

Albrighton Primary School

New House Lane, Albrighton, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV7 3QS

Inspection dates	28–29 June 2016
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	Requires improvement

Summary of findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and governors have established a culture of 'only the best will do'. Clear educational direction and self-evaluation, along with improvements to teaching, have been the driving force of the school's improvement since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' attainment has improved across the school. All groups of pupils now achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' achievements in phonics are high. Throughout key stage 2, pupils have made rapid improvements in writing.
- The quality of teaching is now consistently good. Teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils to think deeply about their learning.
- Pupils attend school regularly and behave well in lessons and around the school. Parents are supportive of the school and say that their children are safe and enjoy school.
- The early years provision is good. As a result of effective leadership and teaching, children make good progress from their starting points.
- By the time pupils leave school they are well prepared for their next stage in education. They now achieve standards that are above average in reading and mathematics, with standards in writing catching up rapidly.
- Relationships throughout the school are strong. The work of the learning mentor is having a positive impact on pupils' self-esteem.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through all aspects of the curriculum.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write in depth in subjects other than English, especially the most able pupils.
- Pupils make too many errors in their spellings.
- In the Reception class, there are missed opportunities for children to develop their letter and number formation skills in play activities.
- The school's assessment systems for analysing pupils' progress are cumbersome and are in the early stages of development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is outstanding throughout the school by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics
 - ensuring that the pupils have more opportunities to write in depth in all subjects, especially the most able
 - giving plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise their spelling and correct mistakes
 - streamlining assessment systems so that staff can instantly have access to information on the progress of different groups in their classes
 - ensuring that teachers in the Reception class provide more opportunities for children to develop their recording of numbers and letters in play activities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the arrival of the present headteacher the school has continued to successfully address the legacy of underachievement identified in the previous inspection. The whole school community has been united under the motto of 'Only the best will do', and policies have been put into practice restoring dynamism, enthusiasm, professionalism and a love of learning both in the pupils and staff.
- External reviews of the school have been undertaken and, with the help of external consultants and the local authority, the headteacher has implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan. Her vigilant checking on its implementation, coupled with regular staff meetings to talk about the impact of actions on pupils' progress, led to her taking many bold decisions in the interests of pupils' learning, such as abandoning the use of a very structured whole-school writing scheme, which was not raising standards fast enough.
- Honest and purposeful communication systems were introduced throughout the school and parents' views were sought on many aspects of school life. This ability to listen to the views of the school community and provide a clear sense of educational direction has been the cornerstone of the school's success.
- Supported by a capable senior leadership team, a newly appointed deputy and knowledgeable and well-informed governors, the headteacher has ensured that a good quality of support is available to prevent pupils from falling behind. Well-thought-out training for all teachers and teaching assistants, linked to their ambitious performance management targets, has ensured that a culture of high aspirations has been established. Staff teach confidently and the impact of training can be seen on pupils' outcomes. This is particularly the case in the teaching of writing correctly constructed sentences.
- Displays around the school are of a very high quality. It is clear that pupils have been emotionally engaged in their learning through their mature responses to the literature that they have read. The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are taught to think deeply about how the human condition can overcome obstacles, such as in the Year 3 and 4 class assembly about Derek Redmond finishing the 400m final during the Olympics in spite of a physical injury.
- The school's work to promote British values is good. Pupils know the importance of tolerance, and of abiding by the law. They are eager to exercise their democratic rights by applying for various positions of responsibility such as classroom ambassadors and members of the school council.
- Pupils benefit from a stimulating curriculum that captivates their interests and is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to read in depth about the subjects that they are studying with a well-equipped library, which has been a focus for development. Excellent links with RAF Cosford have enabled pupils to gain a greater insight into the work of the forces as well as increasing their opportunities to make friends with children from different parts of the world. This has a good impact on their personal development as they learn about the customs and traditions of other countries.
- The primary school physical education and sports funding is used effectively, resulting in teachers upskilling their knowledge, especially of gymnastics, through working with sports coaches, and pupils improving their fitness through multi-skills activities such as football, tag rugby and swimming. Funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well with every penny accounted for and evaluated as to the impact that it is having on the learning of pupils, resulting in pupils achieving as well as their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. Funding is also used to ensure that these pupils have full access to school trips and after-school clubs.
- Parents are highly complimentary about all of the school's recent improvements. 'The school is at the heart of the community, it's like belonging to a family; the school just cannot do enough to ensure that we are true partners in our children's learning', reflects a typical comment from parents.
- The school works well with the neighbouring local authorities and is very keen to learn from good practice. Middle leaders have been trained to undertake book scrutinies and evaluate lessons. Moderation exercises of standards are undertaken, resulting in teachers becoming more competent at understanding the differences between pupils' attainment at 'working towards, at, and in greater depth' in relation to age-related expectations.
- The leadership of English and mathematics is good. Teachers with responsibilities for these subjects have expert subject knowledge, which they share with teachers through team teaching, leading workshops and evaluating teaching and learning. They have been instrumental in arresting and improving the legacy of underachievement in key stage 2.

- The leadership and management of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities is improving and is good overall. A new coordinator has been appointed and all staff ensure that inclusion of all groups of pupils is at the core of their work.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know the school well and make good appointments. They have received adequate training in relation to safer recruitment and choosing the right people with the right skills. They are able to offer good support as they are skilled and knowledgeable in the area of education, finance and human resources and have a good understanding of the local community. They work alongside senior leaders making strategic decisions about resources, such as the purchase of a good variety of books which have fuelled pupils' interest in reading.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are involved in the monitoring of the school development plan and evaluating the work of the school. They read external reports, ask searching questions and ensure that the deployment of resources gives good value for money. Governors know that the quality of teaching is good, that standards are rising and that there are no significant differences in the achievements of different groups of pupils. They ask pertinent questions about staff who are paid extra money for responsibilities undertaken. They check that teachers are rewarded if they have reached their targets and are shown to contribute effectively to the life of the school.
 - Governors insist on knowing how spending is helping improve pupils' learning. They are fully aware that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is helping to ensure good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as well as through the appointment of a learning mentor. Governors have attended training in radicalisation and extremism and are vigilant that all pupils are aware of the dangers of extremist views.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All members of staff are highly vigilant when it comes to ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils throughout the school, including children in the early years. All members of staff, including teachers new to the school, know exactly what to do in the event of any concerns being raised by pupils. Leaders work well with parents and other stakeholders to create a well-informed and safe culture in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The high focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment is paying dividends. Teaching has improved since the last inspection due to rigorous performance management, individual coaching and an intensive package of training for all teachers and teaching assistants, and is now good.
- The consistent approach of teachers in modelling what the learning should look like and asking questions that deepen learning is a regular feature in lessons. Information from tests is generally used well to ensure that teachers are clear about pupils' starting points and know where to take them next. However, the retrieval of the assessment information from somewhat cumbersome computerised systems means that, on occasions, teachers are unable to have instant and timely information on the progress of different groups of pupils in their classes and this occasionally slows down learning.
- Pupils love learning because teachers support them and ask questions that deepen their learning. In Year 2 in English, the teacher gave children the opportunity to play around with the meaning of words that could alter the meaning of a sentence. She then showed them how, through the use of adjectives in writing, the reader could easily conjure up mental images.
- Teachers always ensure that pupils know exactly what they are intended to learn, and the skills needed to achieve this are shared with pupils. In mathematics, all pupils have the choice of choosing an extension activity. However, there are times when teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical reasoning skills, such as to ask pupils how they arrived at a particular answer. This limits pupils' skills in being able to clearly identify any misconceptions that they might have that can be rectified on the spot.
- Teachers take all opportunities to get pupils to read in class and pupils 'devour' books because they are so engaged in reading. It is common practice for some pupils to take out their reading books during playtime because they are so engrossed in their reading. Teachers focus sharply on improving pupils' grammar, punctuation, spelling and writing. While pupils in key stage 2 scored highly in their tests, scrutiny of pupils' books across the school shows that spelling is still an issue that needs attention even though it is picked up in teachers' marking. More opportunities are needed for pupils to practise their spelling.

- Teachers mark according to the criteria in the marking policy. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy seeing symbols rather than a lot of writing as this helps them remember the teachers' instructions easily. However, not all pupils act on the marking identified by teachers, especially in correcting their spelling mistakes.
- The quality of teaching of English and mathematics in both key stages 1 and 2 is good overall. Teachers have given a lot of thought to what works for them in accelerating the rates of progress of different groups of pupils. For example, in the teaching of writing teachers have emphasised the correct construction of a sentence and only when pupils know the basics do they move them on to writing more detailed sentences. However, scrutiny of pupils' books shows that there are missed opportunities for the most able pupils to write in depth in other subjects.
- The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities is characterised by high expectations. Teachers ensure that these pupils are working on age-related expectations and are given the support that they need to access the same learning opportunities as their peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils learn in a calm and purposeful learning environment where all staff are vigilant of their social, academic and emotional needs. They know their pupils well and have trusting relationships with them.
- The concept of the 'unique child' developed in the Reception class runs throughout the school. Staff value their pupils' uniqueness and build up their confidence as learners as they move up the school. They encourage them to do their very best and this develops their resilience as learners. Pupils glow with pride when they are rewarded with certificates for being a 'Star Reader' or 'Class Hero'.
- Staff put a great emphasis on developing pupils' confidence. As a result of this, pupils are living up to the high expectations that teachers have of them. Pupils know what it is to be a successful learner and they are confident in trying out new approaches.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe when online and in school. Several pupils belong to the e-safety committee, which meets regularly to discuss aspects of safety with parents, staff and governors. Pupils told inspectors that they would never give out any personal details about themselves over the internet, share passwords or provide information on where they live.
- Information is provided for parents and made available on the school's website to raise awareness of any potential dangers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of safe and unsafe situations and the dangers and risks that they may face when not in school. The personal, social and emotional and health aspects of the curriculum equip pupils with a good understanding of the dangers of smoking, drugs and alcohol and the importance of healthy food and exercise.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying, including racism and cyber bullying, which they say never happens in school. Through the work that pupils have undertaken on Black History Week and multicultural week they know that differences make us special and that it is wrong to judge someone for what they believe in or what they look like. Pupils know that they must tell a trusted adult if they feel unsafe. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying or name-calling in the school and say that it would be silly to want to bully your friends.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good around the school and in lessons. Parents, staff and governors share the view. The school's behaviour log records all aspects of behaviour, even very minor incidents. Nevertheless, the behaviour of pupils is typically good over time. Governors say that when they accompany pupils on any trips, their behaviour out of school is impeccable.
- Pupils' attendance is good and has improved since the previous inspection. The work of the learning mentor and education welfare officer has played a significant part in ensuring that pupils arrive to school on time and are punctual. Pupils say that they 'love school' and never want to miss being with their teachers and their friends.
- Pupils are confident that they can report any concerns and that any member of staff would deal with it, especially the headteacher. According to them, she 'stands no nonsense'.

- The 'good to be green' policy is having a positive impact on the behaviour of pupils. Those interviewed said that, if needed, sanctions are applied fairly.
- Behaviour in lessons is consistently good. Pupils listen attentively and get on with their work independently.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. Attainment at the end of key stage 1 has risen considerably in the last two years and in 2015 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects good progress from pupils' previous starting points.
- In Year 6 in 2015, data shows that attainment was broadly average in mathematics and reading, above average in spelling, punctuation and grammar but below average in writing. These results must be treated with caution, however, as over 50% of the pupils in this year group did not start their education in the school. Furthermore, a high proportion of the most able pupils left the school before the end of Year 6 due to RAF postings overseas.
- Progress in key stage 2 has improved and is now good. The school's own assessment moderation, verified externally by moderators, and inspection evidence, shows that standards currently in Year 6 have risen and are above average in reading and mathematics. Standards are also improving rapidly in writing but, as yet, are not as high. Even so, all pupils currently in Year 6 are now working at least in line with age-related expectations and approximately one third are working beyond this in reading and mathematics. These improvements are due to the incisive steps taken by the headteacher to raise teachers' expectations and to improve teaching, along with the effective programmes of support that have been put in place. All groups of pupils are achieving well in key stage 2; attainment is rising rapidly and progress continues to speed up.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check are high. Over two years, pupils have exceeded the national pass mark. The very small number of pupils who were not secure in their reading skills in this check all passed their resits and are making good progress because they were well supported in Year 2.
- Pupils throughout the school read well. They have good expression and comprehension skills. Their reading records show that parents engage with them and hear them read at home. Pupils are familiar with a wide range of authors and their reading diet includes fiction, non-fiction and poetry books. Each class has a library that is used regularly and the work of authors within the school contributes to the high profile of reading.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in mathematics. Teachers' subject knowledge and the leadership of mathematics are strong. Pupils have a secure knowledge of times tables. They can tackle problems with gusto and resilience. Throughout the school pupils are taught how to read information from tables and graphs. This is improving their skills of problem solving. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to explain the process of how they arrive at an answer or how they might alter their reasoning should they gain further insights into the many ways that a problem might be solved.
- The school celebrates pupils' good achievements in writing. Many examples of well-written work displayed around the school demonstrate that pupils think deeply about the writing process undertaken. In English, pupils write in depth, especially when discussing the class readers. However, scrutiny of pupils' books shows that pupils do not write at length often enough in other subjects. Pupils sometimes do not correct their spelling errors that teachers have identified.
- Only a few pupils at the school are classed as disadvantaged. School data and inspection evidence confirms that they make the same good progress as their peers in reading, writing and mathematics, and sometimes they do better than this.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities make good gains in learning because of high expectations of staff, tailor-made support to match their needs and the help gained from specialist partners. Parents are very appreciative of the help that their children receive.
- The most able pupils are also doing well. Although a below-average proportion of pupils in Year 6 in 2015 reached the higher levels of attainment, school data and inspection evidence shows that more pupils than previously are working at levels beyond those expected, particularly in reading and mathematics. However, in writing, the most able are sometimes held back because they do not have enough opportunity to write in depth across the curriculum.
- Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education, as they are literate, numerate and confident learners.

Early years provision

is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills that are typical for their age in most areas of learning. They make good progress in all areas of learning including reading, writing and mathematics. In both 2014 and 2015, a well above average proportion of children attained a good level of development by the end of Reception. The same picture emerges for children's attainment this year. This represents at least good progress from their starting points.
- Children learn in a stimulating learning environment both indoors and outdoors. Staff are imaginative and make learning fun, and from the minute children enter the classrooms they are encouraged to do well and concentrate on their learning
- Children enjoy learning outdoors, especially in the forest school, where they observe and draw mini-beasts. They are highly inquisitive as to their habitat and their paintings of caterpillars show a good level of detail.
- Indoor provision is laid out well, with clear links to different areas of learning. There is a good supply of books made available which children like to look at to get ideas for their drawings and writing. However, sometimes teachers miss opportunities to model the correct formation of letters and numbers through play activities.
- In mathematics, children make good progress because teachers focus on the vocabulary to describe shapes and ensure that there are plenty of practical materials to reinforce the concept of numbers.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers know how young children learn and consistently use a range of descriptive vocabulary to help children improve their speaking and listening skills. Children visit the local shops and broaden their experience of the locality in which they live, learning about the people who help them such as the police and firefighters. Children are continually assessed and information from observations undertaken by teachers is shared with parents and used to develop the next steps in children's learning. Children are ready for learning when they start key stage 1. They are able to concentrate, listen to the teacher's instructions and are familiar with school routines.
- Parents say that they are always welcome in the Reception class and that they receive good insights from the teachers' observations as to how their children learn. They are true partners in their children's learning and they are made to feel very welcome in school.
- As a result of good-quality support and provision, the few disadvantaged children achieve as well as other children.
- Adults provide encouragement while setting high expectations for their conduct and manners. As a result, children behave well, learn to cooperate and show interest in others and their learning
- Improvement since the last inspection has been driven by good leadership, effective teamwork and clear communication about using information on children's learning to plan activities that will suit their needs.

School details

Unique reference number	123410
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10002534

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cath Ratcliffe
Headteacher	Julie Bratt
Telephone number	01902 372 558
Website	www.albrightonprimary.com
Email address	head@albrighton-pri.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 January 2014

Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school caters for service children, whose parents are posted at RAF Cosford, resulting in a high number of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times of the academic year.
- The school offers full-time early years provision for Reception-age children.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities is below that seen nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils aimed at helping pupils to learn to read. Joint observations were carried out with members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with senior leaders.
- The inspection team considered 26 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and 15 text responses from parents. The inspection team met with parents at the beginning of the school day. The school's own survey of parents and pupils' views was taken into account, as well as responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 12 members of staff.
- A meeting was held with governors, including the chair of the governing body. Meetings were held with school leaders responsible for English, mathematics, science, early years provision and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team examined a range of documents. This included the school's review of its own performance, checks on the quality of teaching, development plans, safeguarding documentation, information about pupils' progress and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

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