

# Moat Hall Primary School

John's Lane, Great Wyrley, Walsall, West Midlands WS6 6BX

## Inspection dates

7–8 November 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Turbulence in leadership and staff changes over the last few years have meant that improvement strategies have not been sustained or implemented effectively.
- There has been a decline in the school's performance since the last inspection. Not enough pupils attain the expected standard in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Over time, the quality of teaching varies too much. In some classes teaching is very effective and in others it requires improvement. Teachers' expectations are not always high enough.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account robustly enough. They do not have a good enough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have been too slow to act when standards have fallen.
- Leaders do not use the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- Teachers do not teach some aspects of the curriculum effectively, including religious education and cultural development. This means that pupils do not achieve well in these areas.
- Support for pupils with challenging behaviour requires improvement. The school's exclusion rate is high and has been rising over time.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the national average. However, too many pupils take holidays during term-time.
- Teaching in the early years requires improvement. The most able children are not challenged enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher is taking speedy action to tackle the school's weaknesses. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving more rapidly than in the past.
- Teaching assistants support the needs of individual pupils well. This helps them to make faster progress.
- The teaching of reading in the early years and key stage 1 is effective. Pupils enjoy reading and demonstrate good phonics skills.
- Staff are committed to improving outcomes for all pupils. They have worked hard to create a positive and supportive learning environment.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure good teaching and learning in all classes so that pupils make the progress of which they are capable by ensuring that all teachers:
  - share the same consistently high expectations about what pupils can achieve
  - plan work which is carefully matched to the abilities of all pupils
  - explain clearly to pupils the intended learning outcomes of tasks.
- Improve the effectiveness and impact of leadership and management by ensuring that senior leaders:
  - build into the curriculum opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and cultures
  - create an effective pupil premium strategy so that funding is better targeted and leads to raised levels of achievement for disadvantaged pupils
  - support new middle leaders so they implement improvement plans effectively and contribute strongly to raising standards across the school.
- Improve achievement in writing by:
  - providing teachers with the training, knowledge and understanding to teach writing effectively
  - ensuring that teachers more effectively support pupils to edit and improve their writing
  - providing pupils with meaningful and regular opportunities to develop their extended writing skills across the curriculum.
- Improve behaviour and attendance by:
  - providing better support for pupils with the most challenging behaviour so the exclusion rate is reduced
  - leaders taking more strident action to deter term-time holidays and reduce the persistent absence rate.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by ensuring that:
  - all governors have the necessary skills and knowledge to hold school leaders strongly to account for the school's performance
  - the school's website is fully compliant with the government's requirements.
- Improve the early years provision so children make better progress by ensuring that teachers provide challenging activities that stretch all children, including the most able.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Changes in leadership, staffing and governance over the last few years have resulted in school improvement initiatives being started but not finished. This has hindered school improvement and has led to pupils falling behind in their learning.
- Elements of weak leadership in the past have led to pupils not attaining the standards of which they are capable. Until of late, leaders' and governors' checks on the school's performance were not robust enough; they did not consider pupils' outcomes with enough rigour. This led to the school's evaluation of its own performance being both inaccurate and overgenerous.
- Since the time of the previous inspection, leaders and governors allowed the quality of education provided to deteriorate. Pupils' achievement fell to below average and leaders did not take sufficient action to address the decline in the school's performance. Only after local authority involvement last academic year did leaders and governors take more decisive action to halt the decline.
- Until recently, leaders have not made sure that all pupils received a good-quality, broad and balanced curriculum. Subject leaders did not check to ensure that pupils were receiving their full curriculum entitlement. As a consequence, pupils' knowledge and understanding in some subjects, such as religious education, are limited.
- Leaders' evaluation of the effectiveness of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is not thorough enough. This has meant that disadvantaged pupils have not achieved as well as they could have because resources have not been targeted effectively. New leaders have made this a priority for improvement. Improved use of these funds is already beginning to have a positive effect on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Previous actions to address weaknesses in teaching were ineffective because leaders did not check to see that agreed actions had been carried through into practice. For example, teachers received training in the teaching of writing but this remains a weakness.
- The new headteacher, appointed in September 2017, has wasted no time in identifying the school's strengths and the areas which require improvement. She has made an accurate evaluation and acted swiftly to begin addressing some of the issues around teaching. The headteacher has raised the bar, which has in turn started to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of doing.
- Leaders now undertake regular monitoring of lessons, teachers' planning and pupils' outcomes. This provides them with a much more realistic view of the quality of teaching than in the past. Leaders use this information well to identify weaknesses and offer training and development for staff to help them to improve.
- Middle leaders have not taken enough responsibility for improving standards in their subjects across the school. Many subject leaders have only taken up their responsibilities at the start of this academic year. Some of them, including the special

educational needs coordinator, are already bringing about improvements to pupils' learning as a result of their work.

- The headteacher has revised and put in place more rigorous arrangements for teachers' performance management. This has ensured that there is a much closer link between teachers' performance and their pay.
- The large majority of staff welcome the changes that the new headteacher has already implemented. They say the headteacher 'is moving us in the right direction' and is running 'a tighter ship'. Staff are committed to making the necessary changes to improve the school.
- Leaders make effective use of the sports premium funding to improve teachers' skills in teaching physical education (PE). This funding has also been used to expose pupils to a wider range of sports through extra-curricular clubs. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by these activities. After-school clubs include football, science and choir. Clubs are well attended.
- The majority of parents and carers say that their children are well looked after at school. Several parents raised concerns about the lack of communication between home and school, especially in relation to some of the recent changes brought in by the new headteacher.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance has been weakened by the high number of changes to the governing body and by governors' lack of knowledge and understanding of pupils' assessment information. This has meant that governors have not been able to hold leaders to account for the school's performance rigorously enough.
- Governors have not made sure that the school's website contains the required information as stipulated by the Department for Education. As a result, parents are not as informed as they should be about the school's work.
- While governors visit school and have some knowledge of how the school operates, they do not systematically evaluate the school's performance thoroughly enough. However, more recently they have made headway in reviewing their structure and the way that they work. They acknowledge their weaknesses and show a willingness to improve.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders responsible for safeguarding have addressed the previous weaknesses in safeguarding procedures and practice. All staff are clear about reporting procedures for dealing with children who may be at risk of harm. Teachers and others are constantly alert to any changes in a child's behaviour that may indicate that the child is at risk. They are quick to take action to ensure that pupils remain safe. Staff are proactive in identifying those pupils and/or their families that would benefit from early help. Leaders have developed effective partnerships with other agencies to make a positive difference to keeping pupils safe.

- Staff receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge about safeguarding matters is always kept up to date. Leaders have built safeguarding into their weekly briefing as a standing agenda item so staff remain constantly aware that 'it could happen here'. Leaders take the appropriate measures to ensure that all staff are safely recruited.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school and are safe. They say that they have a trusted person in school that they could go to if they have any worries or a problem. The site is secure and access to the building is controlled appropriately.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good throughout the school. In some classes teaching is very effective and pupils make good progress as a result. In other classes, pupils make less progress because teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are too low. Leaders' recent initiatives to improve the quality of teaching have already begun to address some of these inconsistencies.
- Sometimes, teachers are unclear about what learning they are expecting to take place. They focus too much on pupils completing a task rather than on the quality of their learning. This leads to pupils working through an activity without a full understanding of what they are expected to learn, which slows their progress.
- Occasionally, teachers set work for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities that is not appropriate for their current level of understanding. Consequently, pupils struggle to complete work and make too little progress in their learning.
- Too often, teachers set work for pupils, particularly the most able, that is too easy. In other classes, teachers provide pupils with more choice to select a task that is matched to their ability. Due to this inconsistency in approach, too many pupils are not challenged as well as they might be and therefore do not attain the levels of which they are capable.
- The teaching of writing is not effective enough. Teachers' subject knowledge is not well developed. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to edit and improve their writing or for pupils to develop their writing skills in different subjects. These weaknesses slow pupils' progress in improving the quality of their writing.
- The teaching of reading in key stage 1 is good. Pupils use their phonics to successfully blend and segment words as a result of accurate teaching. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' participation and engagement. Consequently, pupils respond enthusiastically and achieve well, demonstrating a good understanding of what they read.
- Teaching assistants add value to pupils' learning and achievement in most lessons. They support pupils well during group sessions by guiding them and asking helpful questions to improve pupils' understanding, providing assistance only when necessary. In some classes, teachers very skilfully check on the work of teaching assistants to ensure that their work helps pupils to make accelerated progress.

- Teachers have a good awareness of what disadvantaged pupils need to do to catch up. Many, but not all, are well supported. Evidence from work in their books shows that these pupils are making increasing rates of progress.
- Teachers are adept in asking a range of questions to explore pupils' understanding. Most teachers check pupils' responses to their work and provide useful feedback to move them on. For example, a teacher used open-ended questions effectively, which helped pupils to understand the process of 'column addition' in mathematics.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' personal development is not yet consistently taught well because the personal, social and health education programme is not delivered regularly and according to the planned scheme of work. There are few checks to ensure that pupils' experiences follow the agreed plan.
- Teachers help pupils to develop their spiritual, social and moral development effectively. For example, in school assembly pupils were encouraged to discuss acts of kindness. However, teachers are not as successful in supporting pupils' cultural development. Consequently, pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- In almost all classes, strong and positive relationships built upon mutual respect exist between pupils and staff. Pupils are keen to please their teachers because staff value their responses. Discriminatory behaviour is rare.
- The vast majority of pupils are confident and were keen to speak positively to inspectors about their school experience. Pupils contribute actively to the school community. For example, some older pupils act as prefects and help the younger pupils.
- Leaders take pupils' views seriously. The members of the active school council, democratically elected, meet weekly and chart their work with specific projects on a 'progress board'. For example, they contributed their ideas to improving the playground environment and secured a new 'trim trail'.
- Pupils have a good knowledge about personal safety, including the risks from grooming and online behaviour. They say that bullying occasionally happens, although it is usually resolved quickly and when necessary with the help of teachers.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour in classrooms is typically good. Most pupils listen to staff attentively, usually remain focused on their work and try hard. Pupils get along well with their

fellow classmates and work together cooperatively. Older pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved significantly since the arrival of the new headteacher.

- Occasionally, where teaching is less effective, a few pupils become disengaged. This happens when work is too difficult and they are not given the necessary support from the teacher. Leaders have put in place an effective behaviour management system which celebrates positive behaviour and discourages poor behaviour. Pupils understand the system well and know what is expected of them.
- Pupils' behaviour out of class is not as good. Pupils' raised voices and more boisterous behaviour prevail in corridors when adult supervision is reduced.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Last year, the persistent absence rate was above the national rate. However, so far this academic year it has reduced as a result of the concerted efforts of leaders to improve attendance through a range of incentives. Despite leaders refusing to authorise term-time holidays, too many parents continue to take pupils out of school for holidays.
- Pupils with challenging behaviour are often supported by a range of external agencies. However, despite this support, the school's exclusion rate, particularly in relation to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, remains high in comparison with national figures. This means that these vulnerable pupils miss even more time from school.
- Pupils' presentation in books is generally improving across classes as a result of leaders' recent focus on this area. Pupils have responded well to the raised expectations, although teachers do not always model good handwriting in pupils' books.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because the progress of individual pupils, including disadvantaged and the most able pupils, has not improved quickly enough, especially in writing. The new headteacher is tackling the legacy of underachievement to ensure that all pupils catch up. Consequently, improved teaching and learning is currently having a positive impact on the progress of the majority of pupils.
- Provisional 2017 national test information shows that pupils' progress in reading and mathematics in key stage 2 was broadly similar to national averages. Weaker teaching of writing over time has meant that pupils make slower progress than that seen nationally. Pupils' current work in their writing books indicates that some are still not making good enough progress.
- Previously, attainment in key stage 1 had been below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Provisional 2017 information indicates that standards have noticeably improved, although they remain just below average in reading and writing. The proportion of pupils who achieved at the expected standard in mathematics was broadly average.
- As a result of improved teaching, current pupils in key stage 1 are making better gains in their early reading skills. Following a three-year decline in the Year 1 phonics screening check, outcomes improved in 2017. The proportion of pupils passing the

phonics screening check increased markedly and was almost in line with the national average.

- Current pupils' work and the school's own assessment information show signs of improved progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. However, progress in writing remains variable. Despite the school's renewed focus on disadvantaged pupils, not all are making fast enough progress to enable them to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- Progress for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is inconsistent. When pupils are supported effectively and given appropriate work matched to their needs they achieve well. At other times, tasks and support are not so precisely targeted so pupils do not learn as well as they could.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Leadership of the early years is developing. The leader, who is new to the role, has some understanding of the emerging priorities. However, she does not yet have an in-depth evaluation of the quality of all aspects of early years provision. This hinders the leader's ability to set development plan priorities and address all areas currently requiring improvement.
- The early years leader has already introduced several new initiatives which have begun to improve practice across the early years. The leader is well supported in her new role and is demonstrating the capacity and determination to make further improvements.
- There has been some variation in outcomes by the end of Reception. In 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was just above the national average. In 2017, it fell slightly below. Leaders are unclear about the reasons for this.
- Teaching is improving, although it is not yet consistently good. Teachers plan meaningful tasks which children respond to well. Most children spend sustained amounts of time consolidating their learning and are keen to try out different activities. However, sometimes teachers do not use assessment information as well as they should to plan the next steps. This holds back some children, particularly the most able.
- The teaching of early reading skills is effective and children confidently use their growing phonic knowledge to work out how to read unknown words. They transfer these skills to their writing and are able to write words which can be read. There are fewer opportunities for children to write freely and for different purposes. As a result, children's progress in writing is slower than in reading.
- Learning journals of current children evidence improving rates of progress across a range of areas of learning. Teachers are beginning to use this information to build a picture of children's current capabilities and inform the planning of next steps in learning.
- Teachers and other adults support children's play in sessions sensitively and use a range of questions to encourage vocabulary development. For example, a teacher

skilfully encouraged children's good speaking skills through a dialogue about Guy Fawkes.

- Children usually behave well and are supported effectively by adults to do so. Most are confident to access all areas of the curriculum, demonstrating that they feel safe and secure. This is as a result of the supportive ethos created and established by adults. For example, a group of children worked together cooperatively in the malleable area to make pretend birthday cakes.
- Safeguarding arrangements in the early years are effective. Children feel safe and secure. Staff follow the same rigorous safeguarding procedures as they do in the rest of the school.
- Parents spoke positively about how their children have quickly settled into Nursery and the Reception classes. They say that they feel welcomed into school. Parents are invited to share their children's achievements from home with school staff. This enables early years staff to plan a wider range of learning opportunities based on children's interests.

## School details

Unique reference number	124191
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10037872

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	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Deakin
Headteacher	Jane King
Telephone number	01922 660960
Website	<a href="http://www.moathall.staffs.sch.uk">www.moathall.staffs.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@moathall.staffs.sch.uk">headteacher@moathall.staffs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	21–22 May 2013

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about admission arrangements, pupil premium, PE and sports premium or the accessibility plan on its website.
- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has a Nursery which is managed by the governing body.
- Almost all pupils are White British. A very low proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported with a statement of special educational needs, an education, health and care plan, or through special educational needs support is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.

- The school met the government's floor standard in 2016. This is the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed lessons across the school, which included some joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors reviewed a wide range of pupils' work in books and on classroom walls.
- Inspectors interviewed groups of pupils, including the school council. They spoke to many pupils during lessons and at other times to gather their views.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and a range of other leaders. One inspector met with 24 school staff to gather their opinions. The lead inspector held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- An inspector met with the chair of the governing body. No other governors were available to attend the governors' meeting during the inspection.
- Responses from 43 parents and carers to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and 41 free-text responses from parents were analysed. Inspectors also gathered the views of parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors listened to several pupils of various ages read.
- Inspectors considered 22 responses to the staff questionnaire and 21 responses from the pupil survey.
- The inspection team took into account a wide range of information including the school's website, development plan, assessment information from its pupil tracking system and leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning. Inspectors reviewed documentation relating to safeguarding, as well as governing body minutes and notes of visits from the local authority.

## Inspection team

Tim Hill, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Deborah Allen	Ofsted Inspector
Wayne Simner	Ofsted Inspector

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