

Hawbush Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103820
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	355469
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Kath Campbell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Parkes
Headteacher	Alison Pell
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed seven teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, pupils and a local authority representative. They also spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including teachers' planning, information about pupils' progress, child protection and safeguarding procedures. They looked at pupils' past and present work and scrutinised 95 questionnaires completed by pupils and 54 by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress and attainment of different groups and whether this is high enough
- the impact of strategies to improve the quality of teaching in order to help pupils make good progress, particularly in mathematics
- the extent to which assessment and tracking systems are accurate in identifying pupils who are not making enough progress, particularly girls and more-able pupils
- whether the school has been able to move forward at a fast enough pace during long-term staff absence and building work.

Information about the school

Hawbush is an average sized primary school that serves an urban area. Most pupils are from a White British background and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. Over a third of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. A similar proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has received numerous awards, including Basic Skills Mark 2, Sportsmark and the Healthy School Award, in recognition of its work. It is currently experiencing long-term staff absence and considerable disruption during major building work.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the quality of teaching, pupils' attainment in mathematics and the achievement of girls and more-able pupils.

Hawbush is a happy school, regarded highly by parents, carers and pupils. This view is aptly summed up by one parent's comment, 'Every child does matter.' The good quality pastoral care, guidance and support is a strength of the school and results in pupils' good personal development. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in improved rates of attendance. Focused support for individual families has led to a significant drop in the proportion of persistent absentees.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. In Years 1 to 6 the pattern of progress is more variable, with some accelerated learning towards the end of Key Stage 2, enabling pupils to reach broadly average levels of attainment. However, not all groups make enough progress. Pupils with special needs and/or disabilities often make the best progress because they receive the most effective individual support. By contrast, some girls and more-able pupils underachieve in mathematics and action taken by the school has not had sufficient impact on rectifying the problem. Attainment in English has shown sustained improvement in Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection, with many pupils displaying increased confidence and maturity in their writing. Although the pattern of improvement is not as clear cut in Key Stage 1, there are encouraging signs that initiatives, such as the Communication, Language and Literacy Development project, are starting to have a positive impact. By contrast, standards in mathematics are lower and progress has not been fast enough. Attainment in mathematics has declined since the last inspection. Staff absence has led to a lack of continuity in the leadership of mathematics and the subject has not had a high enough profile. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge or to work unaided.

The school has improved its systems for tracking pupils' progress since the previous inspection. Senior leaders pinpoint potential underachievement far more accurately than in the past. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching are a major barrier to success. Although there are examples of good practice, there is not enough good teaching to accelerate pupils' progress at the rate needed to raise attainment. In less successful lessons, teachers do not ask enough of pupils, particularly girls and more-able pupils, and do not use marking and assessment well enough to show pupils the next steps in their learning. The curriculum is satisfactory with notable strengths in the opportunities to

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enhance and enrich pupils' enjoyment of learning. However, opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects are not sufficiently well developed.

The headteacher has provided stability during a period of considerable disruption. Despite its difficulties the school has managed to make satisfactory progress in rectifying weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The local authority has provided effective support, with the introduction of a temporary senior member of staff. This has helped the school to get back on track. Leaders and managers at all levels are keen to improve their school. They have an accurate view of what needs to be done but are over-generous in their view of several aspects, most notably, the quality of teaching and learning. The governing body is supportive and knowledgeable but is not fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. The role of subject leaders, although satisfactory, has not been fully effective during periods of staff turbulence, because they have not had the time to carry out the full range of monitoring and evaluation activities. Greater stability, a stronger leadership structure and more effective tracking systems have ensured that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve achievement in mathematics throughout the school by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to practical, investigative work
 - providing greater challenge in order to improve pupils' problem-solving and skills in independent working.
- Ensure teaching is consistently good or better throughout the school by:
 - making better use of assessment information to provide work that accurately matches individual pupils' needs and abilities
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in order to eliminate the underachievement of girls and more-able pupils
 - ensuring marking helps pupils to know how to improve their work
 - providing greater opportunities for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects.
- Improve the rigour of monitoring and evaluation of leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, by:
 - strengthening the role of middle managers
 - developing a monitoring structure that enables leaders and governors to measure the impact of initiatives on pupils' learning with greater accuracy.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

When they start in the Nursery class, children's skills and knowledge are well below those expected for their age. An increasingly strong focus on the development of literacy skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides a secure framework for improvement. Accurately targeted support in Key Stages 1 and 2 is also starting to address

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underachievement. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in literacy is rising because the school has a far more consistent approach towards the teaching of English than in the past. However, this is only part of the picture. Not all teaching provides a strong enough challenge to ensure that all pupils attain in line with their capabilities, particularly in mathematics. Far too often, pupils of different abilities are asked to do the same work at the same level. As a result, more-able pupils underachieve. Girls do not always receive the same level of support as boys and they sometimes make slower progress. In some lessons, teachers cater well for the needs of individual pupils. A good example of this was seen in a Year 3 science lesson where pupils of all abilities rose to the challenge of retaining complex vocabulary as they learned about the properties of rocks and soil. Well-structured activities ensured successful learning for all.

Pupils are respectful, courteous and polite. Relationships are harmonious and this contributes greatly to good behaviour in lessons and around school. Pupils undertake an impressive range of responsibilities in and beyond the school community that makes a major contribution to their good personal development. They have a very secure understanding of healthy lifestyles. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils have a secure understanding of cultural diversity and life in a multicultural society. However, weaknesses in pupils' achievement in mathematics mean that they are not adequately prepared for the challenges of secondary education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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How effective is the provision?

Although evidence of good teaching skills can be found in each key stage, the quality of teaching and learning remains too variable to improve pupils' attainment. Lessons are generally well planned so that pupils know what they are going to learn. In the best lessons, work is well matched to the needs of different abilities, ensuring successful learning. Effective teamwork of teachers and support staff makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. In less successful lessons, teachers talk for too long, leaving pupils with too little time to practise skills; work lacks challenge and teachers do not always notice that girls sit passively, making too little progress. Teaching does not always focus sufficiently on the quality of pupils' learning. Marking is weak and is not used effectively to move pupils on to the next steps.

Initiatives, such as 'Every Child a Reader', combined with targeted small group teaching, are having a positive impact on standards. The satisfactory curriculum is supported well by a good range of extra-curricular sports activities, visits and visitors greatly enhance pupils' enjoyment and personal development. The school has identified the need to increase the opportunities for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects but planning is not yet fully developed.

Pastoral care is a strong feature of provision. The learning mentor is instrumental in promoting good behaviour and the learning link worker successfully encourages regular attendance. Close liaison with families, carers and outside agencies help support potentially vulnerable pupils well. Pupils say that the preparation they receive for their transfer to secondary school enables them to approach this with confidence.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Throughout the school's refurbishment, the headteacher has managed to move the school forward, albeit at a slower pace than needed. She has created a welcoming and cohesive school which is highly regarded by parents and carers. The stability provided by long-serving staff has also had a beneficial impact during difficult times. The temporary deputy headteacher and headteacher work effectively as a team. A renewed sense of urgency to tackle underachievement, and a shared commitment towards raising overall school performance is evident. However, a lack of rigour and precision in monitoring leads to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. Middle managers do not have a clear enough overview of pupils' attainment and achievement. The school improvement

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plan identifies appropriate actions but lacks clarity about how the school will measure the impact of these on outcomes for pupils.

Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective, and that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. In many respects, the school is a strongly inclusive community but the underachievement of significant groups means that equality of opportunity is inadequate. Discrimination is tackled appropriately through, for example, the involvement of pupils with diverse groups of people within the local community and numerous partnerships with other schools where pupils come from different backgrounds. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. It ensures that pupils have an adequate understanding of other faiths and ways of life.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with particularly weak early language, literacy and numeracy skills. Many have not achieved the Early Learning Goals for children this age by the time they move into Year 1. The new Early Years Foundation Stage building has enabled children to settle and flourish within a spacious, attractive learning environment. Children feel very secure and a calm atmosphere prevails.

The high quality outdoor learning area enables children to choose freely whether to work indoors or outside. The integration of children with specific needs into the unit is impressively good and benefits the whole Early Years community. A strong emphasis on personal and social development enables children to move into Year 1 as confident, happy individuals who generally get on well together. Links with families are good, enabling parents and carers to be involved in their children's learning right from the start. Activities are exciting and motivating. During the inspection, there was a real sense of excitement as Reception and Nursery children prepared for their Diwali celebration.

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Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively as a team. Procedures for tracking progress are developing well. Occasionally, independent tasks do not match the needs of individual children or provide sufficient challenge. The recent focus on ensuring that children acquire a secure understanding of letters and sounds is starting to have a positive impact on attainment. Leadership and management are satisfactory with some strengths. All staff demonstrate a strong shared commitment to moving forward.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive in their feedback and overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They all say that the school keeps their children safe. They consider the quality of teaching to be good and feel that the school takes appropriate steps to help them support their children's learning. All parents and carers who responded agree that the school is well led and managed and overall are happy with their children's experience of school.

There were very few negative comments. However, a very small number of parents expressed concerns about the school's ability to deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and the extent to which the school acts upon the suggestions and concerns of parents and carers. The inspection team followed up comments and any concerns raised. Inspection findings support parents' view that the headteacher has provided strong leadership through difficult times. During the inspection the inspection team found that the school dealt very effectively with pupils who were potentially disruptive. Behaviour in lessons and around school was found to be good. The inspection found the quality of information for families about their children's progress to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hawbush Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 208 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	65	18	33	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	57	23	43	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	57	22	41	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	46	28	52	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	46	29	54	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	52	26	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	44	27	50	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	43	29	54	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	39	32	59	0	0	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	52	23	43	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	37	31	57	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	48	26	48	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	56	24	44	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



8 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hawbush Primary School, Brierley Hill, DY5 3NH

Thank you all for looking after us so well when we visited your school. We found you polite, friendly and helpful. Lots of you have happy, smiling faces. It was good to see how much you enjoy school and how well you get on with all the grown-ups that teach and look after you. You told us that everyone really cares about you and you know you can talk to someone when you are unhappy. Your school keeps you safe and you have many chances to eat healthily and do exercise. We really liked the new building for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. We know how much the rest of you are looking forward to moving into your new classrooms.

However, some of you are not making fast enough progress, particularly the girls and those of you that find learning easier. Many of you could do much better work than you do at the moment, especially in numeracy, but some of the teaching you receive is not good enough. That is why we have given your school a 'notice to improve'. This means that your school will be visited again by inspectors during the next year or so to check that your school is improving and that you are making enough progress.

We have asked those in charge to help you to practise your writing and numeracy skills as much as possible in other subjects and to give some of your teachers time to check on how well all of you are doing.

You will all want to help the school to improve by coming to school every day and always trying to do your best. We are so pleased to see that your attendance is getting better. Well done!

My best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

Kath Campbell
Lead inspector

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