

The Bromley-Pensnett Primary School

Bromley, Pensnett, Brierley Hill, DY5 4PJ

Inspection dates 30–31 October 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although leaders and staff successfully raised pupils' achievement and improved teaching after the last inspection, staff absences and changes in the last six months have meant that the improvements have not been sustained.
- As a result, there is not enough good or outstanding teaching to promote good achievement.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough, and tasks are sometimes too easy for pupils.
- Teachers do not always use stimulating resources to fire pupils' enthusiasm and promote good learning.
- Learning does not always move on at a quick enough pace.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is not as good as in reading and mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Staff provide very good support and guidance for pupils who have behavioural and emotional difficulties.
- Pupils feel safe and very well cared for, and their attendance has improved.
- Good partnerships have been established with parents and carers.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons or part lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, a representative from the local authority, governors, parents and pupils.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to the online survey (Parent View) and the results of the school's own parental survey.
- School policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' plans, pupils' work and school improvement planning were examined.
- The inspectors analysed 32 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Taylor

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- A well-above-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has suffered from long-term staff absence, and currently has a number of temporary teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to at least good by making sure that:
 - lessons always have a sharp learning focus and pupils know what they are expected to learn
 - teachers always set suitably demanding tasks for pupils that are not too easy
 - teachers select and use good-quality resources to promote successful learning
 - pupils learn at a consistently good pace.
- Raise pupils' achievement in writing to at least the levels seen in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6, by:
 - spreading the best practice in the teaching of writing across the school
 - implementing a successful programme for the teaching of handwriting so that most pupils have a fluent and joined hand
 - extending opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in subjects other than English
 - celebrating pupils' writing by displaying their work attractively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- A recent decline in the quality of teaching means that pupils' progress is uneven and varies from class to class. Not enough pupils are making good progress and their achievement requires improvement.
- Children start in the Nursery with skills and understanding below the levels expected for their age. Language, communication and social skills are often particularly limited. Children make good progress because of good teaching and interesting learning activities.
- After its last inspection the school successfully raised pupils' achievement, particularly in reading and mathematics. The 2012 Year 6 test results were broadly average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. In a number of lessons seen these pupils were taught and supported well, but teaching and support are not consistently effective enough to promote good progress.
- Positive steps have been taken to raise the achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, but these are not fully effective because teaching is not consistently good.
- The more-able pupils are not always stretched enough because the work set for them in lessons is sometimes too easy.
- In the best lessons, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. This is because they have well-planned opportunities to discuss their learning and to respond to teachers' skilful questioning. More typically, opportunities are missed to develop these skills and their progress.
- Most pupils enjoy books and show positive attitudes to reading. There have been good improvements to reading in Key Stage 2. The Year 6 test results in 2012 were average, with an above-average proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. However, the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is not consistently good enough in Years 1 and 2 and attainment in reading remains below average by Year 2.
- Pupils' achievement in writing requires improvement as it trails behind reading and mathematics. Attainment in writing is below average by the end of Year 6 and very few pupils reach Level 5. Not all pupils, even in Year 5 and 6, are writing with a joined and fluent hand. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their writing skills in different subjects.
- Pupils often make good progress in mathematics lessons. They acquire a good knowledge and understanding of calculation methods. Most pupils use and apply their numeracy skills well to solve problems.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching currently varies widely. Pupils in some classes are making more progress than in others, but there is not enough good and outstanding teaching to sustain good achievement. Records of pupils' performance and the school's monitoring of teaching indicate that teaching was more effective when the school had a more stable teaching force.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough, and this means that learning activities are not always matched closely enough to their different abilities and

needs. Tasks are sometimes too easy, particularly for the more able pupils. When they are not demanding enough, pupils do not produce sufficient work and the rate of their learning slows.

- Most teachers share the purpose of the lesson with the class. Occasionally, lessons lack a sharp focus and pupils do not fully understand what they are expected to learn.
- Raising achievement in writing is an improvement priority. In a good Year 6 lesson, attractive African scenes were used to stimulate ideas for descriptive writing. Using ideas from the pupils, the teacher effectively demonstrated how to draft and create interesting and imaginative sentences. The use of adjectives, similes and metaphors was promoted well.
- Such good use of interesting resources to support writing, and learning in general, is not seen in all classes. In some lessons the teachers rely on dull worksheets rather than using interesting practical resources to promote good learning. For example, in a science lesson about materials, pupils did not have the opportunity to handle and observe a range of materials such as plastics, metal, wood or fabrics to enhance their learning.
- Displays of pupils' writing are limited, and so opportunities are missed to celebrate pupils' writing and to display good quality writing as a model to others.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They establish positive relationships with the pupils and manage them well. Pupils are encouraged to consider and support others.
- Teaching is good in Nursery and Reception. A wide range of interesting activities are provided inside and outside. There is an effective blend of adult-led activities and those that children choose themselves.
- It is also generally good or better in mathematics. In an outstanding Year 6 lesson, pupils made rapid progress in solving subtraction problems. They were inspired by the teacher's enthusiasm for mathematics and her strong expertise. Pupils responded very well to her high expectations of learning. Tasks were challenging, interesting and well suited to pupils' abilities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Parents rightly say that their children feel safe at school and are well looked after, and that the school makes sure they behave well.
 - Children in Nursery and Reception settle well into the school because of the strong relationships established with adults. They enjoy their learning and relate well to others. The few who find it difficult to behave well are given good help and guidance by staff.
 - Most pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Records of incidents show that behaviour has been typically good over time. Pupils say that behaviour is good and sometimes excellent.
 - Pupils feel safe and very well cared for at school. They said, 'Teachers are kind and helpful' and 'This is a safe and healthy school'. The care and guidance given to pupils who have behavioural and emotional difficulties is a real strength of the school.
 - Pupils show considerable care and respect for others, and a good understanding of different cultures and faiths.
 - In an exciting assembly on Halloween, pupils participated with great enthusiasm as they gained
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new knowledge about Halloween traditions. Pupils had really entered in the spirit of the theme with fantastic Halloween costumes. Behaviour was exemplary as pupils appreciated the event and reflected on celebrations and safety.

- Pupils have a clear understanding of different forms of bullying, including persistent name-calling and cyber-bullying. They know what action to take should bullying occur. The school has thorough and effective procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, including bullying. Pupils told inspectors, 'There is not much of it in this school.'
- The school has worked hard to raise attendance. The actions taken have been successful and attendance levels have risen from low to average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and staff have created a positive and welcoming atmosphere in the school. Productive partnerships with parents help them to support their children's learning.
- The senior leaders are a strong team with a track record of raising achievement, improving teaching and promoting good behaviour and attendance. Recently, their improvement drive has been hampered by staffing issues. The absence of experienced teachers has resulted in teaching being less strong.
- Subject leaders are involved in monitoring performance and improving their areas of responsibility. The leaders of English, mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage are strong practitioners who lead by example in the classroom. These key areas are led and managed well, although the initiatives to improve writing have not yet had the desired impact.
- The procedures for the monitoring and development of teaching are good. The school has made good use of local authority support and external advisers in its drive to improve. For example, both the senior staff and the external adviser observe teaching and learning and provide constructive feedback to staff.
- There are clear systems for the checking of staff performance, and good-quality training is linked to improvement priorities such as writing and teachers' individual needs. Performance management is linked well to staff responsibilities, salary and career progression.
- The wide range of subjects taught has been strengthened by good improvements to pupils' learning opportunities in reading and mathematics, and there are well-thought-out plans to improve writing. The wooded and grassed area, the 'forest school', is used well to support and extend learning. Pupils enjoy the good range of clubs and visits.
- The use of pupil premium funding has been planned well to keep Year 1 and Year 2 classes small in numbers, and to provide small group and one-to-one tuition to help this group of pupils. It has also been used for specialist music and sports coaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors support the school well and have a good understanding of its performance and the community it serves. They have a clear overview of pupils' attainment and progress and how these compare to schools nationally. Governors provide constructive challenge and hold the school to account. Through effective training and guidance, governors have a good understanding of issues such as pupil premium funding and the performance management of staff. They make sure that safeguarding procedures and practices meet current national requirements.

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

Unique reference number	103812
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	400659

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	249
Appropriate authority	Dudley
Chair	Amanda Harborne
Headteacher	Alyson Smith
Date of previous school inspection	25 May 2010
Telephone number	01384 816865
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