

Hurst Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103825
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	317389
Inspection dates	28–29 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Ingram
Headteacher	Kevin King
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2005
School address	Paul Street Hurst Hill Coseley Bilston WV14 9AJ
Telephone number	01384 818845
Fax number	01384 818846

Age group	4–11
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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 drawing its pupils from the immediate area which consists of mixed housing. Almost all pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is below the national average as is the proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Overall, children's attainment when they begin school is broadly what is expected for their age. The school provides before and after school care for the families needing it. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

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.

Hurst Hill is now a satisfactory and improving school because of the successful work of the headteacher and the senior leadership team. Achievement is now satisfactory. A menu of excellent assessment processes, the setting of rigorous curricular targets, and thoughtful marking and feedback have all contributed to boosting pupils' achievement. Underpinning this success is the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Approximately a third of the teaching is of consistently good quality, with the remainder broadly satisfactory. The teachers provide relevant experiences that not only capture the pupils' imagination but also clearly motivate them to strive harder for success.

Teachers have a clear understanding and an appropriate expectation of the standards that their pupils' should reach. They use an excellent range of systems for measuring and tracking pupils' progress and attainment, identifying quickly any underachievement. This has had a positive impact on raising standards in mathematics and science, but has not yet had the desired effect of increasing the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing. The pupils do not attain or achieve as well as they could in writing because there are insufficient opportunities for them to write at length.

Pupils enjoy school, attend well and work diligently. Relationships in all classrooms are positive and older pupils, in particular, cooperate well with each other. In lessons, they are often asked to work with a partner and manage this well. The pupils are actively involved in their own learning and are able to reflect on what they have learned.

Pupils benefit from good support and guidance for their personal and academic development, which is reflected in their good attitudes and behaviour. Well conceived procedures and policies for dealing with racism and bullying enable pupils to feel safe and confident that there are adults to whom they can turn if they need help. Pupils enjoy the part they play in helping others, as for example when acting as playground leaders. They have a strong sense of right and wrong which they demonstrate through their good behaviour in and out of lessons. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, cultural education, are good. However, opportunities for them to learn about the multicultural nature of British society are less evident in the curriculum and through displays around the school.

The curriculum supports pupils' personal and academic development satisfactorily. There is an appropriate focus on basic skills across the school. A comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education are central to the curriculum and promote well the pupils' emotional and physical health. The school works hard to ensure the curriculum is appropriate to both girls and boys.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. By the end of their Reception year they have achieved well to reach levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. Particularly good gains are made, from lower than expected starting points, in mathematical, physical and creative development together with knowledge and understanding of the world. A strength of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is teamwork, where the children receive effective help

from adults who engage them in conversation to promote their speaking and listening skills. Adults are skilful in extending children's imaginative role play, as evidenced in the café where children learnt the importance of hygiene, and that print carries meaning when they created menus and wrote down customers' orders. The staff know the children and their families well and use this knowledge to create an atmosphere in which children feel secure. There is a good balance between times when children can choose what they do and when they sit together with an adult to learn as a group. Smooth and effective induction procedures enable children to settle quickly in to the day to day life of the school. From their earliest days in school, children are guided to understand right from wrong, in so doing they quickly form valuable relationships.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, particularly for higher ability pupils in writing.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' good start in the Foundation Stage extends into Years 1 and 2. Teacher assessments for seven year olds for 2007 showed that pupils achieved well to gain above average levels of performance for their age. Satisfactory progress is made throughout Years 3 to 6. Attainment for pupils currently in Year 6 is average in English and mathematics and above average in science. This marks an improvement on test results for 2007 which, although better than the previous year, showed standards in English to be well below average. Such ongoing improvements result from better monitoring of pupil progress, well focused intervention strategies, and an ongoing development in the quality of teaching and learning. Whilst well on the way to eradicating the legacy of underachievement, a higher proportion of potentially higher attaining eleven year olds now need to gain higher levels of performance in statutory assessments. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have good attitudes towards learning, listen carefully, and participate well in lessons. They get along together well, follow school routines, and move around in a sensible and safe manner. Pupils demonstrate their good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle by making good meal and snack choices – 'because it refreshes your brain' – and by keenly participating in extra sporting activities and interests. They produce a good amount of well presented work and understand why it is important to have homework. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and local community, enthusiastically supporting a number of national charities including the Blue Peter Bring and Buy Sale and Red Nose Day. Members of the school council are articulate and put forward their ideas with confidence. Pupils develop skills and personal qualities that will equip them appropriately as caring and responsible citizens and, eventually, for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The best teaching is characterised by lessons that have a clear and precise focus, which teachers effectively share with pupils. As a result, pupils are very clear about what they have to do and what they are aiming to achieve. The pace of learning in these lessons ensures pupils made good progress whilst displaying good knowledge and understanding of their work. Teachers make effective use of questions to develop pupils' thinking and extend their learning. Particularly effective use is made of recently acquired interactive whiteboards as a visual stimulus to enliven learning and motivate pupils. Less effective teaching gives insufficient time for pupils to consider or prepare their responses by talking to a partner, and teachers' questions do not always review or consolidate the main learning in the lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is well planned and appropriately balanced. It offers pupils a broad range of learning experiences. In the Reception class, the curriculum enables children to learn from a judicious mixture of independent, firsthand experiences and adult led activities. Curriculum support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, whilst improving, is currently satisfactory. Good use is made of visitors and visits out of school and good liaison with the local secondary school provides pupils with access to specialist teaching in mathematics and science. There is a good range of well attended extra-curricular sports clubs, although opportunities for other activities are currently limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school looks after its pupils well and parents are positive about the care shown to their children. Pupils feel safe and are confident that teachers will respond quickly to any problems. Child protection and other arrangements to safeguard learners, such as risk assessments, are secure. Effective procedures help pupils settle quickly whenever they start school and help those in Year 6 prepare for their next stage of education. Pupils with learning difficulties are given such support that enables them to make the same progress as other pupils. Good links are maintained with other services to support the well-being of vulnerable pupils. Academic guidance is good, including assessment and marking which have improved significantly. Pupils know their targets for the next stage of learning. As one pupil commented, 'It's good to know what you're aiming for. It helps you improve more quickly.' Such factors help improve pupil progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Urgent and unwavering action by a new leadership team has ensured that the school has successfully tackled all of the issues from the previous inspection. As a result, it is now well placed to make further gains. The most successful and dramatic change has been in the improved leadership of the school at all levels. Effective monitoring has enabled the school to evaluate

its work and to identify areas where significant improvement is required. Senior managers and leaders of subjects regularly observe their colleagues and give feedback on the quality of teaching. Although the school improvement plan covers areas for development well, it is over ambitious in what can realistically be covered in one year. Governors are actively involved in school through the school improvement committee and have an accurate understanding of the challenges facing the school.

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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?	2
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	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

29 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hurst Hill Primary School, Dudley WV14 9AJ.

Thank you very much for being so welcoming during our recent visit to your school.

As you may know, I have been visiting your school each term to check on how well it is doing. The school has improved considerably since its previous inspection. Your headteacher, the deputy and governors are making sure that you are now taught well. As a result, your progress in lessons is getting better.

You behave well and you are kind and considerate to each other. You listen carefully to what your teachers have to tell you and try hard to do your best. It was good to see that some of you are involved in school life, for example by taking on extra responsibilities such as the school council. We were interested to hear about your plans for the future.

We have made some suggestions to help your school become even better. The improvements you have made in your work in mathematics and science need to extend to English, especially your writing. We have asked all of your teachers to try to make all of their lessons as exciting and interesting as they possibly can.

Your teachers, governors and other staff have worked extremely hard to improve things for you. You have also helped by making sure you know your targets. I would like you to continue to help the school improve by making sure your work is the very best it can be. I am confident that your school will continue to do well.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wordsworth Her Majesty's Inspector



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Her Majesty's Inspector