

Oakhill Primary School

Hawksworth, Glascoate Heath, Tamworth, B77 2HH

Inspection dates 5–6 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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

- Pupils have not yet made enough progress to overcome weak learning in the past and reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Boys do not make as much progress in their learning as girls.
- Pupils' limited knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is holding back their spelling.
- Weak knowledge of basic literacy and numeracy, particularly for boys, is limiting pupils' progress in mathematics and writing.
- A few pupils still rely on teachers to manage their behaviour for them.
- Teachers do not always take enough account of how well pupils are learning in lessons to adjust tasks so that they make good progress.
- Although improving, attendance is still below average.
- Some staff who are new to leading important subject areas have not yet developed their roles and responsibilities.
- Not all of the governors have sufficiently strengthened their skills to effectively support and challenge the school or help it to improve.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is now improving quickly because the new senior leaders are having a significant impact on the quality of education.
- The quality of teaching has improved and pupils are now making better progress.
- Outstanding teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a very good start to their school life.
- Pupils supported through extra government funding have caught up with others in their work.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy school.
- Pupils' work is marked very thoroughly. This helps them to improve it.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons and saw all teachers. Seven lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The inspector heard pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and pupils. The inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, and the data it collects on pupils' progress. Documents detailing the school's arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for them to be published.
- Staff did not complete the inspection questionnaire but instead spoke to the inspector, as a group, face-to-face.

Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average.
- Most pupils come from a White British background.
- The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average. Very few are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above average. In this school, this extra government funding is for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has a close partnership with Hanbury's Farm Primary School, which is led by the same executive headteacher as Oakhill.
- The school was made subject to special measures in March 2012. Since then, there have been significant staff changes, such as:
 - the previous headteacher left and an executive headteacher, a local leader of education, now leads the school
 - a new deputy headteacher has been appointed, and a new senior leadership team formed
 - classes have been reorganised so there are now no mixed-age classes
 - new teachers have joined in Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6
 - subject leadership roles have been reallocated.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make the quality of teaching at least good in all classes by:
 - making sure that teachers evaluate pupils' progress during lessons, and adjust their teaching and learning tasks in response.
- Raise standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - carefully monitoring boys' progress and providing support immediately to tackle any weaknesses, to make sure they achieve at least as well as girls
 - building on the excellent start children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage in learning phonics (letters and the sounds they make)
 - using this learning to improve results in the Year 1 phonics check, and applying it in all subjects to improve spelling throughout the school
 - strengthening core skills in literacy and numeracy, particularly for boys, to support problem solving in mathematics and improve writing across all subjects so that all groups achieve equally well.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by:
 - making sure that pupils with identified behaviour issues are quickly provided with appropriate

and effective support to help them manage their own behaviour
– exploring further strategies to raise attendance.

- Develop the roles of teachers in charge of subjects and other key areas of provision, and governors, to support the senior leadership team in continuing to improve the school.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Although there is now clear improvement in pupils' achievement, pupils have not made good progress since the last inspection and have not been achieving the standards they should.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been steadily improving but remain below average. They were very low in 2012. In 2013, standards rose but were still below average in reading and mathematics. In writing, they were broadly average.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below average in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys did not perform as well as girls. They made less progress than girls through Key Stage 2 and, by the end of Year 6, they were about two terms behind in mathematics and writing. In basic grammar, punctuation and spelling, boys were almost two years behind girls.
- Pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics are not well established. In the past, they have not developed good presentation skills. Spelling is too often inaccurate, although words are recognisable. Some pupils are unsure of basic number facts and having to work these out slows down their progress or leads to avoidable mistakes when solving problems.
- In 2013, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 was below average. Younger pupils struggle with more difficult words and show limited knowledge of letters and sounds when reading unfamiliar words. However, older pupils are more competent readers. They recognise a good number of words and, when reading unfamiliar words, they use letter sounds to blend words. They show an appropriate understanding of what they have read.
- This year, pupils are making much better progress because the quality of teaching has improved and there is closer monitoring of their progress by the senior leadership team. The school's assessment data, lesson observations and pupils' books show pupils are making up for previous limited progress and are on track to achieve standards that are closer to those nationally expected for their ages. The presentation of pupils' work is now much improved.
- Pupils supported through pupil premium funding make better progress than others. The school is successfully closing the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school. In 2013, pupils in Year 6 supported by the pupil premium reached standards in English and mathematics that were in line with others.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are also making better progress this year because work is matched more closely to their individual needs. Expectations for learning are clear and staff set work which moves these pupils on.
- Children join the school with skills, knowledge and understanding well below those expected for their age. They make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and join Year 1 with average attainment.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is improving but has not been good enough over time to secure good achievement for pupils throughout the school.

- At the time of the previous inspection, too much teaching was inadequate or required improvement. Teachers did not use their knowledge of what pupils had already achieved to plan tasks set at the right level for different ages and abilities. Marking of pupils' work was not focused enough to let pupils know what they had done well and what they needed to do next to improve. Teachers did not give pupils enough time to practise what they were learning.
- Teaching has improved significantly under current leadership. During this inspection, there was much more good and outstanding teaching than in the past. Far less required improvement and none was inadequate.
- Teachers plan activities in lessons well so that pupils are able to build on what they have previously learnt. Strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning in previous lessons are used in planning the next steps they need to take. However, teachers are sometimes building new learning on insecure foundations because of a legacy of past underachievement and weak basic skills in literacy and numeracy.
- In the best lessons, teachers adapt lesson activities in response to how well pupils are learning, but this is not yet the case in all teaching.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to talk about their work and ask questions so they understand clearly what is expected. Teachers are now asking questions skilfully to involve pupils and extend their thinking skills.
- Pupils' work is valued highly by teachers. At the end of lessons, teachers and pupils, together as a group, review what pupils have produced. They talk about what is good and sensitively discuss how pieces of work can be even better. Teachers' valuing of pupils' work sets a good example for pupils, who, in turn, value their own and others' achievements.
- Work is marked well now and this helps pupils understand how they can improve it. It identifies what pupils have done well and what pupils need to do to improve. Pupils are given the opportunity at the beginning of each morning to check their work and to complete corrections. In this way, all teachers ensure that mistakes are corrected and misunderstandings cleared up.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. It has been of the highest quality throughout the time the school was in special measures. It is particularly strong when teachers lead groups of children in a range of areas of learning, including literacy, numeracy and developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. When children make their own choices of what to do, teachers set out a wide range of activities linked to the development of children's skills, but especially encourage learning through discovery.
- Pupils with identified special educational needs are supported well in class. Because they feel secure, they persevere with tasks and concentrate well. Work is matched well to each one's particular needs so they make good progress against their individual targets.
- Teachers show that they have high expectations of behaviour and do not compromise them, expecting the same high level of behaviour from all pupils, whatever their particular needs. All pupils respond well and the learning environment is calm.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**requires improvement**

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because teachers still have to manage behaviour carefully to make sure that there is no interruption to learning, and pupils lack the confidence to

work without adult support or direction.

- Pupils concentrate well but rely too much on adults for support when they find difficulty or when it is time to take the next steps in learning. They are developing the confidence to ask for help when they need it, and so are now overcoming many of the difficulties they find in learning.
- Pupils behave well in class but this is still mainly due to strong behaviour management by staff. The few pupils who have found difficulty in settling comfortably into school life respond well to the high expectations of their behaviour and cause very little, if any, disruption to other pupils' learning. They respond to their regular teachers well, although their good behaviour cannot be guaranteed if a different teacher takes the class. Other than effective behaviour management by the class teachers and vigilant supervision, there is limited counselling available that focuses on raising their confidence, improving their self-control and helping them to appreciate the consequences of their actions.
- Attendance fell to below the national average last year. Due to vigilant monitoring and a quick response to unexplained absences, it is improving so far this year, but is not yet average.
- Behaviour is now much better than it has been in the past. Pupils say that conduct is good and has improved. Staff agree with this view, which was confirmed by inspection observations in lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's enthusiasm for learning is exceptional. In general, children are proud when they achieve good results. They work well in groups and listen to others' ideas respectfully. They find their schoolwork interesting and stay on task for extended periods.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Until recently, leaders did not do enough to improve teaching and pupils' achievement. Subject leadership in English and mathematics has been only recently allocated.
- Senior leaders have recognised that there need to be changes in the curriculum. There is an effective focus on raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics, but not enough is planned across other subjects to boost pupils' basic skills. New initiatives, such as the daily 'Fixit' time, when pupils correct their work, are already proving very helpful.
- The current senior leadership team provides strong and highly focused leadership. Its members' detailed awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate and forms the basis of plans for school improvement. Leaders are working rapidly to ensure that staff have the skills to sustain current improvement in the future.
- Senior leaders, particularly the executive headteacher, have been successful in improving important areas of provision in a short space of time. Careful management of staffing, and making necessary changes, have led to better teaching. Higher expectations of how pupils conduct themselves in school have led to better behaviour. In turn, pupils' progress is beginning to show improvement. Current leadership has shown a strong capacity to improve the school.
- The school has appropriate procedures to manage the performance of teachers, and the governors have set demanding targets for the work of the executive headteacher and, in turn, members of staff. Progress towards challenging targets is closely monitored to guide the work of staff and improve their skills.

- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support the progress of eligible pupils and to ensure that they have an equal opportunity to succeed and are fully included in activities. The school has made appropriate arrangements for using the primary sports funding to improve opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities, and to improve staff skills in teaching physical education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement. Pupils have cultural experiences through subjects such as art, music and studying literature. Moral and social development is improving but some pupils have not yet developed a strong enough moral code to manage their own behaviour. Pupils have good opportunities in lessons to develop a spiritual dimension through considering others, discussing important world issues and valuing achievement.
- The local authority has played an important role in enabling the school to improve. It has supported the Chair of the Governing Body in enabling current strong and effective leadership. It has regularly monitored the school's performance and fed back its recommendations. It has also enabled an effective headteacher to lead the school and encouraged the resulting partnership with his successful local primary school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - In response to the slow progress the school was making after being made subject to special measures, the Chair of the Governing Body acted decisively. Working with the local authority, she made arrangements for strong leadership to be put into place. This led to a much greater pace of improvement.
 - Governors are not sufficiently aware of what is taking place in classrooms. As a group, they are not challenging the senior leadership team enough. They are now looking at the school improvement in the short term. In the past, they focused too much on the long-term future of the school and not enough at the day-to-day improvement through, for example, checking on how well teachers help pupils to make good or better progress.
 - Governors are aware of how the school is performing in relation to other schools through regular feedback from the executive headteacher and the local authority. They have an adequate understanding of the information on how well pupils are achieving.
 - Governors set suitable targets for managing the performance of the headteacher and staff. They know how well staff are carrying out their responsibilities through this process, and they link pay to performance.
 - The governing body makes sure that statutory requirements are met, including for safeguarding.
 - The Chair of the Governing Body is aware of the governing body's strengths and weaknesses and is clear about how it should improve. Other governors are not yet fully confident about the work and expectations of a governing body, and do not have sufficient first-hand links with the staff and school. Not all governors have contributed enough to the school's improvement.

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	124166
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	424298

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carole Dean
Headteacher (Executive Headteacher)	Peter Hollis
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2012
Telephone number	01827 475020
Fax number	N/A
Email address	headteacher@oakhill.staffs.sch.uk

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