

# Beacon Primary School

Davis Road, Willenhall, WV12 5HA

**Inspection dates** 24–25 February 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress in English and mathematics. Basic spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in pupils' work are not always tackled early enough.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in a variety of different contexts.
- A few staff do not have the appropriate skills to help pupils who are at the initial stages of learning to read. This limits some pupils' progress.
- The leaders are at the early stages of embedding reading in all subjects. Consequently, pupils have not developed more advanced reading skills, such as predicting, skimming and scanning, well enough.
- Teaching has not been good enough across subjects or year groups to ensure good achievement over time. Teachers do not always deploy the teaching assistants effectively to help pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not always move pupils on quickly enough once they have understood a concept.
- The outdoor areas in the early years provision are not used well enough. Consequently, children do not have enough opportunities to extend their imagination and explore their ideas there.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, together with the newly established leadership team and governors, have made rapid improvements, particularly in the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils' progress is accelerating.
- Pupils are eager to learn and behaviour is good. They feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It motivates pupils and helps them to enjoy learning.
- New members of the governing body carry out their roles and responsibilities well. They keep close checks on the school's work and diligently hold leaders to account.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 25 lessons. Six were undertaken jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed an assembly.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally at break and lunch times. They met formally with two groups of pupils and listened to them read. They looked at pupils' work in their books.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, a representative from the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including the school's evaluation of its own performance, minutes of governing body meetings and documentation relating to safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors took into account the 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's own survey of parents. They also spoke to parents at the start of the day. Responses returned by staff were also considered.

## Inspection team

Sharona Semlali, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

Lucy Maughan

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or those looked after by the local authority, is well above the national average.
- Around one in five pupils is disabled or has special educational needs. This is above average.
- The early years provision includes a morning and an afternoon Nursery which children attend part time. Also, there are two full-time Reception classes.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school has had three headteachers since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up his position in April 2014. The new leadership team has been restructured since September 2014. There have been significant changes to the membership of the governing body.
- A significant number of staff left the school and were replaced.
- The school was supported by a National Leader in Education.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
  - teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning
  - teachers move pupils' learning on quickly once pupils have understood a concept, particularly the most able.
- Raise standards in mathematics and English by ensuring that:
  - teachers identify and address basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar at an early stage
  - all staff have the necessary skills to support pupils who are at the early stages of reading
  - developing pupils' advanced reading skills, such as predicting, skimming and deduction, so that they can understand the implications of the texts that they read
  - pupils have opportunities to use their reading skills in different subjects
  - pupils practise applying their mathematical skills in a variety of contexts so that they have a better understanding of the importance of mathematics in everyday life.
- Make better use of the outdoor provision in the early years to extend and consolidate children's learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good because the determined and clear-sighted drive of the senior leaders has led to recent rapid improvements in teaching and learning. When the headteacher took up his post, he quickly took the necessary actions to improve the quality of teaching rapidly and halt the school's decline. As a result, pupils' progress has accelerated.
- The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership and has established clear plans and systems that have been instrumental in driving the school forward. The school's evaluation of its own performance is thorough and accurate. The headteacher has the full support of staff for the changes being implemented. All recognise that there is still more to be done to raise standards.
- The school receives effective support from local authority advisers. They monitor the school's work regularly and work closely with school leaders and governors to maintain the pace of improvement.
- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders work together to undertake detailed checks on the quality of teaching. All teaching and non-teaching staff have challenging targets related to pupils' progress and the national Teachers' Standards. Weaknesses in teaching are being addressed rigorously. Staff receive a wide range of training that is matched well to their needs.
- The school used to work closely with a National Leader of Education who provided effective support, such as coaching and team teaching for teachers. Regular observations by all leaders clearly identify what needs to improve. Teaching in mathematics and writing has improved as a result.
- Senior leaders review all pupils' performance regularly. They are very quick to put support in place for those who are not making the desired progress. They then check the impact of this support closely.
- School leaders recognise that there is still a legacy of underachievement that needs addressing. This shows the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils.
- The school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. For example, it provides pupils with a new kit for physical education so that all of them can participate in these lessons.
- Governors and senior leaders keep close checks on the spending and impact of the pupil premium funding. It is used effectively to ensure that eligible pupils receive the correct support when needed. This enables them to participate in all of the extra activities provided by the school. The breakfast club is subsidised so that they can attend and have a healthy start to the school day.
- The sport funding is successfully helping more and more pupils to participate in a wider range of competitions in, and beyond, the borough. Pupils are winning more prestigious awards. Younger children are learning to work in teams and take turns. Individual sessions are helping others to become more confident and address their health issues. More girls are taking part in sporting activities outside of lessons.
- The new curriculum is broad and balanced. It promotes British values well. This is evident by pupils' behaviour and respect for each other. The school is preparing them well for life in modern Britain. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is integrated effectively into the curriculum, particularly cultural awareness and social skills.
- Activities beyond the school day and classroom provide pupils with experiences that enhance learning and accelerate their progress. Even though reading is promoted increasingly well throughout the school, it is not yet embedded in all subjects. As a result, pupils' advanced reading skills, such as skimming, scanning and predicting, are not yet developed well enough. Pupils' understanding of the meaning beyond the text is limited.
- Senior leaders are keen to establish and foster relationships with parents. Homework projects and workshops for parents are effective in encouraging parents to become more involved in their children's learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - An experienced and knowledgeable chairperson leads the governing body effectively. Governors have undertaken an audit of their skills which helps them to use each other's knowledge and experience to best effect to move the school forward. They have had effective training relevant to their roles.
  - All governors visit the school regularly to check on their areas of responsibility and meet with leaders. Detailed and accurate reports from the headteacher and other leaders help to keep them well informed about the school's work. Governors are not reliant on the information given to them by leaders, but also seek external validation and meet with pupils through the school council. They keep close checks on the quality of teaching. All of this enables them to have an in depth knowledge of the school's strengths

- and areas for development. They provide a good balance of support and challenge for school leaders.
- Challenging targets for the headteacher are in place. Governors know how the school rewards good teaching and tackles underperformance, as they make the final decision in the process. They are able to interpret the school's data. They know what the strengths and weaknesses of teaching are in the different year groups.
  - The governing body ensures that all aspects of safeguarding meet statutory requirements so that pupils are kept safe.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are keen and have a good attitude to learning. They respond well to their teachers and other adults in the school.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in and around the school. They hold doors open politely for adults and each other. There is a good atmosphere of mutual care and respect between staff and pupils.
- Behaviour logs are used effectively to identify patterns of behaviour. Pupils are clear about the school's behaviour policy. Detailed follow up and support systems are in place for the few pupils who are excluded from school.
- Pupils show respect and pride for the school's environment. It is free from litter and very tidy. Coats are always picked up if they fall on the floor. All pupils adhere to the school's uniform policy, unless it is their birthday when they do not have to wear it. The school council negotiated this privilege with school leaders.
- Pupils take their duties seriously, such as being school council representatives, class buddies and lunchtime monitors. All of this is helping them to gain a sense of responsibility. It helps to prepare them effectively for moving on to secondary school.
- On the small number of occasions when learning does not fully capture their attention, a few pupils lose interest and can become restless.
- Attendance is broadly average and is improving.
- The breakfast club promotes good behaviour. Pupils enjoy the experience. It helps to develop their social skills as they eat breakfast together.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Risk assessments and policies in relation to keeping pupils safe are up to date and reviewed regularly. Members of the governing body undertake regular health and safety checks. All staff training in child protection is up to date.
- Pupils say they feel safe in all parts of the school. They feel staff take good care of them. They are confident about talking to staff if they have any worries at school. Pupils have a secure understanding of what is meant by bullying. They say that bullying is rare and, when it does happen, it is dealt with effectively.
- Pupils know about the importance of road safety, fire safety and keeping themselves safe when using the internet. This is a result of the actions taken by the school.
- Parents and staff agree with the inspection findings that pupils are kept safe.

## The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, although it is getting better quickly, it has not been good enough over time for pupils to make consistently good progress.
- When pupils have mastered a new concept, teachers do not always adjust their planning to extend pupils' learning further. This is often the case for the most-able pupils. As a result, they are not always challenged appropriately and sometimes have to sit and wait patiently until others are ready to move on.
- Teachers do not ensure that additional adults in the classroom are always supporting pupils' learning well enough. For example, it is not always clear what the role of the teaching assistant is when teachers are talking to the whole class.
- The quality of the teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) varies for those pupils who are at the early stages of reading. Where it is taught well, teachers say the sounds accurately. They deal with any errors made by pupils quickly. Not enough staff have the skills to do this. As a result, this limits pupils'

progress in developing early reading skills.

- Leaders have begun to transform the quality of teaching through carefully selected new appointments and by regularly checking the quality of teaching to ensure that none falls short of the mark. As a result, learning is now good or better in more classes than in previous years, and this is leading to pupils making faster progress throughout the school.
- Where teaching is good, teachers generate great enthusiasm for learning and form very productive relationships with their class. As a result, pupils become interested in the lesson and work with energy and eagerness.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving quickly. Teachers ensure that pupils acquire a firm foundation of basic skills in this subject. There is a strong emphasis on getting pupils to understand how to work out number calculations mentally. Teachers provide a range of resources to support pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are making good progress and developing a secure understanding of mathematical vocabulary. However, pupils do not always use and apply these skills in other and more complex situations.
- Work in pupils' books in all year groups shows that pupils are making faster progress in writing than in the past. They have lots of opportunities to write in other subjects. This is helping to increase the quantity and quality of writing. However, teachers do not always identify and address quickly enough some of the basic errors pupils make in spelling, punctuation and grammar. As a result, teachers are still tackling these mistakes in the upper part of the school.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress as they move through the school. Attainment and progress at Key Stage 2 have declined in recent years. In the national assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils' attainment was below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The actions taken by school leaders to halt this decline and to tackle the legacy of underachievement are making a significant difference. Inspection evidence, supported by robust assessment information provided by the school, indicates that pupils are now making better progress than in the recent past as a result of better teaching and more focused support for pupils identified as underachieving.
- Current Year 6 pupils are on track to be closer to the national averages for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Even though too few pupils reached the higher levels in English and mathematics in 2014, the provision for the most-able pupils has improved. Teachers plan more challenges for them. As a result, an increased proportion of pupils are now on track to achieve Level 5 in these subjects. However, there are times when they understand what is being taught and teachers do not extend their learning quickly enough.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are now making good progress. This is because school leaders have put more rigorous procedures in place to identify pupils' needs accurately from an early stage. These pupils are now being assessed more effectively and benefit from focused quality support and improved links with external agencies.
- The attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school in the different year groups are rapidly closing. Disadvantaged pupils currently make similar progress, and occasionally better progress, to others in the school. In a few cases, disadvantaged pupils are out performing others.
- In the 2014 national tests, the gaps were very narrow in writing when disadvantaged pupils were compared to others in the school, as they were only half a term behind. The gaps were slightly wider in reading and mathematics as pupils were approximately two terms behind others in the school in these subjects. The gaps were wider between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally in 2014. They were four terms behind in mathematics. They were over a year behind in reading and were just over a term behind in writing.
- The rate of progress in writing was better than others in the school and similar to others nationally in 2014. In mathematics and reading, disadvantaged pupils made less progress when compared with other pupils, both in the school and nationally.

### The early years provision

### requires improvement

- Achievement in the early years requires improvement because progress is not yet consistently good. The proportion of children on track to reach a good level of development by the end of Reception has,

however, improved compared to 2014. Children are appropriately prepared for moving into Year 1.

- Teaching over time in the early years is not yet consistently good. It is improving because of the effective support, training and guidance from external agencies and the local authority.
- Planned activities and teachers' use of assessment support pupils' learning well in the classrooms. For example, children in a Reception class were highly engaged in accurately working out the addition sums in their books. However, the outdoor areas have been overhauled recently and there are only a few activities for children to choose from or to develop their imaginative skills. As a result, children have limited opportunities to explore and extend their learning in the outdoor areas.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is good and helps to develop children's early reading skills.
- Children's attitudes to learning and behaviour are good. They are respectful of adults. Adults form positive relationships with children. Established routines help children to feel safe and secure.
- Parents appreciate the workshops and induction programmes that the school provides. These are helping them to become involved in their child's learning.
- Leadership and management are relatively new. The leaders have made major changes and improvements to the provision. They have sought support from other schools. Leaders have an accurate and clear overview of the strengths and areas for development within the setting. It is too soon to see the impact of all actions taken to improve children's learning.

## 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>	131580
<b>Local authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	453462

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>	332
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Trawford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Drew
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27–28 February 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01922710874
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