

Bushbury Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104290
Local Authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	319409
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Smith HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	312
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Warner
Headteacher	Sue Cheyne
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2007
School address	Old Fallings Lane Wolverhampton WV10 8BY
Telephone number	01902 558230
Fax number	01902 558234

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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

The school was formed by the merger of neighbouring infant and junior schools in January 2005. Most of the pupils are of White British origin. The proportions of them entitled to free school meals or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well above average. The school takes pupils from areas with well above average levels of social disadvantage. It has a unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties including some with moderate learning difficulties.

When the school was inspected in February 2007 it was judged to be performing less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform and given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement was required in relation to achievement and standards in Key Stage 2. The school was visited by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors in October 2007 and judged to be making satisfactory progress.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school has made significant improvements during the last year and it no longer requires a Notice to Improve because it now provides a satisfactory standard of education. Progress is good in Reception and Key Stage 1, but overall progress is satisfactory because pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have not been able to make up for time lost in previous years. This is the only reason why the school is judged satisfactory rather than good. The highly effective senior leaders, very well supported by all staff, have worked tirelessly so that now the majority of features within the school are good and have the potential to improve further.

Pupils enjoy school because staff are very supportive. They receive very good pastoral care and good guidance with their work. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are still very low but improving rapidly. The school has worked successfully to improve attendance, but it remains low because of a few children who do not attend enough. Parents are very supportive of the school and feel greatly supported by it. They rightly recognise the extremely important part it plays within the local community.

The school has developed safe practices. Pupils were very aware of the dangers with the demolition work which was taking place during the inspection. They are also very aware of the dangers of strangers including the use of the Internet to befriend them in 'chat rooms'. Pupils know well about healthy diets and they particularly enjoy the school lunches, especially the roasts. Rewards are used well by the school to motivate pupils. These include a presentation of a 'golden trainer' for the class with the greatest proportion of pupils who walk to school. Behaviour is good and pupils are extremely polite to each other and to visitors.

Teaching is good because lessons are engaging and enjoyable. Progress in lessons is good and the main reason why standards are rising. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent across all classes and sometimes work is not well matched to pupils' needs. The curriculum has been very successfully focused on improving work in mathematics, English and science. Speaking and listening have been a priority across all subjects and this has improved these but, at times, opportunities are missed for pupils to give extended answers to questions. A consequence of this very focused work on the core subjects has been fewer opportunities for creativity in other subjects.

The leadership of the school has been extremely effective in bringing about rapid improvements. All aspects of teaching are rigorously monitored and reviewed and there is an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning with identified strengths and areas to develop. Additional support is provided to ensure the overall quality is always improving. The governors have been very supportive and have made sure the school is on track to meet the targets it set itself when inspected last year. The evaluation group has been very successful in holding leaders at all levels to account for their work. The school has a good capacity to improve. The local authority (LA) has supported the school well, with good support from subject consultants and close monitoring from other LA advisers. The LA is committed to support the school further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children start in the Nursery with skills and abilities which are well below those expected for their age, particularly with regard to writing, mathematics and their emotional development. From this low starting point, children

make good progress in all areas of their learning and reach just below average standards by the time they start in Year 1. Some boys still need time to catch up with their writing and social skills. This good progress is the result of a well planned curriculum, demonstrating teachers' good understanding of the learning needs of young children, and the caring environment which supports their welfare and helps children feel safe and secure.

The good teaching focuses very well on the basic skills to be learned and gives children a strong basis on which to make progress in the rest of the school. Staff are developing their skills in observing and recording children's learning, although sometimes they miss opportunities to capture individual significant moments of progress. Children learn through exciting activities such as cutting and mashing fruit to make a smoothie and filling gloves with milky water so that they can 'milk' a cow's udder. Children enjoy their tasks and develop good confidence in their own abilities, confidently selecting materials to make a collage or dressing up together to play as animals in the outdoor 'farmyard'. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. Planning for children's activities is consistent across the key stage and staff work closely together, and with parents, to ensure that children's needs are fully met.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the success this year to continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Eliminate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching so that the level of work constantly challenges pupils and teachers ensure pupils give extended answers.
- Continue the work with pupils whose attendance remains persistently low, and their parents or carers, so that overall rates improve.

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

Children enter the school with skills and abilities well below those expected for their age. They make good progress during the Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with standards just below average. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 to reach average standards by the end of Year 2.

Pupils in Year 6 are still attaining standards which are well below average, but there has been a very marked improvement in the level at which they are working. Progress is satisfactory overall because, although pupils are now making good progress and far better than they did when in Year 3, they have not been able to make up for lost ground. Staff use accurate records carefully in order to monitor the progress of pupils so that any underachievement is quickly identified and remedied. Pupils with learning difficulties make similar progress to their peers; for some with most need, very good support means they make better progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils of all ages show good understanding of healthy lifestyles. They respond well to the strong encouragement they are given to eat healthily in school. Sporting and other physical activities such as walking to school and the fun run are seen as 'cool'. Pupils in the unit also

receive very good support so that they are able to reduce stress and anxiety, which also means that their behaviour is generally good, as is that of their peers. This good behaviour demonstrates pupils' outstanding social development and good moral understanding.

Pupils really enjoy school. One pupil said, 'It's fair in school, we are all treated the same.' Whilst others said school was good because their teachers really helped them. Attendance has improved through working closely with parents and families, but it remains low because some children and their families do not value education enough.

Pupils make a valuable contribution to the school and local communities. They have a keen understanding of a variety of different cultures and show good spiritual awareness in some of their writing. They appreciate opportunities to take on responsibility in school. The school council is an influential voice, with pupils of all ages able to contribute. One pupil was very proud of his design for the new play equipment that is displayed in the hall. The whole school community acts as a local hub since it welcomes families and responds well to their needs. Pupils develop valuable workplace skills through group activities and teamwork, but weak numeracy and literacy skills mean their preparation for their future is only satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The strong support by senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning means lessons are generally good and often outstanding. Good planning ensures pupils are enthused and stimulated in enjoyable lessons. They show positive attitudes to learning, and are engaged in their work so that progress is good. However, in some lessons work is not always as well matched to the levels of the different groups within a class.

In good or better lessons clear objectives are used well to show what learning is to take place and teachers refer to them at stages during the lesson to encourage pupils to judge their progress. Although, in some lessons, objectives are imprecise or teachers fail to refer to them.

Teachers offer good opportunities for speaking and listening and have high expectations of pupils' participation and that all answers are given using extended sentences. Teachers make generally good use of questioning to explore pupils' ideas and to encourage them to explain them in detail. This means there are many good opportunities for discussions in pairs, group and whole class, which raises self confidence. However sometimes teachers, content with brief replies, do not question pupils rigorously enough to encourage them to develop their responses.

Most marking is good, with some examples of exemplary practice. These consistently give clear advice for improvement and acknowledge success. Teachers make good use of levels to show pupils what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A strong emphasis on improving standards in English, mathematics and science has meant that pupils are now making good progress in lessons. The curriculum is constantly being refined to ensure areas of weakness identified are quickly rectified. Speaking and listening are integral parts of all lessons and, along with drama, improving the way in which pupils articulate their ideas. The school day starts with a session which focuses closely on supporting identified pupils with phonics and to improve their reading. These sessions have been extended with some

groups to improve mental calculation. The work to improve results in Key Stage 2 tests has been highly beneficial, but the school recognises the need to extend the curriculum to include greater opportunities for creativity and enjoyment.

The school has introduced French and Spanish lessons with some good support from the neighbouring secondary school. Personal, social and health education is very well delivered and highly effective in improving pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, educational visits and visitors to the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Adults in the school work very hard to offer a good level of care, support and guidance. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of their work and is the main reason why pupils' personal development is good. Pupils feel well cared for and are confident that they will be listened to and have their concerns taken seriously. Academic guidance is often very good, but inconsistencies in practice mean that not all pupils receive the same level of regular good advice on how they can improve their work.

Pupils receive a comprehensive range of support to meet their diverse needs, enabling them to derive full benefit from their time in school. The school makes very good use of its links with outside agencies and organisations. Recent marked improvements in attendance have been brought about by working closely with families, as well as pupils themselves, in order to emphasise the benefits of good attendance and to assist them with difficulties in getting to school regularly. The school recognises it needs to build upon these successes to improve further attendance rates.

The needs of pupils in the school's specialist unit are met sympathetically so that many of them are able to progress at the same rate, or better, as other pupils. The support of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well organised and monitored. Pupils feel well prepared for their transition to secondary school. The school has robust, well managed systems for the safeguarding of pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The very strong drive, by the headteacher and deputy, to ensure that pupils make good progress has been instrumental in improving the provision within the school and reversing the downward trend in standards at the end of Key Stage 2. These senior leaders have an excellent overview of the school's strengths in teaching and work very well to bring about improvements to the quality of learning. Teachers are held to account for the progress pupils make in their classes and this has meant progress has increased greatly. Subject leadership is good and has been successful at ensuring greater understanding of effective teaching methods to introduce topics. Subject leaders have also been effective in demonstrating how they have progressed with their work when reporting to the governors' evaluation group. The school is extremely inclusive, but low standards mean that not all pupils reach their potential. However, this is rapidly improving.

Governance is good and ensures aspects of race equality and disability access are monitored. Governors are extremely supportive of the school and also have supported the leadership team well to bring about improvements. The evaluation group has been very effective in holding the

management of the school to account for its work by requiring them to demonstrate the progress made. Governors have worked closely with the school to ensure an accurate self-evaluation. Views from parents are also used well to ensure a comprehensive overview of the school's strengths and areas for development. Parents are very pleased with the school and feel it supports their children very well.

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Annex A

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?	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
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 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	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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	2
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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

13 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bushbury Hill Primary School, Wolverhampton WV10 8BY

I visited your school recently with two colleagues. I was impressed with how well you behave and how polite and courteous you are. Well done, as these attitudes have helped your school get better. The very dedicated work of your headteacher and her deputy, along with all staff, has meant that many things your school does are good. You have helped by working hard and behaving well. You have also improved your attendance, although some of you could make more of an effort and make sure you attend school more. This is an area you, along with your parents, can help yourselves and your school improve. We have judged your school satisfactory overall because for some of you older pupils you have had to make up a lot of work since you were not doing so well when you were in Years 3 and 4.

Teaching has got better and is now good, with many of you saying you enjoyed lessons. We found that some lessons are not as good as others because sometimes the work is not always matched to what you can do. We also thought you had improved your speaking and listening but you do not always answer in full sentences. These are areas we have asked the school to improve. You follow a lot of interesting subjects and I was impressed how many of you enjoyed learning a foreign language, including for some of you answering the register in Welsh. You told us how much you enjoyed trips and I was disappointed I could not go to Kenilworth Castle with some of you, especially as you told me you had such a good day.

You all make better progress in school now compared to a year ago, although standards remain very low mainly because of poor progress in the past. Your school has improved how well you do in English, mathematics and science but there is still more that can be done.

Another reason why your school has got better is the very hard work of your headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff. They have concentrated on making sure you all do well in lessons. They provide very good pastoral support and work very well to help you get better with your work. You said how much you appreciate your teachers when we spoke to some of you at lunchtime.

I hope you all carry on improving and that you do well in the school before you go on to secondary school.

Thanking you once again and wishing you all the best in the future.

Michael Smith Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex B

13 June 2008

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Michael Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector