

Pennyhill Primary School

Hollyhedge Road, West Bromwich, West Midlands B71 3BU

Inspection dates

6–7 March 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Due to staffing difficulties since the last inspection, senior leaders have not secured consistently good teaching throughout key stages 1 and 2. As a result, outcomes over time have not been good enough in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils do not make sufficient progress in reading and mathematics. As a result, standards in these subjects across the school are not high enough, especially for disadvantaged and the most able pupils.
- Although progress for some year groups and groups of pupils is improving, progress rates are still variable.
- Curriculum subjects, other than English and mathematics, are not well developed. As a result, pupils' progress across these subjects is limited. Pupils' work is not of an equally high standard in all subjects.
- Across key stages 1 and 2, the quality of teaching varies. In some classes, work is not challenging enough or too hard for pupils' different abilities. This hinders learning.
- Leaders' monitoring and evaluations of teaching and learning have been overly generous. As a result, the impact of leaders' work to improve teaching and learning has been variable.
- Leaders' monitoring and evaluation of school development activities have focused too heavily on teachers' compliance with school policies and procedures, rather than their impact on pupils' learning. As a result, opportunities have been missed to improve more rapidly pupils' learning and outcomes.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to other pupils but this is not fast enough to help them catch up to national age-related expectations.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders are enthusiastic and committed to improving pupil outcomes.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their individual starting points.
- The quality of teaching is improving. This is leading to better learning opportunities for current pupils.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is effective.
- Procedures for attending to pupils' welfare and safety are good. Safeguarding is effective.
- Most pupils behave well in school. They are proud of their school and feel safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure:
 - monitoring is more precisely evaluating the effectiveness of leaders' actions on improving the quality of teaching and learning
 - assessment information is further refined so it enables leaders to evaluate the impact of actions to accelerate pupil progress more effectively
 - school development activities are carefully prioritised, sharply focused on key weaknesses in school and are accurately evaluated to ensure that they are having an impact on improving outcomes for pupils
 - subject-specific skills, knowledge and understanding in subjects other than English and mathematics are fully developed, so pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
 - pupils have more opportunities to apply their English and mathematical skills across the curriculum to the same standard they demonstrate in literacy and numeracy.
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching in order to accelerate progress and raise pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics across key stages 1 and 2 by:
 - ensuring that assessment information is used effectively so that pupils receive the right level of challenge to meet their needs, enabling them to make good progress, especially for the most able and disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that teachers further develop their use of reading assessment information to precisely develop pupils' fluency and understanding of what they have read
 - ensuring that pupils have opportunities to solve real-life problems in mathematics and further develop their basic arithmetic and reasoning skills
 - enabling staff to share and learn from effective practice within school to further improve teaching.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders can demonstrate improvements in teaching and learning but for some leaders their impact has only recently started to improve progress for pupils.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The improvement plan is very comprehensive and it is appropriate to address the school's areas of weakness. However, there are too many initiatives operating at the same time, creating competing demands on time and resources for leaders and staff.
- Leaders' monitoring of their school improvement work is extensive. However, until recently, evaluations of the impact of their work have focused on compliance with school policies and procedures rather than on improving the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. As a result, pupils have limited opportunities to develop subject-specific skills other than in English and mathematics. Thus, pupils' progress in wider curriculum subjects is limited. The standard of work produced in the wider curriculum is often not of the same standard as in English and mathematics lessons.
- Since the last inspection, the school has experienced staffing difficulties but staffing is now more stable. Leaders' support is having a positive impact on staff development. As a result, there have been improvements in writing across the school, behaviour has improved and attendance is improving. Leaders recognise there is more to do to ensure that teaching and learning, including the teaching of reading and mathematics, are consistently good.
- Pupil premium funding is used appropriately to support pupils' social, emotional and well-being needs. As a result, incidents of poor behaviour among disadvantaged pupils have reduced and their attendance has started to improve. Funding is also used effectively to provide interventions to support pupils' progress in reading and mathematics. Leaders monitor the impact of interventions regularly.
- Leadership of physical education (PE) and sport premium is effective and the leader knows the school's strengths and weaknesses well. As a result of targeted support, teachers' subject knowledge and the quality of teaching of PE and sport has improved. The use of additional funding has helped to increase the numbers of pupils accessing sporting activities. The school monitors closely the number of pupils who are able to swim. Those who are not likely to meet the expected standard by the end of Year 6 receive additional swimming sessions.
- Support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective. Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching, provision and outcomes for pupils. The assessment process to identify pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is thorough and the leader knows the needs of individual pupils well. The majority of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making appropriate progress. Where pupils are not making the progress that they should, this is identified quickly and effective support is put in place.
- Pupils learn about many different religions and show respect, tolerance and

understanding of other cultures and beliefs. Pupils spoke very positively about how much they had learned from an event held at school to celebrate Caribbean Cultural Day.

- Pupils report that teachers and school leaders listen to their concerns and they feel that they have an influence on improving their school. For example, pupils were recently involved in designing the improvements planned for the playground.
- Parents and carers who spoke to inspectors during the inspection or who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were generally positive about improvements in the school. A minority of parents expressed concerns about the school but inspectors did not find that these concerns were well founded.

Governance of the school

- In response to a review of governance, governors have taken effective steps to strengthen the structure and membership of the governing body. Governors now have the necessary skills to carry out their statutory roles and responsibilities and governance is effective.
- Governors ensure that they complete required training and understand the expectations of their roles. As a result, governors are now more focused on the quality of teaching and standards of achievement provided by the school.
- The minutes of recent meetings show that governors are becoming more effective in holding leaders to account for the school's progress. However, in the past, information provided for governors about the quality of teaching, learning and progress has been overly generous. As a result, governors have not had an accurate view of current standards and the impact of school improvement work by leaders.
- Governors ensure that leaders fulfil all their obligations to keep pupils safe. They check on how well the school protects those individual pupils who require additional support and who may be vulnerable. Governors monitor how effectively leaders implement the school's agreed policies and procedures.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's policies and practice demonstrate an informed awareness of the risks pupils may face including the dangers of extreme views and prejudices.
- The culture around keeping pupils safe is strong throughout the school. Leaders and the vast majority of staff have completed a range of safeguarding training, including how to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and exploitation.
- Checks on the suitability of staff are comprehensive and help to ensure that all who work at the school, or visit regularly, are suitable to work with children.
- Staff teach pupils how to keep safe when using the internet and how to ensure their personal safety. Pupils know that an adult will help them if they have a concern or problem.
- Pupils who require medicine in school have access to it when needed. Any medications

are stored correctly. First-aid arrangements are fit for purpose. The school site is well maintained.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. Consequently, the rates of pupils' progress vary across classes and subjects. Over time, some pupils fail to reach the standards expected for their age, especially those who are disadvantaged and/or the most able pupils across key stage 2. More recently, leaders and staff have started to improve the quality of teaching, but it remains uneven.
- Across the school, there is some strong teaching and questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding and move pupils' learning on. However, where teaching is less effective, teachers do not ensure that learning is sufficiently challenging and that pupils are making progress. As a result, learning does not always meet the needs of all groups of pupils, limiting their progress.
- Most pupils work hard in lessons and are eager to please their teachers. Pupils want to do well in their learning and this is evident in the pride they show in their work. Teachers model new ideas well to support pupils in developing an accurate understanding of concepts.
- Some teachers do not use assessment information effectively to ensure the right level of challenge for pupils. Sometimes the work is too easy or too hard and this slows pupils' learning. Sometimes pupils are not directed well enough by adults to ensure that they choose the right level of challenge for their work. When this happens it can lead to some pupils losing focus. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress that they should within lessons.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength. Younger pupils have well-developed early reading skills. However, older pupils' progress in reading is variable because they have weaknesses in their reading fluency and in understanding the meaning of words and text. This is due to weak teaching they have received in the past.
- Reading is now well promoted throughout the school, with engaging displays, challenges and initiatives to inspire pupils' interest and enthusiasm. A well-equipped library along with inviting and imaginative classroom reading areas encourage pupils to learn about authors and read for pleasure.
- Although the teaching of mathematics is helping pupils to acquire basic arithmetic skills, until recently, too few pupils have been given opportunities to apply, use and practise their skills using reasoning, logic and problem-solving.
- Teachers generally follow the school's feedback and marking policy.
- The vast majority of teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils' learning. They work confidently and knowledgeably with groups and individuals, providing appropriate support. However, sometimes they are not able to provide effective challenge because the focus for learning is not clear.
- Support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective across the school, both in classes and in small intervention groups.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' safety is promoted in a variety of ways, for example through regular assemblies, displays around school, school newsletters and school visitors. The school's extensive work on e-safety helps keep pupils safe at school and at home when accessing the internet and other digital media.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, stated their child felt safe in school. Pupils said incidents of bullying are rare but, if they do occur, adults act swiftly to deal with them. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as online bullying.
- Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility, for example by acting as prefects, being part of the school eco council and raising money for charity.
- Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to develop a good insight into other cultures, religions and traditions. Pupils spoken to by inspectors have a good understanding of the importance of tolerance and respect for the beliefs, ideas and views of others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to their studies are good and they generally present their work neatly. In most lessons, they concentrate very well. However, when work is not properly matched to pupils' abilities, a small number of pupils become disengaged and they lose concentration, limiting their progress during the lesson.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and have a strong sense of pride in their school.
- Most pupils behave well around school because they understand the need for rules and show mutual respect for one another. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. Leaders and most parents report that the behaviour of pupils has improved over the last year. This is because of leaders' high expectations about conduct and behaviour. Exclusions occur rarely and they are used only as a last resort.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because the school's own information and inspection evidence show that the school's current pupils are not making consistently strong progress. This applies most notably in reading and mathematics, reflecting the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Progress is limited when work is not effectively matched to pupils' needs and some gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding remain.
- In 2017, outcomes at the end of key stages 1 and 2 show that pupils have made progress in writing which was similar to the national average. The progress in reading and mathematics was below that seen nationally. The 2017 results were not as strong

in reading and mathematics as those in 2016.

- Academic standards reached at the end of key stage 1 are in line with age-related expectations and more pupils are now achieving at the higher standards expected for their age. Consequently, most pupils are well prepared for their move into key stage 2. However, in 2017, too many pupils, including the most able, left key stage 2 poorly prepared for secondary school because of a legacy of poor teaching.
- Recent improvements to teaching are driving improved rates of progress for current pupils. Many pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are now making the progress they should in writing. However, in reading and mathematics the rates of progress need to increase for some pupils. Leaders have taken effective action where they have identified progress has slowed to arrest any further decline. Currently in Year 6, more pupils are working at the standards expected for their age than in the past.
- Over the last three years, the results of the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 and the Year 2 re-check have been at least in line with the national average. As a result, pupils are well prepared to develop good early reading skills.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive effective additional support. As a result, these pupils make the progress that they should.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making progress in line with other pupils in the school. However, they are not making rapid enough progress to catch up with other pupils nationally.

Early years provision

Good

- In both Nursery and Reception, children work purposefully with activities that stimulate their interest and imagination. Teaching pays careful attention to developing children's early literacy and numeracy skills. Classrooms provide plenty of opportunities for them to play, explore, cooperate, discuss, make decisions, discover and imagine. However, the outside space is not routinely used as effectively as it could be to develop children's learning.
- As a result of adults knowing their children well, they are able to adapt teaching effectively to ensure that children receive the right level of challenge. Consequently, children make good progress from low starting points.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development is broadly similar to the national average. As a result, children are well prepared for the challenges of Year 1. This is because of effective teaching.
- The teaching of phonics is effective, therefore children make good progress in developing early reading skills. Children use their phonic skills well to help them sound out unknown words to support their writing. There are frequent opportunities for children to write. This enables them to apply and practise their developing skills as writers. Children enjoy writing and show resilience and perseverance when writing independently.
- Children have well-developed knowledge and understanding of the value of number. This is because adults have a secure understanding of mathematics, and use this to ensure that pupils receive the right level of challenge in their learning to enable them

to make good progress.

- Effective safety and supervision arrangements are in place, both indoors and outside, so adults know where children are and if anyone needs help. Children get on well with one another and there is plenty of lively, good-natured and productive talk between children in all classrooms.
- Parents and carers are actively encouraged to be a part of their child's learning in partnership with staff. Staff value parental contributions to children's learning. This relationship between home and school sets the foundations for a productive, mutually supportive learning journey through the early years. However, the school has yet to ensure that all parents see the value in good attendance and this hampers the progress of a small number of pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	135215
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10042868

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

Type of school	All-through primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	704
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jagjeet Padam
Headteacher	Elaine Williams
Telephone number	0121 588 2230
Website	www.pennyhill.sandwell.sch.uk/
Email address	enquiries@pennyhill.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 March 2016

Information about this school

- Pennyhill Primary is a larger than average, three-form entry primary school with a nursery class.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- In 2017, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress for pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the DfE's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 36 lessons. Inspectors conducted some lesson observations jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors observed pupils at other times during the school day at playtimes, lunchtimes and assemblies.
- The inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, other leaders and newly qualified teachers. Inspectors also spoke to staff informally during the inspection. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority adviser who acts as the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors met with pupils and held informal discussions with them throughout the inspection.
- The inspection team looked at examples of pupils' work in their visits to classrooms. They also scrutinised samples of work from a wide range of subjects for some pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6.
- Two inspectors listened to some pupils from Years 1, 4 and 6 read.
- The inspectors considered a wide range of documents. These included the school's development plans, evaluations of the school's progress, and the formal review of governance. Inspectors also considered minutes of governors' meetings, school policies, local authority reports on the performance of the school and assessment information. Inspectors scrutinised detailed records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- The inspection team took account of 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 53 comments made using Ofsted's free-text service. Inspectors also took account of the school's own survey of parental opinion. No staff or pupil surveys were available for inspectors to consider during the inspection.

Inspection team

John Demmerling, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nadeem Bhatti	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Jones	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca Nash	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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