

Roberts Primary School

Robert Street, Lower Gornal, Dudley, DY3 2AZ

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children get off to a good start and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are making good and improving progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and standards are rising.
- Gaps in achievement between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils have considerably narrowed and some have closed.
- Teachers have high expectations and there are strong and positive relationships between teachers and pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school, and they feel safe in school. Their ability to work together in pairs and groups is excellent.
- Pupils' progress in science and their enjoyment of it is particularly marked in Key Stage 2.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has developed strong leaders throughout the school. All staff share a desire to improve and this is improving teaching and driving up pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders have introduced excellent systems for checking pupils' progress. Any underachievement of individual pupils is dealt with quickly and effectively in this improving school.
- The governing body's understanding of the day-to-day work of the school has improved since the previous inspection. They set challenging targets for school leaders and work very effectively as a team in support of the school.
- The school makes excellent use of the opportunities for learning offered by the extensive outdoor areas and the Environment Zone.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils currently in Key Stage 2 do not consistently reach the same standards in their spelling and punctuation that they do in other aspects of their learning.
- The school does not always communicate swiftly and effectively with all parents.
- The school does not track the attendance of specific groups of pupils closely enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, five of which were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspection team looked at pupils' work in their books and listened to younger pupils read.
- There were meetings with groups of pupils, senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 81 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and considered the 31 responses to a staff questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the 89 responses by parents to a recent questionnaire from the school.
- The inspection team examined: the school's own information on pupils' recent and current progress; the school's evaluation of how well it is doing and its records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Richard Boswell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stuart Ransom

Additional Inspector

Edgar Hastings

Additional Inspector

Suha Ahmad

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Roberts Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The percentage of pupils who are supported through the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school runs both before and after school clubs. It also manages the Environment Zone, an outdoor facility, for the use of its own pupils and those from other schools.
- A very small number of pupils attend provision away from the school site on a part time basis at Quarry Bank Language Unit.
- Six pupils from outside of the school who have statements of educational needs attend the school nursery.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise achievement in English by making sure that teachers in Key Stage 2 consistently show the same high expectations of their pupils' spelling and punctuation that they do in the teaching of other skills.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that the school regularly checks that information reaches all parents and that any concerns receive a swift response
 - examining closely the attendance of groups of pupils so that any patterns can be quickly identified and appropriate action taken.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children usually start in Nursery with skills and understanding that are below and sometimes well below those typical for their age, particularly in their knowledge and understanding of numbers. They go on to achieve standards at the end of Key Stage 2 that are at least in line with those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Although there was a dip in the achievement of pupils in national tests in 2013, actions taken by school leaders have led to a strong improvement in the progress of pupils currently in Key Stages 1 and 2. Many of these pupils have made accelerated progress in the last school year.
- Pupils demonstrate an eagerness to learn, and their progress and attainment have shown a considerable improvement since the start of the new school year. The current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' books and the work seen in lessons conformed to this pattern, including for more-able pupils and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Pupils' progress in other subjects, particularly in science, is also good. However, the use of correct spelling and punctuation by pupils in Key Stage 2 is not always of the same high standard.
- The gap in the attainment of those pupils in Year 6 who were supported by additional funding and others in the school narrowed from 2012 to 2013, by one term in both English and mathematics. This gap has narrowed again in 2014. The gap lower down the school between pupils supported by additional funding and others in the school is closing or has closed. This is as a result of carefully targeted additional teaching in small groups and one to one.
- Children make very good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of well-chosen, stimulating activities, both indoors and outside, leading to rapidly developing skills. Foundation Stage and older pupils now receive a strong grounding in the understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and the most recent results in the national screening check for phonics were much improved on the previous year. Children in the Nursery with enhanced provision places from the Dudley Early Years Service are well supported and are fully integrated in play and activities with other children.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very well supported throughout their time in the school. Identification of individual needs is swift and additional expertise and support is arranged as required. The school's commitment to equal opportunities is evident in the good progress these pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who attend part-time provision beyond the school also make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the previous inspection inadequate teaching has been eradicated and the quality of teaching over time has been good. Senior leaders make accurate judgements about strengths and weaknesses when monitoring lessons and teachers have many opportunities to learn from colleagues in order to improve their practice further. Newly qualified teachers are particularly well supported by a systematic programme of coaching and mentoring.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching of mathematics through the school year have led to all pupils finding a 'way in' to understanding the subject through practical examples of its use in everyday life. This has particularly benefited pupils who do not find the concepts easy to grasp and those pupils who have special educational needs. In English, however, the teaching of

correct spelling and punctuation is not as consistently good as that of other skills.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage well planned activities are linked to children's interests, are well resourced and cover all areas of learning. Teachers are skilled at identifying the children's next steps and closing the gaps in their understanding. The high quality recording of children's 'learning journeys' means that their progress is regularly and accurately assessed.
- Teachers make very good use of the outside spaces for a wide variety of lessons. For example pupils learn to collect and handle data from the solar panels and wind turbine and to undertake research into the abundant wildlife in the Environment Zone.
- Pupils are well prepared by teachers for their studies at secondary school. They have particularly strong skills in science in Key Stage 2 and their books demonstrate good gains in their understanding of scientific methods and processes. More-able pupils are given work in all subjects that allows them to explore topics in depth and at length. For example, in Year 5 pupils compare and contrast war poetry from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and consider its wider moral and social implications.
- Support staff are well qualified, appropriately deployed and highly effective in the classroom and in one to one and group work. They make a particularly strong contribution to raising the achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs as well as pupils who are supported by additional funding.
- There are strong relationships based on mutual respect between teachers and pupils. These lead to pupils having very positive attitudes to their learning which are evident in the pride they show in the presentation of work in their books and their eagerness to engage in debate and discussion in the classroom.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. During their time in the school they develop as confident, responsible and caring individuals. This is supported by pupils taking on a wide range of responsibilities in the school such as membership of the school council or the very active environment committee.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning in the classroom, from Reception Year to older pupils and any disruption is rare and swiftly addressed. Older pupils spoke to inspectors about improvements in pupils' behaviour during their time in the school and the pride they have in their school. This is also clear in the smart appearance of their uniform and their books show that they respond very positively to work linked to creative and imaginative themes.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school responds swiftly to any concerns that arise about the safety of the school site and pupils show a good level of understanding and involvement in the management of their own safety including on the internet. Pupils are very clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and that the small number of incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The school works closely with parents of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and provides a safe and secure setting for all pupils. School records show that staff are well trained in managing the occasional challenging behaviours ensuring that other pupils' learning is not disrupted.

- The school has worked hard to improve attendance and it is now in line with the national average. A family support worker engages with a wide range of parents and good attendance is rewarded and celebrated in whole school assemblies. Any temporary exclusions are very rare and since the previous inspection there have been no permanent exclusions.
- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because the school does not regularly examine the attendance of different groups of pupils in order to identify any emerging patterns of absence that can be swiftly dealt with.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has recognised the need to significantly improve the quality of teaching and to raise achievement. He has successfully achieved this by establishing a strong and determined team of school leaders and staff who share a common set of high expectations. The deputy headteacher and all other school leaders have brought fresh ideas and expertise and have taken on full responsibilities for their areas.
- The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and its rigorous analysis of information about pupils' progress in English and mathematics has been a key factor in the rapid improvements made. The high quality monitoring of teaching by all school leaders has been coupled with well-chosen and carefully targeted training. Leaders and teachers have visited other schools to see outstanding practice, and this has helped to raise the expectations of staff and the aspirations of pupils.
- While very supportive of any improvement, the headteacher has not been afraid to tackle underperformance in teaching. Leaders ensure that teachers are clear about the link between salary progression and the progress their pupils make. Any pay rises and promotion are linked to evidence of their teaching performance and their whole-school responsibilities.
- The curriculum, both in the classroom and beyond, develops pupils' creativity well, particularly in music and drama. School productions, such as the musical 'Oliver!', provide a source of inspiration for pupils and teachers. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted, including their understanding of different faiths and cultures. Their social skills are particularly well developed. These include turn-taking, listening and negotiating in pair and group work.
- The local authority has worked closely and effectively with the school, providing challenge, support and guidance when needed. The school has made good use of additional advice and support from other sources, including neighbouring schools.
- The school has worked hard to create strong relationships with families, and the majority of parents are unreservedly enthusiastic about the school. However not all parents feel that the school communicates with them swiftly and effectively.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities open to them and parents make good use of the before and after school clubs. The primary school sports funding has been used to develop pupils' participation in sports and to improve teachers' confidence in the safe use of apparatus.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection the governors have provided increasingly constructive support and challenge to the headteacher and have helped him to bring about key improvements. Governors have a helpful range of skills and are well informed about how well the school is

doing. They receive regular and comprehensive information from the headteacher and senior leaders, and they make regular visits to monitor the school's work. Governors have contributed to the discussions on how the pupil premium funding should be spent and have kept a careful check on the impact of the extra support and guidance provided for eligible students. They hold the headteacher to account for the way in which increases in pay are used to reward teachers and they know how any underperformance is being tackled. They are less clear about how existing staff responsibilities match their pay. Governors meet all their statutory responsibilities well, including the national requirements for safeguarding pupils. While governors now have greater contact with the day to day life of the school, their work is not always communicated effectively to all parents.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103821
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	442616

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 of pupils on the school roll	704
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	John Walters
Headteacher	David Baker
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2009
Telephone number	01384 818275
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