

Ashwood Park Primary School

Bells Lane, Wordsley, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 5DJ

Inspection dates

20–21 June 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, well supported by an effective team of senior leaders, is committed to ensuring that the school provides a high standard of education. He has established a culture of care and pursuit of achievement that supports the personal development and progress of pupils.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and have the skills and knowledge to hold leaders to account.
- Teachers and support staff share the leaders' expectations and values. As a result, all pupils, including the growing number who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, are well cared for and well supported to make progress.
- Pupils enjoy the school's pleasant and safe environment. They behave well in lessons and around the school. They respect the staff and are grateful for the support teachers and other adults provide them with.
- Children who attend the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress because they benefit from the care and attention of well-qualified and dedicated staff.
- The school supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils effectively.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that is engaging and provides opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and knowledge in a wide range of subjects.
- Staff are well qualified and dedicated, but there are some variations in the effectiveness of practice across the school.
- Leaders have effective systems in place to gather reliable information on pupils' progress. However, they do not sufficiently use their analysis of progress so that it has a direct impact on outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and reduce variations in practice by:
 - ensuring that the effective new approaches implemented by leaders to improve outcomes are fully embedded
 - developing further the programme of staff training based on the school's improvement priorities.
- Further strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - making more extensive use of the analysis of pupils' progress to set challenging targets to raise pupils' aspirations and teachers' expectations.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher knows the school well and shows no complacency in identifying and addressing issues that affect pupils' progress. He was, therefore, able to act decisively and effectively when outcomes declined in 2017. His actions have led to a renewed sense of purpose and urgency in the school.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers form a cohesive and effective team. They share a strong determination to ensure that pupils are taught well and get the support they need to progress.
- The vast majority of staff approve of the actions taken by leaders to sustain the good standard of education that the school provides. They respond well to the ways in which leaders support them and hold them to account for the progress of their pupils.
- Leaders are making sure that the information on pupils' progress they gather is accurate and reliable. They work well with neighbouring schools and the local authority to check that the results of the assessments that teachers conduct are a true reflection of pupils' attainment. Teachers attend moderation meetings throughout the year to compare pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics with that of other schools.
- The curriculum reflects leaders' focus on providing pupils with a well-rounded education. Beyond the specific teaching of reading, writing and mathematics, pupils study topics that cover a wide range of subjects. They have ample opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills while learning about science, computing, geography, religious education or history. The curriculum also includes provision for art and music, as well as outdoor education.
- Pupils do a wide range of activities to enrich their learning. They visit museums and other places of interest. They take part in themed days focused on science, art or cooking. They also attend presentations given by visiting speakers on a range of topics related to their studies. Pupils, parents and carers comment on how enjoyable and beneficial these activities are.
- Leaders rigorously analyse issues that could prevent disadvantaged pupils from achieving well. They pay careful attention to the impact the pupil premium funding has on the progress and personal development of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders make regular checks to ensure that pupils, including the most able, are making good or better progress. They provide additional support when required.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium. As a result, pupils have access to a wide range of sporting activities. The school employs sports coaches who train teachers to deliver effective PE lessons. The sports coaches also run popular after-school clubs and train individual pupils and teams who take part in inter-school competitions. An increasing number of pupils benefit from regular physical activities.
- The school supports the progress and personal development of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities very effectively. When required, the school works well with external agencies. Leaders use the additional funding to provide access to the curriculum and ensure that every pupil receives appropriate support to achieve. The careful

deployment of well-trained staff provides timely and effective interventions. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. An increasing number join the school because of its reputation for providing effective support.

- The school caters effectively for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through the curriculum, as well as the many extra-curricular activities they do, pupils learn to respect others' beliefs and to grasp the importance of the rule of law. The links the headteacher has developed with a school in the Gambia provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to explore cultural differences and world issues.
- Leaders analyse the information they gather on pupils' progress. Their analyses allow them to put in place effective interventions for pupils who underperform. However, leaders do not sufficiently refine these analyses and do not routinely use them to set detailed aspirational targets for pupils to improve their outcomes further.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They contribute effectively to the school's improvement planning and monitor progress against the improvement plans rigorously. They visit the school to gain first-hand experience of the implementation of new initiatives.
- The work of the governing body is well structured. Governors take responsibility for their own training. They commissioned a review by a national leader of governance to ensure that they are fulfilling their duties appropriately and are up to date with the latest developments in education. They have a comprehensive oversight of all aspects of the school, including financial management and the impact of additional funding, such as the pupil premium.
- The governing body holds leaders to account and monitors their actions closely. Governors are knowledgeable and highly committed. They have a very good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and make clear to leaders what their expectations are.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The caring ethos of the school is reflected in its approach to safeguarding. Records are thorough and up to date. Policies and procedures are fit for purpose and support a strong culture of safeguarding. All members of staff receive regular training. Leaders check that all staff are aware of their duty of care and confident to take appropriate action to protect vulnerable pupils. The school works well with families and external agencies to support pupils who are at risk and reach a swift resolution of problems.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They trust adults and know who to talk to if they have problems. They are taught about risks and how to avoid them. They are clear about what they need to do to keep safe when using the internet and social media.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and support staff are conscientious and keen to help pupils. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and lesson time is used productively.
- Subject leaders coordinate the content and delivery of their respective areas of the curriculum effectively. They work well with teachers to plan activities that engage the interest of pupils. The range of activities pupils do in lessons and the variety of work in pupils' books show that teachers devise activities that are designed to address the needs of pupils of various abilities.
- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is done around topics. It is designed to encourage pupils to broaden their knowledge while using their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils are taught to make connections between subjects and have frequent opportunities to write extensively about what they learn.
- Leaders have made the development of reading, especially for boys, a priority. Teachers actively encourage pupils to read often and widely. The refurbishment of the school library and the supply of books linked to the topics covered in the curriculum are supporting the development of reading effectively. The headteacher also supports this school priority by running a book club for boys.
- Teachers regularly assess the work pupils do against the age-related standards set by the national curriculum. They work closely with colleagues from local schools to ensure that the content they teach and their assessment of attainment match what other schools do.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. Their concerted effort is effective in providing support for pupils who find some of the work difficult. As a result, all pupils, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, can develop their understanding and skills across the curriculum.
- Leaders, with the support of the local authority, have introduced new effective approaches to ensure that the majority of pupils successfully attain or exceed the expected standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2. These new approaches are increasingly part of teachers' routine practice, but they are not yet fully embedded or consistently used across the school.
- Staff have access to a range of professional development opportunities. Leaders identify the training needs of individual members of staff through their monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, the school does not have a structured programme of professional development linked to its improvement priorities to ensure greater consistency of practice.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils relate strongly to the school's inclusive ethos. This ethos is illustrated by the effective way the school caters for pupils who are supported by the local authority's

resource base for pupils who have hearing impairment. As a result, pupils are positive about supporting each other and are receptive to the celebration of diversity that the school promotes. Many pupils learn sign language to communicate with their peers who have hearing impairment.

- The school encourages pupils to take on responsibilities to contribute to school life and the well-being of their peers. Pupils get involved as members of the school council, as house captains or as anti-bullying ambassadors. As a result, pupils develop a strong sense of responsibility and play a key role in making the school community cohesive.
- Pupils feel safe at school because they are confident that adults care about them and are there to help them. The school puts great emphasis on creating a safe environment and on teaching pupils to understand and avoid risks.
- Incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour are rare and dealt with effectively. Leaders keep thorough records of incidents. Those records show that leaders follow up issues rigorously and work well with families to support pupils who have emotional issues.
- Parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as those who talked to inspectors, were almost unanimous in saying that their children are well looked after and happy at the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct is overwhelmingly positive. The vast majority of pupils clearly enjoy school and behave well in lessons and during breaktimes. Pupils have a clear understanding of school rules and the vast majority adhere to them willingly.
- Pupils respect adults and get on well with each other. Pupils respond well to adults' instructions and do not challenge their authority. As a result, the school has a calm and pleasant atmosphere.
- Leaders have rigorous and effective policies in place to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. The school's systems to identify and address attendance issues have led to a steady reduction of absences, including persistent absences, over time. When required, leaders work closely with families and external agencies to address issues that may prevent pupils from attending school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Attainment and progress dipped, especially at key stage 2, in reading and mathematics in 2017. Leaders analysed these results closely and concluded that teaching needed to have a sharper focus on reasoning in mathematics and key aspects of comprehension in reading.
- The school's information on the attainment and progress of current cohorts of pupils shows that the strategies leaders implemented are having a positive impact. At both key stages 1 and 2, pupils are making good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points.

- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are making progress which is at least in line with that of other pupils at the school. The school's records show that many pupils who started from low starting points when they joined the school made accelerated progress and are now working at age-related expectations.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good or better progress thanks to the very effective support they get. Pupils in the resource-based provision strongly benefit from being fully included in the school and from the specialist support they receive. Many catch up with their peers at the school and, from low starting points, make good or better progress.
- The school's increased focus on providing appropriate challenge for pupils according to their abilities benefits the most able pupils. The school's information on pupils' progress shows that an increasing number of pupils are working at greater depth.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders know the early years provision well. They are clear about the issues they have to address to ensure that children in the Nursery and Reception classes continue to make good or better progress.
- A large number of children who join the early years have lower speech and language skills than are typical for their age. An increasing number of children have SEN and/or disabilities. Staff conduct rigorous analyses of children's needs when they start and provide targeted support throughout the year. As a result, children's development in the early years is effectively supported and they make good progress towards the national measures of early learning goals and a good level of development.
- The teaching of phonics is well planned and allows all children, including the children who have SEN and/or disabilities, to develop their ability to read with increasing fluency.
- The teaching of early numeracy and literacy is effective. The curriculum is broad and engaging. It offers children a wide range of opportunities to develop their curiosity and desire to learn. Staff are well trained. They direct children's learning and encourage them to develop their independence in equal measure through a variety of activities. The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is well laid out.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes behave well. Learning routines are well established. Children play well with each other and respond well to adults' instructions.
- Children in the resource-based provision are fully included in the early years and benefit from effective support from specialist staff.
- Safeguarding is effective. All adults involved in the early years are vigilant and have the appropriate qualifications and training to provide a high level of care.
- The school actively encourages parents to contribute to their children's education. All parents are involved at the start of the children's learning journals and many continue to be involved throughout the year.

School details

Unique reference number	103818
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10047445

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	305
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Allan Gilhooley
Headteacher	Keith Butler
Telephone number	01384 818545
Website	www.ashwood.dudley.sch.uk/
Email address	info@ashwood.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 February 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The early years comprises a Nursery class for children who attend in the morning and Reception classes for children who attend full time.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2014.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receiving school support is above average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above average.
- The local authority runs a resource-based provision on the school site for 20 children who have hearing impairment. They are educated at the school.

- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected nationally for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 19 lessons, including some jointly with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at their work in books.
- Inspectors took account of the 34 responses and free-text comments on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and talked to parents at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of 51 staff who completed the staff questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the vice-chair and two members of the governing body, the school's senior and middle leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at school documents, including: the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan; minutes of the governing body meetings; the school's information on pupils' progress; planning of work in different subjects; leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Patrick Amieli, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Barry Yeadsley	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Ogden	Ofsted Inspector

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