

Whitmore Park Primary School

Halford Lane, Coventry, CV6 2HG

Inspection dates 12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- By the time they leave Year 6, too many pupils are underachieving. Since the last inspection, standards in English and mathematics each year have been low. This is because pupils do not make enough progress in Key Stage 2.
- By the end of Year 6, the standards reached by pupils that are known to be eligible for free school meals are lower than those of other pupils in the school and much lower than the national average.
- In Key Stage 2, teaching is not good enough to raise standards. The majority requires improvement or is inadequate. There is a culture of low expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers do not plan work for pupils that is sufficiently challenging.
- School leaders have been unsuccessful in leading and sustaining improvements to teaching over time. Some teachers are not responding to the requirement to improve their teaching.
- The impact of governance is inadequate. The governing body does not challenge the school effectively. For example, some teachers are paid too much for weak teaching and the governors are unaware that the pupil premium funding is not used with enough precision to benefit the pupils that it should.

The school has the following strengths

- Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress because teaching is good and often outstanding.
- The quality of learning for the pupils in the speech and language unit is good.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe and in lessons they behave well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 36 lessons and observed 24 teachers.
- Inspectors heard pupils reading, met with them to discuss their lessons, and scrutinised their work.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, local authority representatives, staff, and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the questionnaire responses from eight staff and 20 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View).
- The school's assessment data, self-evaluation information, procedures for the management of teachers' performance and the school's development plan were scrutinised.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined by inspectors.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Tim Bristow, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Additional Inspector
Alan Jones	Additional Inspector
Jenny Edginton	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- An above-average proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic backgrounds or speaks English as an additional language. The largest minority group is of Indian heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The proportion supported by school action is average.
- An above-average proportion of the pupils is eligible for support through the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Within the school there is a special educational needs unit for pupils who have speech and language difficulties. Currently there are ten pupils on roll.
- The school is at the early stages of a partnership with a high performing local school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching that requires improvement or is inadequate to good by:
 - making sure teachers plan lessons that are more challenging for all groups of pupils
 - giving pupils more time to complete their work by reducing the time teachers spend talking
 - making the lessons in all subjects much more interesting
 - raising the teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons
 - ensuring that teachers take full responsibility for the deployment of other adults in their lessons.
- Raise standards in English and mathematics to at least average by:
 - accelerating the progress made in lessons by all groups and particularly the most able pupils
 - using the pupil premium funding to help raise the standards for the pupils for whom it is intended
 - making sure that the quality of teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs does not vary widely from year to year.
- Strengthen leadership and the governors' ability to fulfil their responsibilities by:
 - ensuring that the headteacher and senior leaders take a determined approach to driving improvement and do not hold back from tackling weak practice
 - making sure that teachers are rewarded appropriately for their teaching
 - ensuring that new leaders have the skills necessary and support of senior leaders to fulfil their responsibilities
 - undertaking a review of the work of the governing body and taking action to strengthen governors' ability to take a strategic overview of school improvement and to challenge school leaders.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Standards in English and mathematics have been low for a number of years. There have been times when progress has accelerated, but this has not been sustained for long enough to have an impact on standards at the end of Year 6.
- The current rate of progress in Years 3 and 4 is faster in English and mathematics than in other year groups, and standards are closer to the expected levels than in Years 5 and 6. For example, the school's assessment information shows that in Year 4, standards in writing are the same as those in Year 5, and only a bit lower than those in Year 6.
- Assessment information shows that by the end of Year 6, the attainment in English and mathematics of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is approximately one year behind pupils in most other schools. One reason for this is that the pupil premium funding is not used specifically to help them close the gaps with other pupils.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is slow overall. The quality of learning in the speech and language unit and in some additional activities is good. However, this is not the case when pupils go back to their classes. Insufficient attention is paid to their specific needs and their progress slows.
- The progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those of Indian heritage is similar to the progress of pupils overall.
- Usually, by the end of Year 2 standards are average. Last year they declined. The school's assessment information indicates that standards this year will again be broadly average. Pupils' progress requires improvement in this part of the school because it is dependent on the quality of the teaching from class to class, which varies from requiring improvement to good.
- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are less well developed than is typical for their age. They then make good progress as a result of well-planned provision. When the large majority start Year 1, they have the skills and knowledge expected for their age. One success since the last inspection is better progress in writing and reading. Assessment information in Year 1 shows that a good proportion of pupils have reached the expected standard in reading.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 use their knowledge of the sounds that letters represent to good effect when they are learning to read. However, those that read to inspectors reported that they are not encouraged to read at home which means they do not get as much practice as they could to become fluent readers.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- In Years 5 and 6, too much teaching is inadequate and in the lower years of Key Stage 2 most of the teaching over time has required improvement. There is too much teaching that requires improvement in Key Stages 1 and 2 to ensure pupils build on the good start they get in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In the weaker lessons, pupils spend too long listening to instructions from the teachers. This sometimes takes up half the lesson. They then have insufficient time to complete their work. An

examination of books shows that many pieces of work are unfinished and little is done by teachers or pupils to address this.

- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. Pupils of all abilities are not encouraged to produce work of high quality. For example, inspectors agree with more-able pupils who report that they only get attention from the teacher when they ask a question. This means that they are not challenged to produce work of a high standard.
- In Years 5 and 6 it is evident that because of weak teaching, pupils have gaps in their learning. For example, a proportion of pupils have weak mental arithmetic skills. They struggled to carry out multiplication and division because of this.
- Recently, teachers have benefitted from training so that they can teach writing more effectively. In the lessons seen, some teachers demonstrated a better subject knowledge, but work in pupils' books shows that it has yet to have a marked impact on the standards achieved in Key Stage 2.
- The school has established a marking policy recently that is resulting in an improvement in how well pupils' writing is marked. However, the impact varies as some teachers stick closely to the policy, while others do not.
- In many classes, the marking in mathematics is inadequate. It provides neither guidance on how to correct mistakes nor advice on the next steps pupils need to take to reach their targets.
- The impact of the help from additional adults in the classroom is variable. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the adults play a crucial part in the good and often outstanding teaching that children benefit from. In some of the other classes the help they give pupils requires improvement because teachers do not manage the extra support well enough.
- The quality of teaching for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is too variable. It is generally good when they receive specific help outside the classroom or benefit from the expertise of the staff in the speech and language unit. However, this is often not the case in lessons. Information about their progress shows that over time they are better taught in Key Stage 1 and Year 3 than in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- There is good teaching in the school. For example in a Year 1 class the marking is excellent. The guidance offered to pupils is age-appropriate and is extremely helpful. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson where teaching was good, pupils of all abilities were engrossed in the challenging and interesting activities that they were taking part in.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils behave cooperatively and politely in lessons. They do not take sufficient responsibility for their learning because of teachers' low expectations. They are not given enough opportunity to demonstrate that they can work well on their own or make their own decisions about how to complete their work.
- At break-times most pupils play safely. In assemblies, behaviour is very good because the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development effectively. Behaviour is less good at lunch-times because the supervision is not as good as at break-times. For example, inspectors observed pupils ignoring instructions to walk in corridors and when this occurs little appears to be done about it.

- The pupils spoken to had an appropriate understanding of how to stay safe in certain situations such as when they are using the internet.
- A group of pupils spoken to during the inspection and approximately half the parents who responded to the online questionnaire have concerns that bullying and behaviour are not well managed. The pupils explained that teachers deal with incidents, but it does not stop them happening again. Inspectors examined procedures and records and spoke to staff responsible and found that management was adequate. However, in response to this, the headteacher has decided to carry out a review of how behaviour is managed to ensure that it is as good as it can be.
- Procedures and partnerships with outside professionals to safeguard vulnerable pupils and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are secure.
- Attendance remains below average because the steps taken to improve it have not had the desired impact on the small number of families whose children are persistently absent.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The headteacher and other senior leaders understand what needs to be done to improve the quality of education. However, they have struggled to sustain improvements to teaching and learning and consequently the development of teaching is too slow and variable.
- Procedures to manage the performance of teachers have been ineffective. Some teachers are overpaid even though they underperform, and they are not challenged with enough rigour to teach to the level at which they are rewarded. Underperformance is not tackled with sufficient determination by senior leaders. This then undermines and compromises efforts to raise standards as some teachers try conscientiously to do better while others appear not to take responsibility for their own development or are unable to do so.
- This year there are signs that the procedures to manage the performance of teachers are having some impact. For example, a teacher who has benefitted from coaching has improved her teaching and can now demonstrate good teaching in lessons.
- New subject and year leaders have recently been appointed. They are enthusiastic, but inexperienced and have yet to have a lasting effect on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Some management procedures have strengthened, such as the assessment information about pupils' progress. However, they are not being used well enough to hold teachers to account for the progress of the pupils they teach.
- The school adequately tackles discrimination but does not promote equality of opportunity well enough as too many pupils underachieve.
- The support of the local authority has had too little impact on the performance of the school. In the past the local authority has not responded effectively to the clear warning signs of the underperformance of pupils. The approach of the local authority changed last year. At the regular school improvement board meetings that the school's leaders now attend, there is a much greater degree of challenge to leaders and governors. School leaders now benefit from better support to strengthen leadership and management. The partnership that has been established

with a local school is also a positive step. However, these developments are too recent to have a demonstrable impact on school improvement.

- Leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is excellent. At the last inspection weaknesses in writing were reported. Clear priorities for improving provision were made. These have been acted on and standards in writing and reading have risen each year since then.
- In the rest of the school, there is not enough opportunity for pupils to learn through practical tasks. In many subjects including history, geography and science too much time is spent completing worksheets that are boring and do not help pupils to develop the necessary skills. Pupils are enthusiastic about the additional activities they take part in, such as the Black History week that promotes their cultural understanding and the school clubs. However, in lessons this enthusiasm is not capitalised on to excite and stimulate them. As one pupil said, 'when we make something it is a special occasion'.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors do not hold school leaders to account for the quality of teaching or the salaries teachers are paid. They do not take full responsibility for the governance of finances. They have little understanding of how pupil premium funds are used or the impact on those eligible for them. Their knowledge of what is happening in the school is incomplete and not up to-date. For example, the governors spoken to were unaware that there was a partnership established with a local school. Governors have not been well enough trained or given the opportunity to take a strategic overview of school development. For example, they are not involved in the setting of priorities and only see action plans when they are complete. Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are secure.

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	103685
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	404890

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	658
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Adams
Headteacher	Karen Skoro
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2011
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