

The Heys Primary School

Whiteacre Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, Greater Manchester, OL6 9NS

Inspection dates 16–17 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The rate at which pupils make progress, as seen in lessons and through looking at data, is too variable between different groups of pupils. Many pupils could make better progress than at present.
- There is not yet enough good quality teaching to ensure that most pupils make consistently good progress over time.
- Teachers do not always set high enough expectations for what pupils can achieve, particularly more-able pupils.
- Throughout the school, pupils do not write often enough at length or develop their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- In planning lessons and marking books, teachers do not always make clear to pupils what their targets are and how they can reach them. Marking does not always give clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work.
- Middle leaders need more clarity and guidance on how to improve the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The school's new senior leadership team, together with highly effective support from the local authority and ambitious, knowledgeable governors, are driving rapid improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The governing body, in setting up an Interim Strategic Group which meets weekly, has done much to reduce the effect of disruptions to leadership and management.
- From low starting points, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in a stimulating environment managed by knowledgeable staff.
- Pupils feel safe in school, bullying is rare and behaviour is managed very effectively. Parents, including the parents of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are confident that their children are well looked after in this nurturing school.

Information about this inspection

- Two additional inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed eight teachers.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils, listened to a small number of them read and looked at samples of pupils' work in English, mathematics, science and topic books.
- Many documents were scrutinised, including data on pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation, safeguarding and other policies as well as reports from the local authority and from the temporary executive headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff from the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire and from talking to staff.
- The views of parents were gained from looking at a parental questionnaire conducted by the school in March 2013, the 17 responses on Parent View, the online questionnaire, and from informal conversations with parents bringing their children to school.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patricia Cope

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average, just over half of all pupils.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is high.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is high. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children that are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is average. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for nine pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Currently, there are five pupils on roll who benefit from this provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been considerable disruptions to leadership and management over the last six months caused by illness, retirements and resignations.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in leadership with a new headteacher and senior leadership team as well as a new governing body.
- A temporary executive headteacher was seconded from another school from February half term until the end of the Easter term 2013.
- At the time of this inspection, the acting deputy headteacher, seconded from another school, had been in post since January and the new headteacher had been in post only one day.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good by:
 - setting clear learning objectives so that pupils know exactly what they are to learn and whether they have succeeded
 - helping pupils to be fully aware of their learning targets
 - setting higher expectations for what pupils can achieve both in the level of work set and in the presentation of their work
 - ensuring marking is fully effective in all classes and that pupils are expected to follow up marking comments, respond and improve their work by completing exercises or repeating them where necessary.
- Improve overall attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, especially for boys and those receiving the pupil premium by:
 - ensuring work is consistently hard enough for more-able pupils
 - increasing opportunities for independent work, including investigations and problem-solving
 - reviewing the ways in which the pupil premium funding is allocated to reduce the gap in achievement for these pupils.

- Improve attainment and progress in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write regularly and at length
 - planning to ensure pupils develop their writing skills in subjects other than English
 - celebrating pupils' achievements in writing in displays.

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - clarifying the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders and providing training to help them to check on and enhance the quality of learning more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2012, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was average by the end of Year 6 for the number of pupils reaching Level 4. However, it was well below average for the number achieving the higher Level 5, particularly in writing and mathematics. Predictions for the 2013 pupils are better and show that the school expects a greater number to achieve the higher level in all subjects.
- Achievement is better in reading. Pupils read widely and often and can talk about the books they have read with enthusiasm and knowledge. For example, one pupil's enjoyment of verse has led him to write his own poetry quite regularly.
- Most pupils make the progress expected of them but many more should be doing better. The drive to improve writing is not yet fully successful because not all teachers are effective in ensuring that pupils write regularly. Some pupils take little pride in the presentation of their work.
- There are wide variations in the rate of progress of different pupils. Boys are not doing as well as girls and pupils known to be entitled to receive the pupil premium funding make slower progress than others. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to others. Those who benefit from the resourced provision are well supported in class, individually or in small groups and their rate of progress is also similar to others. There is little difference between the achievement of pupils from different ethnic groups, including those for whom English is an additional language, and all other pupils.
- Although achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 requires improvement, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from starting points which are lower than those typically expected for their age. All children have access to a wide range of exciting activities that they enjoy and which appeal to their interests so that they concentrate, participate enthusiastically and make rapid progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching throughout the school is not sufficiently strong to ensure that most pupils achieve above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, which would represent good progress.
- The steady pace of learning in some lessons means pupils are not fully productive. In those lessons, pupils listen for too long to the teacher, do not write notes or participate in other ways and so are not actively involved in learning. Too often all the pupils are doing exactly the same work, which offers little challenge to the pupils capable of more. Teachers' expectations of the levels of work set and the standards pupils should be achieving are often too low.
- By contrast, where there is good teaching pupils are fully involved from the start. This was observed, for example, in a Year 6 ICT lesson where pupils were creating their own animation films for the first time, or a Year 3 science lesson where pupils began investigations and experiments which made them think and stretched their imaginations. However, not all lessons are developing pupils' investigation and problem-solving skills as effectively.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff use questioning well and encourage children to achieve as well as they can through the 'challenge passports' where they undertake a series of increasingly difficult tasks. Assessment is detailed and used effectively to measure and promote good learning.
- Some lessons are planned well. Their objectives are clear; pupils are fully aware of what they are learning and how they will know that they have succeeded. However, this is not consistent across all classes. Sometimes activities do not match what the pupils are supposed to be learning and some lesson objectives do not offer sufficient challenge for all pupils. Some pupils

are not aware of their targets or of how to reach them.

- Teaching assistants are often effective in encouraging learning, particularly for the pupils receiving extra support from the resourced provision. Their work with individuals and small groups in and outside the classroom contributes effectively to the progress of these pupils.
- Teachers are conscientious about marking books regularly but accept untidy and poorly presented work, do not give enough advice on how work can be improved or the next steps in learning and pupils rarely respond to requests to complete or repeat work which is incorrect. There are few examples of extended writing in other subjects beyond work in English and very few examples of pupils' writing are celebrated by displays on the walls.
- Reading is given a high priority. The well-organised guided reading sessions help pupils to enjoy reading and make strong progress. The school encourages reading and writing by inviting authors to come into school and celebrating events such as World Book day and Roald Dahl day.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Behaviour around school at break and lunchtimes is mostly cooperative and pupils get on well with one another. However, their behaviour to encourage better learning requires improvement because pupils are too easily satisfied with the quality of their work and sometimes lose concentration.
- Staff manage behaviour well and lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. When the opportunity is provided, pupils usually work together enthusiastically. However, sometimes one partner is doing much of the work while the other is watching.
- Pupils are confident that they feel safe in school and are happy to be here. They trust the adults and feel that school has a family atmosphere. Pupils understand about different kinds of bullying and say that little takes place. They are able to explain how bullying can best be avoided. Pupils are taught to act safely and show regard for others. The school is a harmonious community and there are few racist incidents. Few parents have any concerns about bullying or racism.
- Attendance is average and the school works hard to support the small number of pupils and families where attendance is low.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The very new leadership team is acting quickly and confidently to improve teaching and learning and ensure that more pupils make good progress. The deputy head, seconded from a nearby school for two terms, in partnership with a temporary executive headteacher who was in post only from February to April, have successfully led a drive to improve teaching which is already proving effective.
- New initiatives already in place have been implemented after full consultation with the new headteacher who took up his post at the beginning of April. These include an effective tracking system which shows the progress made by all pupils and the quality of teaching across the school. Because of this, the school is now in a stronger position to identify where extra support is needed and to see which groups of pupils are falling behind.
- The school has been very effectively led and supported by the governing body which set up an Interim Strategic Group which has met weekly during the period of disrupted leadership. This group continues to meet and has managed a period of rapid change well. Members have rightly seen that the first priorities are to ensure teaching leads to good progress and to reduce the gaps in achievement between different groups. The impact of their work is already evident.
- The local authority has provided outstanding support during this period by providing consultants, helping the school to produce an accurate self-evaluation, overseeing the writing of a good quality school development plan and ensuring the school has strong temporary leadership.
- Staff morale is high despite the changes in leadership and teachers are enthusiastic about the school's new direction. Middle leaders are keen to take their part in improving the school but

have not been given enough opportunity to develop their skills effectively. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed and remains one of the school's strengths. The pupil premium funding has not been spent to good effect so far because the gap in achievement for the pupils entitled to support remains wide. The new headteacher has already identified the need to make immediate changes to the way these funds are allocated in order to ensure better use of this money to raise standards. This is also to enable more attention to be given to ensuring fairer and more equal opportunities, as currently, despite the school's commitment, not all pupils are doing as well as they could.

- Careful management of the very small number of pupils who benefit from the resourced provision is successfully ensuring their individual learning needs are fully understood and they are well supported and guided both in and out of class. As a result, they achieve in line with other pupils in the school.
- In the past, performance management has not been used effectively to promote the best teaching. The governing body has established a new and rigorous process in partnership with the local authority.
- Parents have full confidence in the school and the vast majority would recommend it to others.
- Safeguarding measures meet statutory requirements and ensure pupils and adults are safe.
- Certain aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are well promoted and quite strong. For example, pupils have a very clear idea of what is right and wrong inside and outside school. Some good information is provided about other cultures through the curriculum; for example, there are striking displays of pupils' work on Aboriginal art, African masks and Indian culture.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly effective. Governors know what is working well in school and what is less effective. They have played a crucial role in minimising disruption caused by staffing difficulties. They have worked very effectively with the local authority to keep the school on track, to ensure the education of pupils is not disrupted and to set about a planned programme of rapid improvement in the outcomes for pupils. Governor training is comprehensive and the governing body has a very clear idea of its own strengths and weaknesses. Its work is closely focused on improving the progress pupils make and narrowing the gaps between different groups of pupils. Governors provide high quality support for senior and middle leaders to ensure they do their jobs well. Governors fully understand the data in order to compare the school's performance with that of other schools and they make a strong contribution to the school's ability to continue to improve in the future.

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	106201
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	411848

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	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Arati Patel-Mistry
Headteacher	Andrew Card
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2009
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