

Harper Bell Seventh-day Adventist School

29 Ravenhurst Street, Camp Hill, Birmingham, West Midlands B12 0EJ

Inspection dates

16 to 17 July 2019

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	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders have improved the school since the previous inspection. Their commitment and drive is shown through their ambition for the pupils and their community.
- The number of leaders has increased. There is good capacity for further improvement. Senior leaders know that middle leaders require more leadership support.
- Leaders have refined and implemented a curriculum which now demands more of pupils. Pupils are attaining higher standards.
- Senior leaders, by supporting individual teachers to teach the school's agreed curriculum, have ensured that teaching has improved over the past two years.
- Governance is effective. The school is well placed for the soon to be formed governing body to begin its work.
- The teaching of reading and writing is effective. Pupils make strong progress in these subjects in each year group.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the previous inspection. However, weaknesses remain, notably in key stage 1.
- Disadvantaged pupils are taught well and make good progress.
- Pupils, notably those who join the school in Reception and progress through to Year 6, achieve well at Harper Bell. They benefit from effective teaching, especially in the early years and in Year 6.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and during lessons. Parents and carers, pupils and staff express positive views about behaviour.
- Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are kept safe. Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well supported. In their day-to-day learning, pupils develop a secure understanding of respect and why celebrating diversity is important.
- Children in the early years benefit from excellent provision through the Reception year. They make strong gains in their learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not taught as well as other groups.
- Pupils attend well. Pupils at risk of high levels of absence are supported to attend regularly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of mathematics, notably in key stage 1, by ensuring that pupils fully understand what is being taught and are provided with tasks which require them to think hard about their responses.
- Improve the teaching of pupils with SEND by ensuring that teachers use agreed approaches in their day-to-day work with pupils.
- Further improve the leadership and management of subject leaders by:
 - developing their confidence and competence in monitoring the impact of teaching in their subjects on pupils' progress and working with teachers to improve their teaching
 - ensuring that the leadership of provision for pupils with SEND is effective.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have continued the effective work, identified at the previous inspection, to help pupils and their families realise their aspirations. Harper Bell is well set to continue improving.
- The recently expanded leadership team means that there is good capacity for further improvement. Newly appointed middle leaders understand their areas of responsibility, but need to refine their monitoring and evaluation work to ensure that specific areas for improvement are identified and that subsequent teaching improves.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for living in a multicultural society. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own cultural backgrounds and then use this knowledge to learn about living in modern Britain. This supports the school's effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders understand the importance of helping pupils understand why discrimination needs to be guarded against. The well-thought-through curriculum enables pupils to learn about equality, for example through historical topics, which explore the effects of discrimination. As a result, the harmonious school community welcomes all.
- Senior leaders work with teachers to agree realistic academic standards that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, can aspire to. Pupils step up to these expectations and pupils' achievements have improved over the past two years.
- Senior leaders use their good understanding of school performance to inform the training provided for staff, which helps them implement the curriculum. Senior leaders make good use of training offered by the local authority and by local schools' alliances.
- Prior to the previous inspection, the curriculum did not require pupils to work at the standards expected nationally. The current curriculum does. Senior leaders' evaluation shows that this is the case particularly in reading and writing. This is because leaders have ensured that teachers have the subject knowledge and skills to teach these subjects effectively.
- Leaders engage well with external services. They use funding, designated to support pupils with SEND, to purchase specialist support. This helps leaders understand what teachers need to do to support the learning of individual pupils. However, teachers' implementation of agreed approaches is inconsistent and pupils with SEND are not currently making the progress of which they are capable.
- The local authority engages well with the school. It has facilitated an extensive range of leadership training for senior leaders who have been keen to learn about effective practice elsewhere. As a result, leadership, notably in the early years, has improved.
- Leaders use the primary school physical education and sport funding very effectively. Pupils experience a wide range of competitive sports. Almost all pupils in key stage 2 have represented the school at different sporting events, such as athletics. Leaders ensure that all pupils, no matter what their specific needs or backgrounds, are able to participate.
- Leadership of the early years has improved significantly over the past two years. The

early years leader has engaged well with the local authority and local schools. This has enabled her to reflect on the provision at Harper Bell. Changes made mean that children receive an excellent start to their education.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. An interim executive board (IEB) has been in place for a number of years. At the start of the next academic year, a new governing body will be formed. The effective work of members of the IEB means that the school is well placed for this change in governance. Governors hold senior leaders to account well. They have monitored the use of the school's finances, notably in how this has improved teaching and academic standards. Governors ensure that their statutory duties are met. They check that staff understand and implement safeguarding arrangements appropriately. Governors ensure that the pupil premium funding is used to address the barriers affecting disadvantaged pupils' learning. A good example of this is how the funding supports families in helping pupils attend school regularly and when learning at home.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior leaders and governors frequently communicate the importance of safeguarding to staff and parents. They ensure that they check that any pupil leaving the school is admitted to another school. Parents express positive views about the school's work to keep pupils safe.
- Staff are vigilant, looking out for any signs of pupils being at risk. If staff are concerned, they take rapid, appropriate action.
- Leaders have attended training, which helps them explore safeguarding matters when appointing new staff. This, coupled with effective induction processes, means that newly appointed staff know how to apply Harper Bell safeguarding arrangements as soon as they begin their roles.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Senior leaders have provided effective support for individual teachers, which has led to improved practice in all year groups. The most effective teaching is seen in the early years and in Year 6.
- Teachers are aware of what pupils need to learn in order to reach the required expectations at the end of each year group. The most able pupils are expected to produce work of higher quality. They meet these requirements well.
- Disadvantaged pupils face a range of barriers, which can adversely impact on their learning. In lessons, teachers keep a close eye on their learning, intervening appropriately when their progress slows.
- The teaching of foundation subjects, such as physical education and music, is improving. This is because teachers are developing a secure understanding of the skills

pupils need to acquire in these subjects in each year group. Consequently, pupils display positive attitudes to their learning across a range of subjects.

- Reading and writing are taught well across the school. Teachers use their knowledge of what most pupils can already do when planning. This enables teachers to provide pupils with reading books and activities that are matched to their learning needs. Pupils benefit as they become fluent readers and writers.
- Effective phonics teaching, including specific methods which help pupils blend sounds together, means that pupils are able to decode words accurately. Pupils become fluent readers quickly.
- The teaching of mathematics is not as effective across the school. Pupils are taught a good range of mathematical topics. However, some of the tasks given to pupils do not make them think hard enough, which hinders their development of mathematical skills. This is most noticeable in key stage 1.
- Teachers do not understand how they can best support pupils with SEND, and the teaching of pupils with SEND is not consistently strong. Consequently, pupils with SEND do not make the progress they should.
- Pupils who need to catch up in their learning are taught well. This includes teaching assistants teaching specific skills in short sessions. In reading, for example, pupils are helped to acquire specific vocabulary, which helps them in subsequent learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this best in English lessons. Here, teachers use questioning to probe pupils' understanding and then adapt their teaching accordingly.
- Parents are well supported to help their children learn outside of school. Investment in software packages and devices has helped families develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils benefit from consolidating important English and mathematical skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their achievements. In music, for example, pupils are confident singing in front of different audiences. This helps them become confident in both their learning and when engaging with others.
- The curriculum requires pupils to be resilient in their learning. They stick with activities and are not deterred when they make mistakes. This supports their welfare, as they know what they need to do to succeed.
- Pupils' physical well-being is developed effectively. This is because pupils adopt positive attitudes to health and fitness. Pupils participate in a wide range of sporting activities and are proud to represent their school at local events.
- Staff understand the needs of pupils and their families. Staff ensure that pupils are well cared for. This includes supporting their emotional well-being. Families approach the school for advice and guidance to help them in their day-to-day lives.

- Pupils have a secure knowledge about how to keep safe both in and out of school. They talk about their learning from lessons and assemblies. This helps them reflect on their views, for example when learning and playing online.
- The school's work in identifying and tackling bullying is effective. Pupils understand the importance of celebrating diversity and welcoming people from all backgrounds. This helps prevent any bullying behaviour. If any incidents occur, pupils are confident that staff deal with them effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and at breaktimes, showing good self-discipline. In lessons, there is very little low-level disruption. This means that pupils are able to get on with their learning without unwanted interruption.
- Pupils, parents and staff express positive views about pupils' behaviour. Pupils are keen to play a role in supporting good behaviour. They show this by challenging their classmates appropriately if they witness poor behavioural choices.
- Effective systems designed to improve attendance ensure that pupils attend regularly. Staff are aware of the high mobility of families in and out of the local community. They are quick to check that pupils are safe if they are not in school.
- Pupils are punctual at the start of the day. They follow well-embedded routines and arrive promptly to lessons during the day, ready for their learning.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning across a range of subjects. They are motivated by the topics they learn about. When teaching is less effective, pupils' attitudes wane.
- Pupils look out for one another. Through the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, they develop empathy well. As a result, pupils learn and play in an inclusive environment.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, pupils have made strong progress in reading and writing in all year groups. Progress in mathematics has improved. However, it remains weaker when compared with the other core subjects.
- Published achievement information needs to be read with caution. The information can be misleading. This is owing to small numbers of pupils and high rates of pupil mobility in the school. Pupils who join the school in Reception and progress through to Year 6 make the strongest progress.
- Often, pupils arriving at Harper Bell at non-standard times are disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. Effective teaching ensures that these pupils make strong progress. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make similar rates of progress to their classmates, although they do not attain as well.
- Pupils are well prepared academically for their move into secondary education. They acquire the skills and knowledge which enable them to progress in the key stage 3

curriculum.

- Effective teaching of phonics and early reading means that pupils attain well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. In recent years, similar proportions compared with national averages achieved the expected standard. Almost all pupils who join Harper Bell at the start of the early years achieve the required standard.
- Pupils read books which are well-matched to their reading ability. Pupils become fluent readers quickly and they are able to tackle comprehension work well. Pupils perform well in assessments, which require them to infer and predict.
- Pupils write well across a range of different subjects. They apply their grammar and punctuation skills accurately when writing for different purposes. Pupils present their work neatly, using fluent, joined handwriting.
- In mathematics, pupils consolidate their understanding best in the early years and in Year 6. Here, pupils who need to take more time to secure basic skills are afforded it.
- Pupils with SEND do not receive consistently effective teaching. They do not make the gains they are capable of in their learning. As a result, this group of pupils do not achieve as well as their classmates.
- The most able pupils achieve well, both in the core subjects and in a range of other activities. In sport, for example, pupils combine their high technical ability with effective teamwork. This results in success in a range of competitive events.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Leadership of the early years is very effective. The early years leader has drawn on her work with a range of local providers to develop an outstanding learning environment. Senior leaders understand what effective provision should look like. They use this knowledge when evaluating the work of the early years leader.
- The early years leader has a clear understanding of strengths and areas for further improvement. Staff have been well supported, through effective training, in developing effective teaching. Staff have a secure understanding of early child development, and they use this to create effective indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Phonics is taught well. All staff have benefited from specific training and support from a range of local providers. The leader has ensured that children are taught the same method for decoding words, and children have plenty of opportunities during the day to practise.
- A range of local networks enables staff to discuss and share effective practice. This has contributed to the continual improvement of the provision. For example, children's learning and progress are captured extremely well in learning journals. This helps staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision and what needs to change.
- Children learn well through a well-planned curriculum that has early language development at its heart. Funding ensures that all children experience a wide range of activities, such as farm visits. This helps children acquire a broad vocabulary and to be able to engage in a wide range of learning activities.
- Staff record children's progress accurately. They use this information to plan activities which challenge children and encourage them to be curious. This helps children of all

abilities to develop positive attitudes to learning, being keen to learn new things.

- Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that is typical for their age. They make strong progress through the Reception year across a range of different areas of learning. As a result, a higher proportion attains an overall good level of development when compared with national averages. Since the previous inspection, an increasing proportion of children have exceeded age-related expectations. Children are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Children are safe in their learning and play. Staff administer effective safeguarding arrangements. Children enjoy trusting relationships with staff and with each other. They listen attentively when others are speaking.
- Staff have formed effective relationships with parents and external agencies. Frequent discussion enables parents and staff to learn from each other about children's learning. Specific input from agencies, such as educational psychology, helps staff to make informed decisions about changes in their teaching practice.

School details

Unique reference number	136440
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10088494

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	168
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Stanley Tucker
Headteacher	Nigel Oram
Telephone number	0121 693 7742
Website	www.harperbellsdaschool.co.uk
Email address	info@hbsda.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 to 9 March 2017

Information about this school

- Harper Bell is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The largest groups are Black or Black British – Caribbean and African.
- Approximately one in four pupils speak a first language that is not English.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The early years is made up of one Reception class. There is one class for each year group in Years 1 to 6.
- There is high mobility in the school, with pupils entering and leaving the school at non-standard times.

Information about this inspection

- Harper Bell is designated a voluntary-aided school. It has yet to receive a section 48 inspection.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each year group. They visited 12 lessons, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the vice-chair of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met frequently with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also met with other school leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading. They listened to pupils of different abilities read.
- Inspectors examined work in pupils' books from a range of subjects.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation to support school improvement. This included minutes of governors' meetings and pupils' attendance and behaviour information.
- Inspectors took account of 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector

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