

Wallbrook Primary School

Off Bradleys Lane, Coseley, Bilston, West Midlands WV14 8YP

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders are failing to provide an acceptable standard of education. Despite recent developments in senior leadership and some improvement in pupils' progress, leaders do not demonstrate sufficient capacity to improve the quality of education provided.
- Leaders have been too slow to respond to weak teaching and poor outcomes over recent years. This has led to pupils throughout the school continuing to make weak progress, most notably in key stage 2.
- Governors lack a precise insight into the school's effectiveness. They do not hold leaders to account for school performance well enough.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they could in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils currently in the school are not achieving the standards they are capable of. This is because teaching is not effective enough, most notably in mathematics.
- Despite the school's efforts, pupils are not inspired to read often.
- School leaders and governors do not have a clear understanding of how pupils at all levels of prior attainment are progressing in their work.
- Pupils' overall attendance has remained stubbornly low for the past few years.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are kept safe and are well cared for.
- Leaders have recently redesigned the curriculum carefully. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is integral to planning. Pupils are prepared well for living in modern Britain.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good.
- Senior leaders demonstrate early signs of effective leadership. Teaching is improving this year and pupils make better progress when compared with previous years.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved this year.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and increase pupils' progress by:
 - teachers identifying what they expect pupils, including the most able, to achieve and providing activities that challenge pupils appropriately
 - ensuring that when adults intervene in pupils' learning during lessons, they gain important knowledge about how well pupils are progressing
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics, and use it to plan and deliver tasks which enable pupils to develop secure reasoning skills
 - inspiring pupils to read more often and checking that pupils read frequently at home.
- Improve the effectiveness of governors by ensuring that leaders are held stringently to account in all areas of the school's work, including the quality of teaching and pupils' academic performance.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that leaders:
 - make clear the standards they expect pupils with different starting points to achieve and then check rigorously that pupils are progressing sufficiently well towards their expected outcomes, especially in key stage 2
 - make the assessment and evaluation process fit for purpose so that leaders are provided with information to help them evaluate the effectiveness of teaching more effectively
 - use the additional pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils in their learning, including the acquisition of core skills.
- Increase the overall attendance rate to at least the national average, ensuring that pastoral leaders reflect on the effectiveness of strategies to improve attendance and make changes as appropriate.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the school's previous inspection, leaders have not been effective in ensuring that the school provides an acceptable standard of education. They have not had the impact required to improve outcomes so that pupils achieve the standards they are capable of attaining. Leaders have been too slow to address weak outcomes.
- Leaders have been too slow in addressing weak teaching. Leaders are not incisive in identifying specific strengths and weaknesses in teaching. They do not provide pertinent advice and support for individual teachers to improve. As a result, teaching does not enable pupils to make strong progress or catch up as required.
- There is now a schedule in place to support leaders in monitoring the school's effectiveness. For example, leaders look at the quality of pupils' work in their books every half term. This work is improving the effectiveness of teaching, with leaders able to show where improvements have taken place. However, the pace of change is not yet sufficient.
- There has been a high number of staff changes over recent years. This has adversely affected the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. In spite of many changes in staffing over time, leaders have been too slow to react. This means that pupils have not experienced a good enough quality of education.
- The newly formed senior leadership team is beginning to have a positive impact on different aspects of the school's provision and subsequent outcomes. Leaders have been effective in reducing the number of significant behaviour incidents. They have ensured that all relevant staff adhere to agreed strategies for supporting individual pupils when they make the wrong decisions about how they behave. As a result, pupils' conduct around school is improving. Staff recognise this improvement and express positive views about working at the school. However, the legacy of underachievement remains.
- Work to improve the provision in the early years and for pupils with SEND is effective. Leaders of these areas clarify the needs of pupils well and ensure that teaching addresses specific gaps in knowledge. This includes the teaching of handwriting and phonics. This leads to pupils acquiring secure skills and knowledge to help them in their later learning.
- Leaders ensure that opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, social, moral and cultural understanding are planned for well. Pupils visit places of worship and work with a range of visitors, such as authors, to learn about equality and diversity. Such opportunities enable pupils to reflect on their views about living in modern British society.
- The design of the curriculum is effective. Pupils are given sufficient time to learn about different topics. Senior and subject leaders understand the importance of evaluating how well pupils apply core reading, writing and mathematical skills when learning about other subjects. This work is in its infancy.
- Staff generate a lot of achievement information. However, they do not use this information efficiently or effectively. They do not make it clear what they expect pupils

with different prior attainment to achieve. For example, the majority of pupils in each cohort are disadvantaged. Leaders have access to and talk about the progress rates of these pupils as a large group, but not in terms of how much ground they need to make up to secure the standards they are capable of.

- Leaders' presentations of achievement information are not focused. They do not enable leaders to effectively interrogate the progress of pupils. This means that leaders and governors find it difficult to identify aspects which require further exploration.
- The local authority has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders have accepted some support offered by the local authority.
- Leaders have clear aims for what they want the primary school physical education and sport funding to achieve. These are to increase pupils' awareness of the importance of physical well-being and to engage more in competitive sports. Leaders are aware that pupils can benefit in other ways. For example, improved conduct at lunchtimes is partly due to employed sports coaches facilitating games. These activities complement the curriculum well.
- Leaders should not appoint newly qualified teachers to the school.

Governance of the school

- Governance is not effective.
- Governors do not hold leaders effectively to account for school performance. Over the past 12 months, governors have gained a better insight into the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement. However, their knowledge and understanding of this aspect of monitoring is not precise enough. For example, they are not clear if groups with different prior attainment are making the progress required for them to reach the standards they are capable of.
- Pupil premium funding has been used to ensure that pupils receive effective support for their well-being. Funds have not been used well enough to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve the academic standards they are capable of.
- Individual governors visit the school to check how well the school is performing. For example, they observe how pupils conduct themselves in lessons, but do not place a strong enough focus on pupils' achievements. Written notes about these visits are shared with other governors, helping governors learn about some aspects of school work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all staff appointed to work at the school are suitable to work with children. Once appointed, all staff are provided with appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding training.
- Leaders have established procedures which staff adhere to well. Staff know how to report any concerns they have, and who to report them to. Leaders and staff responsible for nurture provision ensure that any concerns are followed up appropriately.

- Governors ensure that safeguarding is a standing agenda item at their meetings. The safeguarding governor visits the school frequently and provides written reports on the effectiveness of this aspect of the school's work.
- Parents, carers, pupils and staff talk positively about the school's work in keeping pupils safe. Pupils know who they should go to if they are concerned for themselves or one of their friends.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- There is a weak reading culture in the school. Pupils are not inspired to read and some express poor attitudes towards reading. They are not keen to read in school or at home. This was illustrated by pupils not having their reading records with them in school.
- Work in pupils' books indicates that the quality of teaching is variable across year groups and subjects. Too often, staff encourage pupils to complete tasks rather than taking opportunities to explore where gaps and weaknesses in knowledge and understanding occur and addressing these.
- Groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able, are not challenged effectively. This is because teachers do not use assessment information to plan and deliver work which enables pupils to both consolidate previously taught skills and knowledge and to effectively engage in new learning. As a result, teaching does not enable pupils with different abilities to progress well over time.
- Teachers do not make it clear to pupils what skills they are expected to apply in lessons. For example, pupils are not routinely expected to accurately apply their grammar and punctuation skills in all forms of writing. This means that pupils do not secure and consolidate core skills and vocabulary. This restricts their subsequent learning.
- During lessons, teachers often intervene in pupils' learning. During these times, teachers do not gain important information about how well pupils are learning. In a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils' learning was interrupted as the teacher wanted to check the accuracy of their work. However, errors were not picked up, which meant that pupils thought they were doing well.
- In mathematics, pupils do not secure their reasoning skills well enough. This is because some teachers do not yet have a thorough understanding of how pupils should acquire these key skills. Pupils' books show that there are pockets of better practice emerging, but this is not yet consistently seen across all year groups. This weak subject knowledge is improving, owing to current training.
- Where teachers' questioning is most effective, it probes pupils' understanding well. This enables teachers to check how well pupils have consolidated taught knowledge.
- Pupils with SEND are taught well. They receive well-targeted support, from both teachers and teaching assistants, which addresses their learning needs sensitively. This means that they develop their confidence in learning when tackling those aspects they find difficult.
- There are pockets of effective teaching practice. These include the teaching of phonics, by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils from all backgrounds, including

disadvantaged pupils, secure early reading skills. The most able pupils are challenged well. As result, all groups of pupils benefit from effective teaching.

- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to consolidate their understanding of taught skills, including spellings and reading, through homework. The extent to which pupils engage and complete set tasks is variable, as this is not sufficiently followed up in school. It is weakest in key stage 2.
- Recently introduced strategies designed to improve the teaching of writing are showing signs of impact. As this year has progressed, pupils are controlling their writing better, which helps them convey their ideas to the reader.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Over recent years, pupils have not been well prepared for their move into their secondary education. Weak teaching, poor attendance and attitudes to learning have contributed to low academic outcomes. This has restricted pupils' ability to access the Year 7 curriculum.
- Pupil premium funding is well spent in respect of nurturing provision. Disadvantaged pupils are supported well in being ready to learn as they begin each lesson. Staff look out for pupils' welfare, including at breakfast club, where staff talk with pupils and address any concerns that pupils might have before the teaching day begins.
- Effective nurturing for the most vulnerable pupils results in them engaging in lessons well. This is because staff are skilled at identifying what they need to do to best support these pupils. Pupils' confidence and emotional well-being are well developed.
- The well-designed curriculum ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils talk articulately about different aspects of being safe, including staying safe when learning and playing online. Pupils acquire positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles, which includes their physical well-being.
- Parents express positive views about how the school promotes their children's welfare. They recognise how they can approach staff with any concerns and value the care and attention staff provide for their children. Good relationships exist between parents and school staff.
- Pupils recognise how the school supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They secure knowledge about different religions through assemblies and the curriculum. They understand the importance of mutual respect and the celebration of diversity.
- Bullying incidents are rare. If they do occur, then staff ensure that they are followed through to a satisfactory conclusion. Pupils value the work of their peer anti-bullying ambassadors. This strengthens vigilance at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance has remained below the national average for the past few years. At the time of this inspection, it had not notably improved. There is little variance between the attendance of different groups. Leaders have introduced a range of strategies designed to increase attendance. They have yet to fully evaluate the impact these have had on both overall and persistent absence.
- In classrooms, pupils' attitudes to learning are variable. This is because they want to learn, but do not receive work which challenges them enough.
- Typically, pupils' conduct in lessons is good. This is because both staff and pupils adhere to agreed strategies to support good behavioural choices. Occasionally, some pupils cause low-level disruption which adversely impacts on their own learning and that of other pupils.
- Around school, pupils conduct themselves well. Incidents of poor behaviour are decreasing, notably from the start of this academic year. Pupils recognise that behaviour is improving. They value the support of their peers, including those who take on the role of a playleader.
- Pupils who previously demonstrated poor behaviour now receive improved care, guidance and support and this is helping them to regulate their behaviour. Pupils are punctual to their lessons and they are more resilient in their learning. This provision has also led to a reduction in the number of fixed-term exclusions this year.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Over recent years, pupils have not been well prepared for their move into secondary school. This is because they have left Year 6 with low academic standards.
- Despite some pupils making better progress this year when compared with previous years, overall progress is still not strong enough. This is because pupils, including those who are the most able, are yet to secure relevant skills and knowledge which will enable them to reach the standards they are capable of achieving.
- Typically, children make the strongest progress during their time in the Nursery. Pupils make better progress at key stage 1 than in key stage 2.
- Pupils do not apply skills learned in the core subjects accurately in different subjects. This means that pupils are not consolidating their reading, writing and mathematical skills well.
- This year, pupils are making stronger progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. Recently introduced strategies designed to improve writing are showing early signs of positive impact. For example, a whole-school handwriting approach is helping pupils sustain their writing for longer periods.
- The progress of pupils with SEND, including those with complex needs, is good. Coherent systems are in place to track the academic, as well as personal and social, progress of these pupils. As a result, they learn well across the curriculum.
- Last year, the proportion of pupils who achieved the required standard in the Year 1

phonics screening check was similar to the national average. This has been an improving trend over the past three years. This year, children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress.

- Pupils are beginning to build knowledge through a range of different subjects. This is owing to well-planned sequences of learning in the curriculum. In science, for example, pupils in each year group learn about new processes which link with previously learned knowledge.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Teaching in Reception is weaker than in the Nursery. This is partly owing to a new Reception staff team establishing teaching and learning routines. Learning journals show that children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities well below those typical for their age. They make good progress through the Nursery, better than in Reception.
- Over the past few years, children have not secured the necessary knowledge in order to be well prepared for their learning in Year 1. The proportion of children attaining an overall good level of development has been well below the national average.
- Currently, achievement information is not presented clearly. This means that it is difficult to analyse how well children with different skills and abilities are progressing. However, there are indications that standards are rising. Overall, disadvantaged children make similar progress to their classmates.
- The recently appointed leader of the early years has initiated effective changes. She has strengthened the links between the Nursery and Reception classes. This has meant that the strong practice in the Nursery, most notably around planning work, is influencing provision and outcomes in Reception.
- Staff teach daily phonics sessions. This teaching is effective as children acquire secure decoding skills. There are frequent opportunities for children to rehearse their reading and writing skills in both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Children progress well in their personal and social development. This is because their day-to-day learning and play enable them to become confident learners. They follow routines which are designed to help them explore their interests well. This is most notable in the Nursery. Children conduct themselves well.
- Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning as soon as they join the school. Staff visit homes and use information gained about each child to prepare resources which motivate the children's learning. Parents attend 'stay and play' sessions, which help them understand how the early years operates on a daily basis. Children's achievements are shared with parents in a variety of ways, including opportunities for parents to look at their children's learning journeys.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities. These include providing a safe welcome for children at the start of the day. Frequent training supports staff well in carrying out their work. For example, all staff are trained in paediatric first aid.
- If staff require advice to support their work with children, they can access external services readily. A recent example is work with the speech and language therapy service.

School details

Unique reference number	103783
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10088471

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	287
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-chairs of the governing body	Alison O'Neill and Audrey Rogers
Headteacher	Clare Longden
Telephone number	01384 818985
Website	www.wallbrook.dudley.sch.uk
Email address	info@wallbrook.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 December 2016

Information about this school

- Wallbrook is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is well above average.
- Most pupils are White British. There are no other significant minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including those who have an education, health and care plan, is similar to the national average.
- The early years is made up of a part-time Nursery provision and two Reception classes.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.
- Over recent years, there have been a number of staff changes. The two deputy

headteachers and the leader of the early years were appointed to their roles in January 2019.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in every year group. They visited 19 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or one of the deputy headteachers.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, one of the co-chairs of the governing body and other governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met frequently with senior school leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading. They listened to higher- and lower-ability pupils read.
- Inspectors examined work in pupils' books from a range of subjects.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation written to support school improvement. This included minutes of governors' meetings, and pupils' attendance and behaviour information.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Stone	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Tibbits	Ofsted Inspector

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