

Ackton Pastures Primary School

College Grove, Whitwood, Castleford, WF10 5NS

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.

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate because there has been, and still is, too much weak teaching.
- Since the previous inspection leaders and managers have not done enough to improve teaching.
- From their starting points, pupils of all abilities make too little progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Standards are low in English and mathematics and not enough has been done by school leaders to tackle this since the previous inspection.
- Weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching result in the school's assessment of its performance being inaccurate.
- Senior leaders are not rigorous enough in their analysis and interpretation of the progress pupils are making.
- The governing body has not done enough to challenge leaders about the school's poor performance.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is well liked by parents and they believe their children are well looked after.
- Pupils are eager to learn, try hard and are respectful of adults.
- Staff are very supportive of the school's leaders.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, of which five were joint observations with school leaders. Inspectors also visited groups of pupils who need help with their learning, and an assembly.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, two governors, a representative from the local authority, and school staff, including senior leaders and leaders of subjects and aspects of management.
- Inspectors took account of 24 responses to the online inspection questionnaire, Parent View, the school’s own questionnaire and the views of parents who wrote to the inspection service provider.
- Inspectors also looked at the 26 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspection team looked at a number of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation, information on the management of the teachers’ performance, the local authority’s view of the school, minutes of meetings of the governing body and records relating to attendance, exclusions and safeguarding.
- Inspectors analysed information on pupils’ attainment over time and the school’s information about pupils’ current attainment and progress.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils’ books with school leaders, listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of letters and sounds.

Inspection team

Henry Moreton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Colleen Taylor

Additional Inspector

Dina Martin

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

- Ackton Pastures is an average-sized primary school.
- The largest group of pupils is White British. A lower proportion of pupils than average speaks English as an additional language or comes from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided for looked after children, pupils eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action and school action plus is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' achievement and progress.
- The school was placed in special measures in September 2009. It was inspected in February 2011 when its overall effectiveness was judged to be satisfactory, with good capacity for sustained improvement. Since then there has been disruption in staffing including some which was caused as a result of staff absences.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate inadequate teaching and improve the proportion that is at least good in order to rapidly accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring teachers in each class plan lessons that meet the needs and abilities of all pupils
 - reducing the amount of time that pupils spend sitting down and listening to teachers so that they can more quickly become actively engaged in learning
 - providing more tasks and activities which interest pupils so they are less likely to lose concentration.
- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and ensure pupils make at least the expected progress in English and mathematics across both key stages by:
 - implementing consistent approaches to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics, monitoring their impact and taking prompt action to address any emerging weaknesses
 - making sure teachers know how well pupils are doing and plan lessons that help pupils to learn more, and more quickly
 - planning lessons that capture pupils' interest and give them more time to speak, contribute, do things for themselves, and opportunities to cooperate and work with other pupils.
- Improve the impact of the school's leaders by:
 - developing their ability to check and improve the quality of teaching
 - developing all teachers' ability to analyse how well different groups of pupils are making

progress and adapting plans, where needed, to ensure more rapid progress for all

- providing leaders of subjects and aspects of management with the knowledge and skills to lead and manage their areas effectively
- implementing more robustly the strategies to improve the attendance of pupils who are persistent absentees.

■ Improve the effectiveness of governance by:

- improving governors' knowledge of the school's work, including the quality of teaching
- ensuring governors carry out rigorous checks on the impact of the school's actions and the extent to which these are accelerating pupils' progress and raising their attainment
- ensuring governors hold senior leaders to account for their effectiveness.

An external review of governance is required.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils make inadequate progress in their learning because of weaknesses in the quality of teaching over time. As a result most pupils do not reach the standards they are capable of in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils enter the Nursery and Reception with levels of skills, knowledge and experience below those typical for children of this age. When they start in Year 1, their communication, language and numeracy skills are below average. They make the expected progress in other areas of learning during the year.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are low in reading, writing and mathematics and have been so in four of the last five years. Pupils' progress throughout Key Stage 2 is too slow. Their attainment by the end of Year 6 is low.
- Pupils do not apply their knowledge of letters and sounds, nor do they practise letter formation or sentence completion consistently from an early age. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are poor. Pupils' writing is poor.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematics is insecure and they do not use their numeracy skills in different subjects.
- Teachers assess and track how well pupils are doing but pupils are falling behind in their learning because teachers do not use this information to pitch work at the right level to meet pupils' learning needs. Some pupils told inspectors that their work is too easy. At other times it is too hard. Inspectors agree with these views.
- Based on the scores in the national tests, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic groups and those eligible for the pupil premium make progress at a similarly slow rate to other pupils in the school. Overall, there is no consistency of approach to many aspects of the school's work as pupils of all abilities move through the school. Too much ground has been lost and the older pupils are not catching up.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- The quality of teaching is inadequate in reading, writing and mathematics. Too little teaching is good so pupils do not make enough progress from their starting points.
- There is little evidence of a consistent approach to teaching and the progress of too many pupils has been slowed by changes of teacher or poorly planned initiatives which have failed to work.
- Sometimes, teachers lack sufficient knowledge about what they are teaching. Tasks given do not match the pupils' needs and abilities, or what they already know and understand. Pupils spend too long passively listening to teachers without doing anything or contributing to the lesson.
- Lesson planning is weak because teachers do not use the information about pupils' progress to set work at the right level of challenge. Targets set for pupils are not checked regularly enough by all teachers. Some pupils could not tell inspectors what their targets are and they are not involved enough in measuring their own progress. Generally, their contributions are undervalued.
- Support staff are sometimes deployed effectively to help and assist pupils. In some classes, they are less effective because they have too little to do during teachers' lengthy introductions to the whole class.
- Teachers are not using homework consistently and not enough is given. This view is shared by parents.
- The pupils' books show that they make too little progress over time. For example, the quality of the work some pupils were doing during the inspection was no better than it was several months ago.
- Pupils are unsure how to respond to teacher's marking and do not always understand the

comments or know how to use the information to improve their work.

- Teachers do not provide enough specific guidance to parents to enable them to support their children's reading at home.
- Inspectors did see some evidence of improvement. The use of assessment to provide targeted interventions in reading, writing and mathematics is helping pupils to catch up. The improved teaching of reading is slowly beginning to bear fruit. Pupils are increasingly working with each other and this is helping them to develop their learning. Teachers use the school website well to extend pupils' knowledge of mathematics. However, too much of this better practice is not commonplace and improvement is fragile.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Attendance is below average. Although the school uses rewards to promote good attendance this action has not been successful enough in tackling the poor attendance of individual children.
- The majority of parents indicate their children are happy at school and feel safe.
- Pupils feel safe, though some did express concerns about the behaviour of a few. This does not inhibit learning in lessons because it is usually confined to play times. In lessons, pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to do their best, even when bored by mundane activities. They enjoy reading.
- The support for the few pupils who need to learn to manage their behaviour is effective. A few parents do not know how bullying is dealt with. The school's records of incidents of bullying and other issues are analysed to highlight trends or patterns. Since September 2012 there have been several short-term exclusions involving several children and these are managed well.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying. The school provides lessons about how to tackle bullying, how to keep themselves safe and how to respect others. As a result they are clear about what to do when bad behaviour occurs.
- A few parents do not feel the school responds to their concerns.
- Pupils' experiences at school contribute adequately to their spiritual, moral and social development. Their cultural knowledge and awareness has improved since the previous inspection.
- Inspectors observed an assembly on the theme of friendship. This was so well led that pupils were enthralled and at one point collectively gasped in wonder.
- Pupils are given responsibilities around the school and they respond well. They are given opportunities to make choices and are proud to show their work.
- Inspectors were impressed by the courtesy pupils showed them.

The leadership and management

are inadequate

- The senior leaders have not tackled the underperformance which has characterised this school for too long. The contribution made by other leaders to bringing about improvements is limited.
- The principal is aware of the issues and has tackled some poor teaching, but far too much teaching still requires improvement or is inadequate. Pivotal changes are taking far too long to bear fruit.
- Leaders have the skills to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching against the National Teachers' Standards. However, the systems they use are cumbersome and lack rigour. When monitoring in lessons, they do not pay enough attention to what exactly the pupils are learning. As a result the school's evaluation of its performance is too generous.
- A professional development programme for teachers encourages them to take greater responsibility for pupils' progress and attainment, but this has not been effective because senior leaders are not rigorous in their analysis and interpretation of the progress pupils are making.
- The school's records of pupils' progress indicate that expectations lack the ambition to improve standards quickly enough. Learning outcomes are not analysed rigorously and the gaps between

all pupils and their peers nationally are not closing. This means the school cannot ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed.

- The school has good evidence of how well disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making progress and whether it is sufficient, but it is not doing enough with this information. In contrast, the use of the pupil premium has been evaluated well to show its impact for pupils currently in the school. This is an improvement on last year when the Year 6 pupil premium group made slow progress and were eighteen months behind the other pupils in English and mathematics.
- The local authority has put reasonable support in place to help the school tackle the issues it faces. It recognises that this has not had the desired effect and the school has not progressed as well as it should over the past two years.
- School leaders enjoy the support of staff. As a result and in spite of challenging times, morale is high.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There has been insufficient improvement in the governance of the school since the last inspection. Governors understand the information they receive about pupils' progress but are not challenging leaders to ensure improvements in teaching and pupils' achievements. They have good knowledge of the impact of the pupil premium funding and this is communicated well to parents through the school's website. Governors are not ensuring that progression through the pay scales for teachers and leaders is linked to their performance. All safeguarding requirements are in place and staff have received the required training.

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	108241
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	400028

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	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Hesketh
Principal	Mandy Pickles
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2011
Telephone number	01977 723030
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Email address	headteacher@actonpastures.wakefield.sch.uk

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