

# Ham Dingle Primary School

Old Ham Lane, Pedmore, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY9 0UN

## Inspection dates

6–7 February 2018

| Overall effectiveness                        | Requires improvement        |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b>                 |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b>                 |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b>                 |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Inadequate                  |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good in key stages 1 and 2. While leaders have improved the quality of teaching, some weaker teaching still remains.
- Where teaching is weaker, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. As a result, some pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Mathematics teaching does not provide a consistently high level of challenge for the most able pupils. As a result, not enough pupils achieve the higher standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- The teaching of handwriting and punctuation is not consistently precise. Consequently, pupils do not apply these skills well to longer pieces of writing.
- Leaders' checks on teaching provide effective feedback to teachers on what to improve. However, after teachers have received feedback, leaders are not consistent with the quality of follow-up support.
- The provision for children in the early years is a strength. However, some children, including the most able, do not get sufficient opportunities to apply their writing skills to short sentences.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher's tenacity has brought about significant improvements since the last inspection. Staffing has been stabilised and a range of new policies have been implemented.
- Key weaknesses in safeguarding procedures identified at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed.
- The interim executive board (IEB) provides good additional capacity because its members are knowledgeable and challenging.
- Other leaders feel empowered and have an increasingly positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Teaching of phonics and reading is effective. The culture for reading is good. As a result, pupils' attainment in reading has risen accordingly.
- Teaching in Reception is strong. Children get off to a good start and are happy. A stimulating curriculum sparks children's interest.
- Staff enjoy working in the school and feel that morale has improved. Relationships between staff and pupils are good.
- A range of thoughtful enrichment activities impact well on pupils' personal development.

## Full report

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.

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

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that it is good or better in key stages 1 and 2 by making sure that:
  - weaker teaching demonstrates sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve
  - teachers use accurate subject knowledge to develop the quality of pupils' handwriting and punctuation within longer pieces of writing
  - teaching provides a consistent level of challenge for the most able pupils in mathematics so that more pupils achieve the higher standards.
- Further improve leadership and management to address the remaining inconsistent teaching by ensuring that:
  - teachers receive precise follow-up support so that they know exactly how to improve particular aspects of their teaching
  - leaders evaluate how successfully teachers have implemented previously suggested feedback and respond accordingly.
- Further improve the quality of writing in the early years and foundation stage by ensuring that:
  - children, particularly the most able, receive high-quality opportunities to practise their writing skills in short sentences and, when appropriate, include features of narrative in their writing.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher has provided determined and purposeful leadership since her appointment in January 2016. She has tackled significant weaknesses that were apparent in the school. Staffing was fragile because of high turnover and low morale. Safeguarding procedures were inadequate and aspects of the national curriculum were not being taught. These issues have been successfully addressed. Central to this success is the strong working partnership between the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. They have high expectations and want the best for the school community.
- Leaders have put a significant amount of work into making the school a safer place for pupils. The designated safeguarding leads have been meticulous in their approach and systems are well organised. Clear examples of this work are the development of improved perimeter fencing and a safer main entrance to school. Several pupils commented to inspectors that they now feel safer on the school site.
- Senior and middle leaders are empowered and trusted to lead. They have a clear understanding of their roles and are enjoying their increased responsibility. Assessment information is analysed well and pupils' progress meetings are a collaborative process. Leaders and class teachers work closely to identify pupils that require further support.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection but there are still some inconsistencies. Leaders have ensured that some inadequate teaching has been addressed and that less teaching requires improvement. Checks on the quality of teaching provide appropriate next steps for teachers to improve their practice. However, leaders' feedback does not outline the specific support teachers need to achieve their next steps or an evaluation of how well teachers have addressed previously set next steps. Therefore, the feedback needs to be more precise so that remaining weaker teaching is rapidly addressed.
- Staff are energised by the renewed purpose and direction in the school. A number of staff commented on the positive changes since the last inspection and how morale has improved. Regular training opportunities support staff to improve their practice. Teaching assistants attend staff meetings when new initiatives are introduced, which is enabling them to support pupils' learning more effectively.
- The pupil premium funding is used successfully to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders put in place highly individualised strategies to meet pupils' specific needs. For example, an 'early bird' club is provided to boost pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Some pupils also attend a specific off-site intervention to help build their confidence and self-esteem. Strategies are precisely evaluated and demonstrate a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum has been revitalised over the last two years and pupils enjoy new, interesting topics. They develop appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects. Pupils spoke excitedly about their 'Titanic' topic and how it improved their understanding of science and history. Other pupils talked about how motivated they are by the homework projects linked to their topics. Music and French are taught

to pupils by specialist teachers, which is deepening pupils' learning experiences. Pupils enjoy whole-class music lessons and several learn to play instruments through individual lessons.

- The sports premium funding plan is effective. Leaders are forward-thinking and are using part of the funding to put in place additional swimming for pupils who are not on track to be able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. Some pupils commented that they would appreciate more competitions and after-school clubs for sport. Leaders have plans to ensure that this increases in the future.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Leaders ensure that pupils discuss different faiths and cultures on a regular basis. As a result, pupils are tolerant and have sensitive views about the world. Some pupils love being involved in a leadership programme to develop their life skills. They climbed Snowdon in Wales to raise money for two defibrillators, one of which was donated to the community.
- The majority of parents and carers are happy with the quality of education. Several commented on the recent improvements in the school and how much safer the site feels. Parents who have children in Reception are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of provision in the early years. However, there are some parents who are not as positive and feel that the school still has room for improvement.
- The headteacher and the IEB have raised concerns about the condition of the school building. While they recognise that it is safe, they are working closely with the local authority to ensure that the building is in the best possible condition in the future.

## **Governance**

- The IEB was put in place after the school was judged to be requiring special measures in the previous inspection. It has successfully guided the school through a difficult period.
- The board is led by an experienced and highly skilled chair. He is ably supported by two other board members, who offer effective additional expertise. They hold leaders to account by asking appropriate questions about teaching and outcomes for pupils. Their understanding of the school is strong because they carry out regular checks to ensure that leaders are implementing the improvement plan. Board members know the main priorities and are clear about where improvements are required. For example, they have been instrumental in improving the reading culture across the school.
- The chair's knowledge of safeguarding has been used wisely to support other leaders in school. He carries out regular visits to ensure that statutory requirements are being adhered to.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have rapidly addressed the serious safeguarding issues that previously existed in the school. Policies and procedures are well organised. Staff know their responsibilities well. Pupils' welfare and safety are important characteristics of the school.

- The checks for the safe recruitment of staff are stringent and meet statutory requirements. New staff are vetted thoroughly and given high-quality training to ensure that they know how to keep pupils safe.
- Training for all staff has also been central to the good safeguarding culture that exists in the school. Regular updates and annual training enable staff to keep abreast of important guidelines. Staff have a good understanding of important issues, such as the 'Prevent' duty and female genital mutilation.
- The safeguarding leaders take concerns about pupils very seriously. Staff are quick to report concerns, which are followed up tenaciously by leaders. Leaders involve outside agencies if they require support for a family. When this support does not meet leaders' expectations, they are quick to challenge it so that it improves.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Several pupils commented how much safer they feel because of the new perimeter fencing. The curriculum teaches pupils about road safety, stranger danger and bicycle safety. As a result of learning in e-safety week, pupils are also clear about the dangers associated with the internet.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection but there is still too much variability in the quality of teaching between some classes. Where teaching is weaker, it is because the expectations of what pupils can and should achieve are not high enough. When this occurs, work is not demanding enough and pupils produce work that is of a poorer standard than they have produced previously.
- The quality of teaching in writing is inconsistent. In some year groups, pupils write well and at length across a range of genres. However, technical aspects of writing, such as handwriting and punctuation, are not taught consistently well across the school. As a result, not enough pupils are applying their handwriting and punctuation skills to longer pieces of writing.
- In mathematics, teachers have ensured that pupils' calculation skills are good. Pupils are confident about calculating mentally or using written methods to work out their answers. However, the most able pupils are not given a consistent level of challenge. They are capable of applying their skills to more challenging problems in a range of contexts.
- In the strongest teaching in the school, work is well matched to pupils' needs, enabling them to make good progress. One of the main characteristics of effective teaching in the school is teachers' questioning skills. Questions are often open-ended and allow for pupils to develop their own thinking.
- Teachers have improved the culture of reading across the school. A new reading programme encourages pupils to read a range of appropriately challenging books. Pupils enjoy reading and know which authors they like. They are gradually being introduced to more complex reading comprehension skills as they move through the school.
- Phonics teaching in the early years and key stage 1 is good. Staff use precise subject

knowledge to teach new sounds. Pupils respond well to the teaching and confidently recognise sounds to help them read tricky words.

- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and lower-attaining pupils, are offered good support in class. They are often given tasks that meet their needs appropriately. Staff support them to be successful, using a range of resources and prompts.
- Teachers' understanding of assessment has improved. Consequently, assessment is now more accurate.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and staff ensure that pupils' personal development is at the forefront of the school's work. Enrichment opportunities help pupils to develop important life skills, such as responsibility and cooperation. The school council spoke about their campaign to make the road outside the school safer. The 'eco-warriors' are proactive and have made a range of decisions to make the school environmentally friendly. Pupils were proud to explain that they have a different charity to raise money for every month.
- Older pupils in the school have mature and sensitive views. They listen to and are considerate of each other's views. This was evident during a religious education lesson in Year 6 where pupils were considering how bread-sharing was a powerful message in the Bible. Comments from pupils included 'Sharing bread demonstrates friendship and how you can help others who might be less fortunate than yourself.'
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils work hard in lessons and concentrate well. Staff provide positive encouragement to pupils and, as a result, pupils enjoy learning. Occasionally, when expectations of what pupils can and should do are not high enough, some pupils do not concentrate as well.
- Pupils also enjoy different clubs and wider experiences at school. Several pupils commented on how they love singing in the school choir and being able to perform their songs to a range of different audiences.
- Staff ensure that pupils are growing up with a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Classrooms have a 'feelings box' where pupils can sensitively share thoughts if something is going well or if they need some help. Pupils are clear about what constitutes bullying and what they must do if they experience it.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour in lessons and at social times is positive. Pupils are respectful of one another and their school. Staff manage behaviour effectively and are quick to address any issues that arise. Pupils enjoy different rewards for their behaviour. Lower down the school, younger pupils are motivated by the 'zone board' where they can be moved up on the board if they behave well throughout the day. Older pupils enjoy the house

points reward system, where they collect points when they are recognised for their good work or behaviour.

- Serious incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are extremely rare. Incidents are monitored and followed up well by leaders. Pupils who have complex behavioural needs receive appropriate support. The school makes good use of a member of staff who works closely with pupils and families who require additional support.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. In 2016, attendance rates were better than those seen nationally. In 2017, attendance rates dropped slightly and were broadly in line with the national average. However, so far this academic year, rates have risen to the high rates seen previously. Leaders monitor attendance rates well and pupils whose attendance drops receive timely support to attend school more regularly.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not consistent across different classes in the school. Where weaker teaching remains, some pupils do not make the progress that they need to. When expectations are not high enough, pupils are not sufficiently challenged and their skills do not develop at the rate they should. Leaders are addressing this and outcomes are gradually improving. In 2016, at the end of key stages 1 and 2, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standards in reading and writing were below the national averages. In 2017, these same measures improved significantly.
- At the end of key stage 2 in mathematics, pupils' progress has declined over the last three years. In 2017, progress was in the bottom 20% of all schools nationally. At the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in mathematics was below the national average. The most able pupils' attainment and progress are hampered because they do not get consistently challenged.
- Outcomes in pupils' writing books are inconsistent. Too many pupils do not apply their handwriting and punctuation skills to longer pieces of writing. This prevents some pupils from being secure writers within the expected and higher standards for their age.
- Reading attainment and progress are more positive. In 2017, at the end of key stages 1 and 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards was above levels seen nationally. As they progress through the school, pupils are practising their reading comprehension skills more regularly. This is helping to ensure that they have a good understanding of the texts that they read.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard for the grammar, punctuation and spelling test was above the national average.
- Good phonics teaching leads to positive outcomes for pupils. At the end of Year 1, a high proportion of pupils achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check. The school's performance has been above national levels for the last three years.
- Disadvantaged pupils are well provided for through targeted strategies in reading,

writing and mathematics. Leaders provided convincing assessment information to show how additional support improves their progress. For example, reading interventions accelerate pupils' reading ages considerably. Gaps are gradually diminishing for disadvantaged pupils. There are several examples where their attainment is better than that of other pupils nationally.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive good support in class and through additional support. As a result, they make progress at least in line with their peers.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- As a result of good teaching and strong leadership, children get off to a good start in Reception. Staff and children bond well together. Consequently, children settle well, enjoy coming to school and behave well.
- Leaders know the setting well and children's needs are at the heart of decision-making. Leaders identified that forming relationships was a lower-performing area of learning on entry to Reception. They responded by putting in place successful strategies, such as 'forest schools', to enable children to socialise well.
- Leaders also know the needs of the staff and have put in place good support to help them improve their practice, particularly in the quality of their observations and assessments. The children's 'learning journeys' kept by staff demonstrate regular and accurate assessments of children's work.
- Induction processes are well organised and ensure that staff understand children's needs from the outset. Before children start, leaders carry out visits to the feeder pre-schools and make home visits. Good communication with parents continues throughout Reception. Parents contribute to children's 'learning journeys', and 'pop-in sessions' enable them to see how their children are taught in school.
- Teaching is vibrant and holds children's interest. Both teacher-directed activities and play are stimulating and well planned. Staff's input is precise and enables pupils to pick up new skills. Teachers' questioning skills are a particularly effective characteristic of the good teaching. Questions enable children to develop their own answers and think deeply about what they are learning.
- Children are taught how to form letters and sounds accurately in their writing. However, they do not receive sufficient opportunities to apply their writing skills in short sentences. This is particularly the case for some of the most able children, who are ready to write sentences and use features of narrative in their work.
- A thoughtful early years curriculum gives children a broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding. Children enjoy discussing shape in mathematics, showing their creative skills in art and being engaged in physical play in the outdoors. Children love their forest-school sessions. The exciting range of activities are having a positive impact on children's social and emotional development.
- Outcomes for children are positive. In almost all of the areas of learning, a high proportion of children enter Reception at a typical level for their age. They make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1. The proportion of children who reached a good level of development has been above the national average for several years.

- All statutory welfare requirements are met.

## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 103808   |
| Local authority         | Dudley   |
| Inspection number       | 10044561 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. 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 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 393  |
| Appropriate authority               | Interim executive board  |
| Chair                               | George Craig   |
| Headteacher                         | Jacqui Grace   |
| Telephone number                    | 01384 818 965  |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.hamdingleprimary.co.uk">www.hamdingleprimary.co.uk</a>       |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:info@ham-dingle.dudley.sch.uk">info@ham-dingle.dudley.sch.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | November 2015  |

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- A large majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- When the school was inspected in November 2015, it was judged to require special measures. Subsequently, the school had one monitoring inspection. At this monitoring inspection, leaders and managers were judged to be taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.
- The headteacher started at the school in January 2016. An IEB replaced the governing body shortly after the school required special measures in its last inspection.
- The IEB takes responsibility for challenging and supporting leaders to develop educational outcomes for pupils, as well as being a link to the local community. The chair of the IEB is a national leader for governance.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 28 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books. They met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons. They also met with a group of staff to gain their views about the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, as well as other senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with the three members of the IEB and the representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation. These included assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is monitored and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors talked to a large number of parents at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

|                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Matt Meckin, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Chris Bandfield             | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Barry Yeardsley             | Ofsted Inspector        |

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