

# West Heath Primary School

Rednal Road, Birmingham, B38 8HU

<b>Inspection dates</b>		28–29 November 2013	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures

- Pupils make inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics in most year groups, but particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 declined in 2013 and were well below the national average.
- The teaching is variable in quality and fails to engage and motivate all pupils. Too often, work does not match the different ability levels within a class.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not always secure, particularly in mathematics, and their planning is not precise enough.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not always use time effectively in lessons to ensure that pupils are actively engaged in their learning.
- Teachers' marking does not always give pupils enough information to help them improve their work.
- Teachers do not teach phonics (letters and the sounds they make) well and they do not give pupils enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects.
- Leaders and managers, over time, have not been rigorous enough in their self-evaluation and have not done enough to halt the decline in pupils' achievement and to improve teaching.
- Governors have not been well informed and have failed to hold the school to account and stop the fall in achievement.
- There are too many lessons where pupils are inattentive.
- Relationships between the school and some parents and carers are poor.

### The school has the following strengths

- Since her appointment, the headteacher has taken decisive action to deal with teaching. As a result, pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching are beginning to improve.
- Pupils feel they get good support with any problems and they feel safe because they know staff care for them.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 21 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors listened to several pupils read and looked at samples of their recent work.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, teachers and members of the governing body. The lead inspector had a discussion on the telephone with a representative from the local authority. Discussions also took place with mixed-ability groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of school documents, including: the school’s self-evaluation; the school development plan; behaviour records; and documents relating to the work of the governing body and the management of teachers’ performance.
- The views of the 40 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. Inspectors also considered the views expressed in 35 questionnaires returned by school staff.

## Inspection team

Steven Cartlidge, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Tracey Kneale	Additional Inspector
Enid Korn	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.*

*The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.*

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those speaking English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for support through the pupil premium. This is extra funding from the government for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standard for primary schools, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher were appointed in April 2013.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve teaching so that none is inadequate and much more is good or better by ensuring that teachers:
  - have high expectations and are precise about what they want each group of pupils to learn and how they are going to check how successful they have been
  - make accurate use of information about what pupils already know and can do to plan work which challenges all groups of pupils and helps learning to move at a brisk pace
  - develop secure subject knowledge for the teaching of mathematics
  - use time more effectively in lessons so that pupils spend more time actively engaged in, and making decisions about, their own learning
  - plan lessons that excite pupils and engage their curiosity
  - use teaching assistants and other adults more effectively, so none of their time is wasted, and check that their support is helping pupils to make better progress
  - use marking to inform pupils about how well they are doing against their targets and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Raise standards in reading and writing by:
  - ensuring that the teaching of phonics (letters and their sounds) is more closely matched to pupils' abilities and moves learning on more quickly
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and develop the skills of writing at length in different subjects.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
  - improving leaders' understanding of how much progress pupils should make in order that suitably challenging targets can be set

- improving the accuracy of school self-evaluation by rigorously analysing all available information
- implementing more rigorous checks on teaching that focus on how successful teachers are at moving learning on and how they can improve their practice
- working closely with parents and carers so that they are better able to support their children’s learning.
- improve governance by ensuring that members of the governing body are better informed about the school’s performance and can use information to set more challenging targets for improvement
- arranging an external review of governance to include a specific focus on the school’s use of pupil premium funding.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Pupils of all abilities, including the most able, do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics in most year groups and especially in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 6 in 2013 underachieved. They left the school around two terms behind pupils nationally. This means that they were not prepared well enough for the next stage of their education.
- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge broadly in line with those expected for their age. Children's progress is inadequate and they join Year 1 with skills and knowledge generally below average. However, there are signs of improvement under the new leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage, seen in children's work during the inspection, particularly in reading and their work with counting and number.
- Pupils who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding make inadequate progress. In 2013, they completed Year 6 with attainment in English that was similar to their classmates but they were more than six months behind them in mathematics. This meant the gap between these pupils and their classmates has not narrowed.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the 2013 phonics screening check was well below the national average and has declined since 2012.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make inadequate progress. The work they have been given has often not been matched to their ability and so they have fallen further behind their peers.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to other pupils in the school.
- As a result of senior leaders' focus on improving the quality of teaching, some pupils in some classes are making better progress than before. However, improvements are not apparent in all classes and have not had time to have a major impact on improving the achievement of all pupils.

### The quality of teaching is inadequate

- The teaching is not always good enough to ensure that pupils make at least the progress that is expected nationally. Activities in lessons do not always motivate and engage pupils. Consequently, some pupils become distracted and do not take an active part in the lessons as their concentration lapses.
- Some teachers' subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics, is not secure and this can lead to pupils' errors not being corrected.
- In too many lessons, work is not matched to pupils' different abilities. Consequently, the most able are not stretched and the less able do not get sufficient support. Questions are not directed at particular pupils and so some pupils do not become involved. In a lesson in Key Stage 1, for example, all pupils were given the task of learning to use adverbs correctly in sentences. The most able could already recognise adverbs and were presented with no extension work or opportunity to work independently. Those of lower ability were not engaged from the beginning because they did not understand the task. The pace of the lesson was too slow and pupils made

little or no progress.

- At times, pupils do not settle and get on with their work quickly enough. Teachers spend time explaining what different groups are going to do which means that some pupils, and teaching assistants, spend time listening to work they will not be attempting and which, for the pupils, may be too hard or too easy for them to do.
- Teaching assistants do not always support pupils well enough during introductory activities and, too often, teachers do not routinely check how much progress pupils make when they are working with assistants.
- Teachers do not always check on how well pupils are progressing during the lesson so they are not able to ensure that pupils are challenged by demanding work or given support if they need it. Teachers do not consistently ensure pupils understand their work. Consequently, pupils do not always remember what they have covered in lessons.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects other than English. Over time, pupils have not had enough practice and their writing and presentation skills are not well developed.
- Pupils have not had enough opportunity to practise their phonics and often the pace of learning phonics is too slow. However, some good practice was seen where pupils worked through sounds rapidly together.
- Pupils say they enjoy lessons when they have opportunities to work in groups or on practical activities. However, opportunities to work like this have been limited in some classes. This means that when some pupils get opportunities to work in this way, they do not always respond well because they have been used to being closely directed with their work, and have had few chances to think for themselves.
- Marking has been a focus in the school and some marking of pupils' work is of high quality, providing clear and specific information about how pupils can improve their work. Pupils then respond to show that they understand what they need to do. In too many instances, however, teachers give a comment about pupils' work but do not identify how they can move more rapidly towards their target.
- During the current academic year, new senior leaders' records of lesson observations indicate an improving trend towards good or better teaching taking place in just over half of the lessons. This was reflected during the inspection, where good or better teaching was also seen in half the classes observed. In these lessons, pupils are motivated and engaged throughout the lesson. For example, in an English lesson in Year 6, pupils were working in pairs and groups talking confidently about their 'flashback' stories. All pupils in the class, including the more able, were totally engrossed in their work and striving to reach the highest levels possible.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate**

- Behaviour is inadequate because, in too many lessons, pupils do not show a positive attitude to their work and, at times, they do not concentrate and become distracted.
- Attendance has been below average and decreasing for the past two years. Until recently, the work that the school has done with parents and carers of pupils who are persistently absent has had little effect. However, since September 2013, the school has introduced new initiatives to

improve attendance. Early indications are positive, as attendance from the start of the academic year has risen to above last year's national average.

- Fixed-term exclusions were significantly above the national averages in 2011 and 2012. Some older children say there is poor behaviour in some classes and on the playground. However, exclusions have reduced considerably since September, and pupils told inspectors that since the appointment of the new headteacher, poor behaviour is now dealt with more effectively by teachers and lunchtime supervisors.
- Parents are happy with the school's arrangements for keeping children safe and feel that behaviour is good. Pupils say they feel safe at school. There are rare incidents of bullying and pupils know exactly what to do if they have concerns, including over the use of the internet and social networking sites.
- Pastoral care is good. Relationships between pupils and staff are good and the school provides good support for pupils who have additional social and emotional problems.

### **The leadership and management are inadequate**

- The quality of education provided by the school has fallen since the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment is lower at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics because they have made inadequate progress. Leaders, including governors, were too slow to react to this decline.
- Expectations have not been high enough to ensure that teachers demand the very best of their pupils. Checks on teachers' performance have not focused sufficiently on the impact that teaching has had on pupils' progress over time.
- The school's self-evaluation is generous in places and is not an accurate evaluation, for example, of the quality of teaching and learning. Over time, leaders, including governors, have not demonstrated that they have the skills necessary to evaluate accurately the quality of education provided by the school, so have not drawn up sufficiently precise priorities for improvement.
- Relationships between some parents and carers and the school's leaders are poor. Of those who responded to the online questionnaire, a quarter had concerns about the leadership and management of the school. A third of parents and carers who responded would not recommend the school to another parent.
- Leaders who have specific responsibilities for subjects rely too much on the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher to measure the impact new initiatives are having on pupils' achievement. Subject leaders have not been effective in driving improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The curriculum does not ensure that all pupils make sufficient progress. It does not offer pupils enough opportunity to use their reading, writing and mathematical skills across a variety of different subjects. Although a new curriculum has been introduced to address this issue, it is too early to measure its impact.
- The curriculum is successful at fostering pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as enhancing their personal and emotional well-being.
- The recent focus on improving pupils' achievement, teaching and safeguarding is beginning to show that the quality of education provided by the school is improving. The headteacher has

taken appropriately tough action with staff who cannot improve, and staff now understand that any salary increases must be linked to the impact their teaching has on pupils' performance. There has been insufficient time for training some teachers to rectify areas identified for improvement and, as a result, the quality of their teaching has not yet improved.

- There have been serious safeguarding issues in the school, which the new headteacher had to deal with quickly. Her immediate focus upon making the school site safe means that all safeguarding issues have been resolved.
- Since her appointment the headteacher has ensured that sports funding has been used to increase participation in sports' activities. All pupils in Years 2 to 6 now spend at least one lesson each week with qualified coaches, and other activities are provided for younger pupils. The coaches also offer lunchtime and after-school sports activities. It is too early for leaders to have evaluated the impact on pupils' health, well-being and performance in physical education.
- The local authority recognised falling achievement at the school and took necessary steps to appoint an effective headteacher. However, the local authority has not done enough to help the school raise standards for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is inadequate. Governors have been too reliant on the information that the school's senior leaders have presented and have not challenged this robustly to ensure that they hold leaders to account. They have not had a proper understanding of pupils' progress and attainment across the school, the quality of teaching or the performance of teachers and leaders.
- Governors check that the annual reviews of teachers' pay are completed and they have been supportive when strong action had been needed to hold teachers to account.
- Governors have approved the allocation of pupil premium funding to provide one-to-one tuition and small-group teaching, but these actions have not been effective in reducing academic disadvantage.
- A new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in November 2013 following the disbanding of the previous governing body and the appointment of a new governing body. This new governing body cannot yet demonstrate a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134279
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	427019

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	380
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Frances Millett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michelle Hooper
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 458 4257
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