fairclough
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2003
<b>School address</b>	Shannon Drive Brownhills Walsall WS8 7LA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 452766
<b>Fax number</b>	01543 452766

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average and no pupil has a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average.

## 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, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (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 or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. The school is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education because it is not led and managed effectively. Improvement since the previous inspection has been inadequate and pupils' progress, in Years 3 to 6, has declined over the last three years. Given the results they attained in the national assessments in Year 2, many pupils make inadequate progress by the time they take tests in Year 6 and do not achieve in line with their potential. Children start school with knowledge and skills that are well below expected levels. Through good teaching in the Foundation Stage they progress well. At the end of the Reception Year, many attain standards in line with national expectations although their literacy skills are weak. Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and overall standards are broadly average in Year 2. From this secure start, progress declines and is inadequate by Year 6. In 2007, overall standards at the end of Year 6 were well below average. The school's data show that pupils in the current Year 6 have made inadequate progress, particularly in writing and science, both of which were key issues in the previous inspection report. Some teaching in the school is effective. However, particularly in Years 3 to 6, teachers' planning is hampered by poor assessment information. In too many lessons, there is insufficient regard to the wide range of ability in the mixed age classes. Teachers' expectations of all pupils are not high enough, particularly the more able. Similarly, managers fail to check that the work pupils do from year to year builds successfully on what they have already done. Thus teaching and the curriculum overall are inadequate. The school has not focused enough on improving progress and while the school's targets are satisfactory, they are not always realised. Too many pupils do not develop the key skills to the levels required to prepare them adequately for the future. Pupils who need additional help with their learning make satisfactory progress. The headteacher has worked hard to provide a calm, friendly environment where pupils feel safe and happy. Pupils' personal development is good. They like school, attend regularly, behave well, try hard in lessons and show kindness to others. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe, fit and healthy and enjoy the many sporting activities the school provides. Parents are generally positive about the school. Pastoral care is good but because the guidance to support pupils' academic progress is poor, overall care, guidance and support are inadequate. The school has an over generous view of itself. Pupils' progress is now being tracked and monitored but any information gathered is not being analysed to identify which pupils are not making progress. Given that this was an issue identified in the previous inspection report, the school has been slow to act to secure better progress. Senior managers still do not analyse the information they gather, nor check its accuracy in order to identify early, any pupils who may be falling behind. Subject leadership is inadequate, particularly in science where standards are exceptionally low. Procedures to evaluate provision, especially teaching and learning, lack rigour. Governors, while supportive, have not held the school to account regarding pupils' progress and the school's failure to address the issues from the previous inspection report. They play a limited role in checking the school's performance and driving school improvement. School leaders have not demonstrated adequate capacity to make improvements.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good teaching and a well planned curriculum help children achieve well in all the areas of learning. Many children start with skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in personal and social development and literacy. Consequently these are given high emphasis. Careful guidance and support help children feel secure. They adopt school routines quickly, settling happily and confidently to enjoy all that is provided. They explore the activities staff plan enthusiastically. For example, their delight was immeasurable as they tried to catch the bubbles from the bubble machine. A good balance of adult-guided activities and those that children select helps them gain confidence and independence. They help to tidy up and take responsibilities seriously. Staff check that children try everything that is planned and intervene appropriately to guide their learning. Leadership is good. All staff work effectively, making sure every child has the help they need to succeed. The outside area is particularly popular with children but this space is underdeveloped.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rate of pupils' progress in order to raise standards in English, mathematics and, more particularly, science where they are very low.
- Improve teaching, especially in Years 3 to 6, so that teachers have higher expectations of all pupils, particularly the more able.
- Ensure teachers have the assessment information they need to build on pupils' previous achievement and learning successfully.
- Improve leadership and management, and ensure leaders at all levels evaluate the school's work more rigorously and drive school improvement more urgently.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Overall progress and achievement are inadequate. From well below expected levels at the start of the Foundation Stage, standards rise to broadly average at the end of Year 2 and then fall to well below average in Year 6. In Year 2, standards are average in reading and mathematics but below average in writing. Teachers have little effective guidance about how much progress is expected of pupils in each year group or how to set targets to help them make appropriate progress. The school's leaders have not checked progress closely enough to identify pupils who might be falling behind in order to provide them with extra support quickly or to make sure the more able are challenged appropriately. As a consequence, the pupils' achievement falters and progress declines except for those with specific learning needs. Standards in the present Year 6 are below average in mathematics and well below average in English and science. Assessment information is still not good enough to support pupils' sustained progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils say they like school because they feel safe and secure. They enjoy most lessons but some say they could do harder work. Attendance levels are satisfactory. Behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly and polite and willingly help others. They are confident that they can share any problems that arise, for example with Year 6 'buddies' and that the rare incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly. Pupils have a

good understanding of the need to stay healthy. Many select healthy lunches and enjoy the school's numerous sports activities. They understand the dangers of the misuse of drugs and know how to stay safe. Pupils are aware of their social responsibilities and show responsibility by helping around the school. School council members organise playground activities and older children in the Nursery help younger ones get dressed. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the wider community by supporting charities and attending local community events. Many visits and visitors extend pupils' understanding of the world of work and leisure. While pupils' personal skills are good, their below average basic skills mean their preparation for the next stage of their education is inadequate.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

Teaching overall is inadequate because teachers' expectations are not high enough. Although some lessons are satisfactory or even good, the work in pupils' books shows that pupils of all abilities frequently do the same work and repeat work they have done in previous classes. This is particularly apparent in the Years 3 to 6 mixed age classes, where the lack of information to support accurate planning is particularly an issue. In the good lessons, planning takes good account of pupils' needs. Presentations are stimulating and interactive; whiteboards are used effectively to present visual material that captures pupils' interest. Teachers engage pupils in discussions that help them understand things more clearly. Teaching assistants are used well to encourage all pupils to participate fully. Inadequate teaching is often the result of teachers having insufficient knowledge of pupils' prior learning and achievement. Overuse of worksheets also results in teachers not always matching learning to pupils' needs adequately. Despite pupils' mixed experiences, relationships between pupils and staff are good and pupils always try their best. Pupils' written work is sometimes poorly presented, again reflecting teachers' low expectations.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 4**

While the basic curriculum meets statutory requirements, its planning does not take into account the needs of pupils different abilities sufficiently. Whilst work is planned using several suitable commercial schemes, aimed at specific year groups, the school fails to check that pupils in these classes do not repeat work that is new to others in the class. Work to improve pupils' writing, an issue in the previous report, has had insufficient impact on standards because progress has not been monitored closely. Provision for science still does not challenge more able pupils enough in their investigation skills. The school has addressed the shortcomings identified in the previous report, in art and design, physical education and design and technology, through use of specialists who provide specific skills. Opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology are satisfactory. A good programme for personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal development. Visits, visitors and out of school activities, particularly in sport and art, add to pupils' enjoyment and give them ample opportunities to develop their skills.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 4

Pastoral care arrangements are good. Pupils feel that staff will help them if they are worried or upset. Any problems that arise are dealt with appropriately. Child protection, health and safety and safeguarding procedures are all secure. Pupils who have specific needs are supported sensitively and external agencies are contacted where necessary. Pupils are supported well when they first start school and those in Year 6 feel ready for the move to secondary school. Academic guidance is inadequate. The school does not have an accurate overview of pupils' achievement and does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance to improve their work. In some classes pupils have targets, for example in literacy, but these do not necessarily relate accurately to pupils' attainment and teachers rarely refer to these targets in their marking. While practice in one or two classes is good, marking generally is not good enough to show pupils how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 4

The lack of skill and expertise of leaders and managers in evaluating the school's performance and in taking prompt remedial action when necessary has resulted in pupils' inadequate progress by the end of Year 6. The school was very slow to respond to the issues raised in the previous report and, in some areas, the action taken has not had any sustained impact. For example, standards did rise in science but fell again dramatically in 2007. Governors have not questioned or challenged the information provided by the headteacher regarding standards and other aspects of the school's work. The school has had a surplus budget for some time but pupils have continued to underachieve. The new chair of governors is aware of these weaknesses and has drawn up an action plan to start to address matters. Much needs to be done to eradicate weaknesses in teaching, halt the decline in pupils' progress and eliminate the legacy of underachievement, but the lack of leadership skills of senior managers and subject leaders limit the school in its ability to bring about the changes needed, without additional support.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 March 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Brownhills West Primary School, Shannon Drive, Brownhills, Walsall, WS8 7LA I am writing to tell you what we found out when we came to your school recently to look at the work you do and to talk to you and your teachers. Thank you for making us welcome and for being so friendly and polite. We enjoyed talking to you about school, the good friends you make and the interesting activities you do. The school is certainly a friendly place and you work and play together happily. You behave well, look after each other and do kind things like raise money for charities. You told us that you feel safe at school and that staff help you if you have problems. You know how to look after yourselves and understand the need for regular exercise and eating healthy foods. You told us that you are happy in school. We could see that from watching you run about excitedly in the playground. I really loved watching the children in the youngest classes chasing bubbles in their playground. You always try to do your best and your teachers certainly work hard to try to help you to learn. While we think that there are some particularly good things about the school, we feel that it needs extra support to help you to make the best possible progress. We have asked the headteacher and the staff to do a number of things to make your school even better. We think that, in Years 3 to 6, standards could be higher in English, mathematics and science, so we have asked teachers to help you to make faster progress. To help with this, more lessons should be really interesting and everyone should aim to produce high quality work. We have also asked the school's leaders to check very carefully how well you are doing, so that they plan the right work for you to do next. We want the school to improve as quickly as it can so your school leaders will get help to do this. Once these improvements have been made, you will be able to do much better. There are things you could do to help too; for example you could ask for harder work if you are finding things too easy and ask teachers to give you targets that will help you achieve more. I hope that you will all do well in the future. Yours sincerely Rajinder Harrison Lead inspector

**Annex B**



13 March 2008

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Brownhills West Primary School, Shannon Drive, Brownhills, Walsall, WS8 7LA**

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There are things you could do to help too; for example you could ask for harder work if you are finding things too easy and ask teachers to give you targets that will help you achieve more. I hope that you will all do well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison  
Lead inspector