

Hawbush Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 103820 |
| Local Authority | Dudley |
| Inspection number | 308430 |
| Inspection dates | 8–9 July 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 249 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Janett Parks |
| Headteacher | Alison Pell |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 September 2003 |
| School address | Hawbush Road Brierley Hill DY5 3NH |
| Telephone number | 01384 816930 |
| Fax number | 01384 816935 |

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average, as is the proportion eligible for free school meals. The school holds a number of awards. It has achieved the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, Sport England Active Mark and Healthy Schools status, and is working towards the ICT Mark. The school is participating in its third creative partnerships project. The school also has Investor in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hawbush Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education. It has a number of strengths as well as areas to improve. A notable strength is the excellent quality of relationships and partnerships with a number of agencies that support pupils well-being. The school's self-evaluation is refreshingly direct and accurate, providing a firm basis for continued improvement. This, together with sound leadership and management overall and the satisfactory progress made on tackling the issues raised in the previous inspection, demonstrates a sound capacity for continued improvement.

The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. Nevertheless, there is not enough good teaching to accelerate pupils' progress to the point where they reach higher standards. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, teachers do not make it clear enough to the pupils what it is they want them to learn. Although all lessons seen had a learning objective, these varied in their precision, with pupils not always fully understanding what it is they are learning. The school is making increasingly effective use of the information it gathers about the pupils' performance in tests and other assessments. However, the information recorded is not always easy to follow and teachers do not always use it to plan subsequent lessons. As a result, work is sometimes insufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able pupils. The school has plans to refine how it records pupils' progress to make the information easier for teachers to use to plan for the next steps in learning.

At Key Stage 2, the progress pupils make is gradually improving. Standards in mathematics and science are rising and are broadly average. In English, particularly writing, standards across all year groups are lower with pupils making slower progress. This is because there are too few opportunities to write for sustained periods and because skills are not taught systematically. Nonetheless, most pupils, including those who find aspects of learning difficult, make broadly satisfactory progress between the time they enter the school and the time they leave it.

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good and is underpinned by a satisfactory curriculum. Pupils are learning a wide range of social skills that are helping them to develop into well-rounded individuals. They understand the difference between right and wrong and appreciate how their actions can affect others. Pupils respond maturely to opportunities to take responsibility and make a valuable contribution to their school and the local community. The school council helps to develop pupils' independence, awareness of citizenship, representing the views of others and having a say in the life of the school.

Pastoral care is good. The emotional needs of pupils are catered for effectively. Well-conceived arrangements prepare pupils appropriately for the move to the next stage of their education and contribute positively to the pupils' well-being and learning.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children quickly settle into the school life because of the warm and nurturing environment created and the effective partnership with parents. Planning covers all the appropriate areas of learning for this age but teachers do not always identify what it is they want the children to learn in each area. There is generally an appropriate balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities although at times some child-chosen activities are not well enough

structured or linked to the development of key skills. Children who entered the Nursery this year have poorly developed social skills, with particular weaknesses in language skills that restrict learning in other key areas. Nevertheless, they make steady progress but few reach the goals expected by the time they start Year 1. The school is taking part in a national project to support children in developing early reading and writing skills.

What the school should do to improve further

-
- Raise standards in English, particularly through the systematic teaching of writing skills.
- Ensure there is more good teaching across the school by ensuring that teachers make it very clear to pupils about what they want them to learn.
- Refine assessment procedures to show more clearly pupils' progress.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities well below those expected for their ages. They make satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1 to reach below average standards in reading and writing and well below average standards in mathematics. Results in English, especially writing in the 2007 Key Stage 2 national tests, were exceptionally low when compared to the national picture, with all pupils making inadequate progress. Constructive changes in the way writing is taught have begun to arrest further decline. Consequently, pupils are now making broadly satisfactory progress, with standards beginning to rise. The 2008 Key Stage 2 national test results for mathematics and science show continued improvement and are the school's highest ever scores, with improved performance at the higher Level 5.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and are motivated to learn, and nearly all of them demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. In class, they generally behave well, work diligently, and are capable of sustained periods of concentration. They mostly listen carefully to their teachers, willingly ask and answer questions, and freely offer their own ideas and suggestions. Where behaviour issues arise, they are dealt with promptly. The learning mentor is especially effective in supporting and guiding pupils who have behavioural difficulties. Personal, social and health education makes an effective contribution to the pupils' understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their participation in physical education and the need for a healthy diet. They report that, 'lessons are fun and educational at the same time'. Attendance is well below average and adversely affects the achievement of a number of pupils. In particular, the practice of pupils taking holidays in term time is reducing their chances of attaining higher standards. Nevertheless, the school does all it can to encourage pupils to attend regularly. Furthermore, persistent non-attendance is monitored carefully but is not always tracked against pupils' progress.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Taken overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In most classes, teaching promotes positive behaviour and learning. Strengths in teaching are the positive relationships that staff have with the pupils and their effective use of regular praise and encouragement to motivate them. The best lessons are well structured, have a brisk pace and pupils are given ample opportunities to apply and consolidate learning, resulting in pupils making good progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory rather than good when activities do not match the pupils' needs precisely. Moreover, when teachers spend too much time talking, there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn actively through paired talking or practical tasks and pupils' progress slows. Here, teachers' expectations of what the pupils can attain are not high enough. In some instances, work for the higher attaining pupils is too easy and the pace of learning is too slow.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced, fulfilling statutory requirements and supporting pupils' personal development well. It is effectively enriched through a wide range of visits and visitors. Pupils particularly value the residential trips and the many after school clubs. The wide range and variety of sporting activities encourage pupils to take regular exercise and open up many good opportunities for them to take part in team sports. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy and an increasing awareness of improving pupils' knowledge and use of information and communication technology.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements for pupils' care, guidance and support are effective. Child protection, safeguarding and health and safety procedures are secure and clear. The headteacher has worked hard to provide a calm, friendly environment where pupils feel safe and happy. Pupils have good relationships with a range of adults in school, including class teachers, support staff and the learning mentor, who know them well and are responsive to their needs. Pupils say that there is always someone to talk to if they need to and they feel safe. Pupils are well cared for, including those pupils who are vulnerable and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are sound procedures for monitoring and supporting the academic progress of pupils, including those who find learning difficult. Intervention programmes to support and aid pupils' progress are effective and the school works very well with several outside agencies to cater best for the needs of pupils requiring extra support in order to enhance their learning. There are some good examples of teachers giving pupils regular feedback through their marking, providing clear explanations and ideas on how to improve their work, but this is not consistently done in all classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides effective leadership. She has a clear view of the way the school should continue to develop and has been successful in bringing about many positive changes. Nevertheless, progress has not been as swift as it could be. Subject coordinators have an appropriate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have opportunities to monitor pupils' work on a regular basis so that they can see how pupils achieve. Throughout the school, assessment is carried out regularly and conscientiously. However, the results are not always used well enough to guide the planning of subsequent work and to ensure that all the teaching is challenging. The school improvement plan provides a good basis for future development. Governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily and are supportive of the school. They are just becoming involved in the checking on the effectiveness of the school's work.

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Inspection judgements

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| 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

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

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 3 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| 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 | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 |
| 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? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

10 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hawbush Primary School, Brierley Hill, DY5 3NH

We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about your work when we inspected your school. We really appreciated the way you greeted us and took time to talk to us about your school. We know that you are proud of your school and enjoy being there. We found that Hawbush is a satisfactory school with some strengths.

Here is what we found out on our recent visit.

- You make satisfactory progress and your work is improving.
- You are polite and mostly well behaved.
- You tell us that you feel safe in school and enjoy the clubs and activities on offer. It was good to see how excited Year 6 were just before going on their residential visit and hearing about Year 5's visit to Boddenham Arboretum.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and enjoy being active in sports.
- Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting.
- Adults look after you well in school.

We have asked the school to do three things to improve it further.

- We have asked your teachers to make all lessons as good as they can be by telling you exactly what you are going to learn in each lesson.
- We have also suggested that you could do even better in writing and we have asked your teachers to help you with this.
- We have asked you teachers to make the information collected about how much progress you make a little easier for them to use.

You can help the school by making sure that you attend school regularly and continue to try your best.

We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wordsworth Her Majesty's Inspector