



Bushbury Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104290
Local Authority Wolverhampton
Inspection number 286900
Inspection dates 21–22 February 2007
Reporting inspector Mary Hamby HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Old Fallings Lane
School category	Community		Wolverhampton
Age range of pupils	3–11		WV10 8BY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 558230
Number on roll (school)	312	Fax number	01902 558234
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Graham Warner
		Headteacher	S Cheyne
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 1999		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	21–22 February 2007	286900

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school has not been inspected previously because it is a new school, formed by the merger of the former infant and junior schools. There has been a high turnover of staff within the last three years and the number of pupils that enter and leave the school is also higher than usual.

Most of the pupils are of White British origin and the proportion of them entitled to free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also very high.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

Although there are clear signs that this is an improving school, it is not yet as effective as it should be. There is underachievement in Key Stage 2, and this is why the inspection does not support the school's judgement that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the pupils' achievement and standards in Key Stage 2. Standards in Key Stage 2, particularly in Years 5 and 6 are well below average in English, mathematics and science. Since the merger, the school has introduced a range of effective strategies to improve the provision in Key Stage 2 but the impact of these is not yet showing through in standards.

The pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. They reach standards close to the national average by Year 2 except in speaking and listening, where pupils' skills are below expected levels. These skills are not developed well enough throughout the school because there is insufficient focus on this aspect of English throughout the curriculum.

A very successful aspect of the school is the care and support given to pupils. This helps them to feel safe, have confidence in themselves and have positive attitudes to school. Work with pupils with emotional difficulties is outstandingly successful and consequently these pupils are included very well and make good progress towards their targets.

The headteacher's clear vision and the strong support she receives from governors and her deputy show that the school has good capacity to improve. The leadership team work together well and there are now consistent policies and a shared positive ethos throughout the school. The school has a clear view of its strengths and is tackling weaknesses methodically. Checks on teaching and learning are now regular and rigorous, and training is given where necessary. The teaching has improved significantly, according to the school's own evidence, and is now satisfactory. The teachers work well as a team and give high prominence to pupils' personal development. This helps pupils behave well, become confident learners, and understand how to keep fit and healthy.

The leadership team has been successful in drawing two schools together since the merger two years ago, but has faced numerous challenges during this period. The high turnover of staff and pupils' low attendance have had a detrimental impact on the standards, particularly in Key Stage 2. The school has responded effectively to these challenges. Staffing is now stable and attendance, though still below average, is improving.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the initiatives used to raise standards in Key Stage 1 are applied rigorously in Key Stage 2 so that pupils build on their knowledge consistently and reach the standards they are capable of reaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve opportunities for pupils in all year groups to develop their speaking and listening skills so that they reach higher standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

When the children start Nursery their levels of skills and knowledge are well below those expected of children of their age. Through their time in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 the pupils' independence and confidence improve and they make good progress in most areas. Although speaking and listening are still well below expected levels, standards in other subjects are close to the national average in Year 2. However, this good start is not yet built on effectively through Key Stage 2. Although there are signs that achievement is improving, it is still not good enough and standards are very low in English, mathematics and science. This is a handicap to the future employment potential of all pupils.

There are no significant differences in the achievement of pupils from different ethnic or social backgrounds in the school as a whole. Girls do slightly better than boys, but no more so than is seen nationally. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, especially those with emotional difficulties, achieve slightly better than other groups and make steady progress towards the targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel valued. One of them said, 'The teachers always listen to us here.' The positive relationships and sense of community within the school promote their social development very well indeed. They play together well at recreation times and are developing a competitive spirit in team games. They display good cooperative skills when working together, but are often less confident when speaking in front of an audience. Moral development is very good, and the pupils have a clear idea of what is fair. Pupils feel safe and know who to turn to if they have any worries. They are confident that bullying is not tolerated and any instances are dealt with effectively. Pupils know about healthy lifestyles and participate in a wide variety of physical activities.

Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. They appreciate opportunities to engage in the arts, but have less opportunity to develop their awareness of our multicultural society. They have good opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility, and contribute to the community well. The personal development of vulnerable pupils is highly successful because they have quick access to sensitive and skilled support.

Attendance is improving because of the many well planned initiatives introduced by the school, but punctuality at the start of the school day remains an issue.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

This is improving and its impact is beginning to show through in the progress that pupils make. However, it has not been good enough in Key Stage 2 in the past and that is why standards have been too low. One clear improvement is the quality of marking, which recognises what the pupils have done well and identifies points for improvement. This helps the pupils to concentrate on one aspect of their work and is particularly helpful to the less able pupils. The teachers have effective behaviour management strategies and so lessons run smoothly and at a brisk pace. They know the pupils very well and the level of care shown for their personal needs is outstanding.

Lessons are usually pitched at the right level for pupils, but sometimes the work is not challenging enough for the more able pupils in Key Stage 2. Some of the question and answer sessions in particular are not geared well enough to meet the wide range of abilities in the class. The teachers listen carefully to the pupils but do not give them enough opportunities to respond at length to questions and do not demand enough of them to help them develop their powers of argument.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is appropriately tailored to have a high focus on literacy and numeracy to remedy the pupils' low attainment. The practical approach to all subjects suits the aptitudes of the pupils, many of whom need to have new learning reinforced a number of times. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is appropriately based in guided play. The opportunity to go on visits makes the curriculum relevant and interesting. Activities are carefully designed to engage vulnerable pupils and plans for these children are carefully targeted to meet individual needs.

The good provision in the arts and sport and extensive range of extra-curricular activities make a good contribution to pupils' learning and enjoyment of school. However, insufficient attention is given throughout the curriculum to activities that will develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are very pleased with the attention their children receive, and are right in their view that the school takes very good care of their children. Staff have training to ensure they understand issues such as child protection, asthma and allergies, and are vigilant to ensure pupils' welfare. The school has excellent procedures to meet the

needs of vulnerable pupils and this helps these children to face and overcome their difficulties. The outstanding support from professionals, such as the educational psychology service, helps to supplement the school's own expertise.

The procedures for pupils moving into school are effective so that pupils settle well. There are effective systems to promote a smooth transition from one class to another to ensure the continuity of education. The school has improved its procedures to support pupils' academic progress by introducing a regular assessment regime. This has already proved to be useful by highlighting pupils who need extra support. However, it is still in its infancy and needs more consistency in the data used in order to be truly effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide determined and inspirational leadership which has remained strong in the face of challenging circumstances. They are well supported by governors whose individual skills are used judiciously. Governors provide a good balance of encouragement and challenge for the leadership team.

The school demonstrates clear capacity to improve. The former issues of high staff turnover and periods of staff absence have been eradicated and there is a strong culture of optimism in the school. Staff have responded well to the opportunities offered for professional development, which have improved planning and assessment. Leadership of special educational needs is very effective and helps pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to achieve their targets.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The school has effective methods to check on the quality of teaching and learning. The leadership team know what they wish to achieve, but targets are not specific enough; this hampers evaluation. The school judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory and this is understandable in the light of the improvements it has made, particularly to the quality of teaching. However, the impact of improvements to achievement in Key Stage 2 is only just beginning to show through and they are not yet robust enough to justify this judgement.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making my colleagues and me so welcome when we came to meet you this week. It was really good to listen to what you had to say about your work and read your parents' views of the school. One of your parents wrote that your school has 'happy children with a thirst to learn', and that is just what we saw when we came. We agree with you that your teachers are kind and helpful and that they care for you and listen to what you have to say. The school takes good care of you and is really helpful when problems arise. We think you are really lucky to have special places like 'the Den' and 'Noah's Ark' to go to when you need to.

The children in the infant block are getting on well and there are some good things happening in the junior block too. However, the boys and girls in the juniors are not doing as well as they should in English, mathematics and science, and so we have said that the school needs something called a 'Notice to Improve'. This will mean that someone will visit the school later this year to see if it is making enough progress.

We also decided that you all need more opportunities to develop your speaking and listening skills. That does not mean we think you should be chattering in class! We want you to answer questions in full sentences and be able to give your opinions in a well thought out way using a wide range of vocabulary. You can help with this by reading more so that you learn new words and understand how to be persuasive when talking in front of your classmates.

Above all we want you to really try your best at all times and continue to enjoy all the opportunities that your school offers you. Aim high!

Good luck and very best wishes for your future.