

# Birds Bush Primary School

Birds Bush Road, Belgrave, Tamworth, B77 2NE

## Inspection dates

9–10 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Not enough teaching is good or better.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils could achieve in lessons are not always high enough.
- Too many pupils do not make enough progress, especially in mathematics.
- Work is not always challenging enough for the most able pupils.
- Members of the senior leadership team and teachers who lead subjects or other aspects of the school's work do not do enough to help the headteacher improve it.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work are good. They have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe.
- The school ensures that pupils are well looked after and kept safe.
- The school has successfully improved the teaching of writing. Pupils make good progress in this subject.
- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception.
- The school's actions to improve the teaching of mathematics are working. Standards have improved this year.
- The headteacher provides strong and supportive leadership.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes during 22 lesson observations and a series of short visits. The headteacher joined inspectors on a number of these visits.
- Meetings were held with senior staff, two members of the governing body, teachers, pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 21 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of school documentation and data relating to teaching and learning, behaviour and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Mark Mumby, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Carter

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mary Maybank

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national average. The proportion who are supported through school action is slightly above the national average.
- Virtually all pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after children, is similar to the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers and teaching assistants:
  - make effective use of assessment to match teaching to pupils' individual needs
  - have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in a lesson
  - use questioning during lessons to assess learning and then adapt pupils' work so that it remains challenging throughout each lesson and enables all pupils, especially the most capable ones, to learn quickly.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that all teachers who have a leadership role play a full part in planning improvements, implementing changes and evaluating the impact of their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The progress pupils make from Year 1 to Year 6 is slower than in Nursery and Reception. It is better in writing than in reading or mathematics. In mathematics, fewer pupils make better progress than that expected for their age compared to pupils in other schools.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding typical for children of their age. They learn quickly and develop their independence well. By the time they reach Year 1 they are working at above-average levels. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.
- By the end of Year 6, standards in English are average. In mathematics, they dipped in 2011 but rose significantly in 2012 to be close to the national average.
- The attainment of pupils who have difficulty with their learning and who receive additional help is similar to other pupils in writing and mathematics; in reading it is lower. The school is effectively narrowing the gap between the attainment of these pupils and others.
- The good support which the school provides for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium helps them to make good progress.
- Pupils develop appropriate reading skills. They learn about the sounds that letters make and use these to read unfamiliar words. They read a range of books. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about different authors and can explain why they like particular styles of writing.
- Pupils have a good understanding about different types of writing. For example, older pupils can explain clearly the style of writing they need to use when writing a report.
- Many pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge. For example, younger pupils do not always understand what they are doing when following a method they have been taught to subtract two numbers. Older pupils do not always have a good understanding of the value of different digits in numbers up to 100. Pupils' skills to apply their mathematical understanding to solve real-life problems are under-developed.
- Pupils' work is mostly well presented. However, a few older pupils have not developed a neat style of joined handwriting.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. In Nursery and Reception it is good. In Years 1 to 6 it requires improvement.
- In Nursery and Reception, teachers have a good understanding of the children's needs. They use this to plan purposeful learning activities both indoors and outside. They check on children's learning through the day and guide them well in their activities to improve their understanding.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to learn about language. There are written words for them to see, teachers model speaking well and children are encouraged to talk. There are not as many opportunities planned for children to develop their mathematical skills.

- Older pupils benefit from well-organised classrooms. Teachers have established clear routines and have high expectations of behaviour. This ensures that there is a good atmosphere in which to learn.
- Lessons are not always planned well enough to meet the needs of the different pupils in the class. Frequently, pupils spend too long completing tasks which they can do easily and are not provided with more challenging work to extend their learning. For example, once pupils have learnt a strategy to carry out a calculation in mathematics, they are rarely challenged to apply this strategy to solve real-life problems.
- Expectations of what pupils are capable of are not always high enough. For example, all pupils in a Year 5/6 class were given the same text to read and the same questions to answer. The least-able pupils made the most rapid progress because they were supported by the teacher. However, more-able pupils learnt very little because they merely provided simplistic answers to complete the task.
- Teachers do not consistently check learning during lessons. Consequently, some pupils complete only small amounts of work because they get stuck. More able pupils frequently complete tasks quickly but they are not provided with more challenging work to extend their learning.
- Pupils who receive additional help because they have difficulties with their learning or have fallen behind mostly make good progress because of the high level of adult support they receive, mainly from teaching assistants.
- Pupils' receive clear guidance about how well they have done and how they can improve their work through teachers' marking. This helps pupils to learn more quickly.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and respond well to the well-established routines in school. They behave well in lessons and are respectful to each other and to staff.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast club behave well and are cared for well.
- The school has good systems to check on pupils' behaviour. Its records, along with the views of pupils, parents and staff confirm that good behaviour is the norm.
- The school has implemented effective systems to manage behaviour. Pupils are motivated by 'golden time' and individual merits. The school has been particularly successful in managing the behaviour of the few pupils with challenging behaviour. As a result, they work and play harmoniously alongside other pupils.
- Pupils speak highly of their 'Rights Respecting School' which has helped to engender good relationships between pupils and respect for all members of the school community.
- The school has a clear anti-bullying policy aligned to the 'Rights Respecting School' philosophy. As a result, incidents of bullying have reduced since the last inspection and are rare. Homophobic bullying is very rare. Only one incident of racial bullying was reported last year.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe during assemblies and in personal, social and health

education lessons. They have a good awareness of the risks associated with the use of the internet, railways, roads and gang culture.

- The school has worked very successfully with parents and carers to improve attendance. It is currently above average.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The headteacher provides clear leadership to the staff team. She is focused on ensuring that teaching improves to be at least good and holds the staff to account for their work well. Other leaders are less effective and so the school relies too heavily on the headteacher. The headteacher has identified the problem with leadership and has changed the responsibilities of other leaders to make better use of their expertise.
- Recent changes to the leadership structure mean that some staff have recently taken on new roles. Consequently, senior leaders and teachers in charge of subjects are not fully effective in helping the headteacher to lead the school. The role of the deputy headteacher is not clear enough.
- The teacher in charge of mathematics has only been responsible for this subject for a year. He has undertaken training to help him in his role and has put his skills to good use in planning what should be taught when. He has also helped other teachers when planning their lessons. However, he has not visited other teachers' lessons to check if the work he has done is making enough difference to pupils' learning.
- The school's leaders know what the school needs to do to improve and have proved that they can make things better. For example, work to improve the quality of pupils' writing has raised standards quickly. The prompt actions the school is taking to improve learning in mathematics are already beginning to plug gaps in pupils' knowledge and raise standards.
- The school has used its pupil premium funding well to provide additional support for those pupils who need it through a range of small group and one-to-one teaching. Consequently, these pupils are making much faster progress and are reaching standards similar to other pupils.
- The headteacher observes lessons regularly and provides feedback to teachers about their work. The school employs external consultants to help her with this. Teachers say that they find the feedback helpful and that it helps them to improve their teaching. However, the written feedback doesn't always give teachers enough information about how well their teaching is helping the pupils to learn.
- Teachers are set clear targets to improve their work. These are based on helping pupils to learn better and are linked to the standards expected of all teachers.
- The school uses a robust system, including detailed information from the observation of lessons and the progress pupils make, to decide whether or not to award pay increases to teachers.
- The local authority has assessed the school as not causing concern; it provides a medium level of support. This support has been targeted at the development of leadership, such as helping the teacher in charge of mathematics to carry out his new role.
- The school has planned its teaching around a set of themes and this works well as it keeps pupils interested in their work and lets them practise their literacy and numeracy skills in

different subjects. They have good opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in most subjects and through a range of interesting visits.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body knows what is working well in the school and what is less effective. It works well with the headteacher to plan improvement work and ensures that it receives clear information from the school about how effective any changes are in improving the school. It holds the headteacher to account for her work through rigorous performance management. It monitors arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils well; consequently, the school's systems meet statutory requirements. It ensures that money is spent appropriately.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124170
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402235

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

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	346
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve O'Brien
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Barnes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01827 475170
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