

Gorsefield Primary School

Robertson Street, Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 4DW

Inspection dates

20–21 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is inadequate. Their progress is too slow and by the end of Year 6 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are too low.
- The quality of teaching over time is inadequate in Key Stages 1 and 2. There is not enough good teaching to raise standards quickly enough.
- Work in lessons fails to meet the needs of pupils of varying abilities, particularly the middle-ability and most-able pupils.
- Teachers do not have an accurate understanding or high enough expectation of what pupils can achieve. Too often, pupils' work lacks challenge.
- Teachers' marking often does not give clear enough guidance to pupils about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Too much teaching fails to engage pupils; hence, some pupils' attitudes to their work and their behaviour require improvement.
- The leadership of teaching is inadequate. Leaders are not rigorous enough in their evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. The leadership has been too slow to remedy weaknesses in the quality of teaching because it has judged it to be better than it actually is.
- The improvement plans of senior and middle leaders lack precise enough detail and clear timescales. The impact of leaders' actions is not monitored carefully enough.
- Leaders including governors have not addressed well enough the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Achievement and standards have remained stubbornly low since and there is too little sign of improvement. At present, the capacity to improve without external guidance is too weak.
- The governing body is ineffective because it has not challenged senior leaders appropriately to bring about enough improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress.
- Teaching in the resourced provision is good; consequently, these pupils achieve well.
- The partnership with parents is strong. The school has been recognised for the quality of its work with parents, who are highly supportive of the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 21 lessons or part lessons and observed pupils working in small groups with adults outside of classrooms. One lesson was jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed an assembly and visited a parents' workshop.
- Inspectors heard some pupils read and looked at work in pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Key Stage 1 and 2, staff, representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents they spoke to on the playground and the school's own parental questionnaires. There were not enough responses to generate results to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, pupil progress data for each year group, improvement planning, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance and exclusion figures and checked the school's view of its own performance.
- The views of 17 members of staff, expressed through a staff questionnaire, were also taken into account.
- The school has recently been accredited with the Leading Parent Partnership Award, in recognition of its work with parents.

Inspection team

Barbara Flitcroft, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gillian Burrow

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), 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

- Gorsefield Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority) is higher than that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils 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 well above average.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standards that set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Alternative off-site provision is provided by The Ark, which currently supports two pupils who need additional help with managing their behaviour. The school has a specially resourced provision for up to 12 pupils with special educational needs related to cognitive learning difficulties.
- The school runs a before-school nurture group twice a week for specific pupils, which is managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, so that it is consistently good or better and so that all pupils make good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
 - eradicating any remaining inadequate teaching raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve
 - making sure that all teachers use information about pupils' progress to plan lessons which meet pupils' varying needs and abilities and provide good levels of challenge, particularly for the middle-ability and most-able pupils
 - ensuring marking consistently provides clear guidance for pupils about what they need to do next to improve their work and giving pupils time to act on it
 - making sure that teaching motivates and engages pupils enough in their work so that their attitudes to learning are always good
 - ensuring that support staff play an active role in all parts of lessons.
- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics, so that they are at least in line with national standards by the end of Year 6, by:
 - improving pupils' accuracy in their use of grammar, spelling and punctuation
 - improving the teaching of phonics (the links between sounds and letters)
 - making sure that all pupils read high-quality and varied texts that are appropriate for their differing ages and abilities
 - ensuring that all teachers insist on high expectations of good standards and presentation of

pupils' work, including neat, correctly formed handwriting and numbers and that these are always modelled accurately by staff

- placing less emphasis on the completion of worksheets and giving more opportunities for pupils to set out their own work
- providing pupils with more open-ended challenges which encourage them to further develop their mathematical thinking, especially in a real-life context, particularly the middle-ability and most-able pupils.

■ Urgently improve leadership and management, including governance, so that the school's improvement is rapid and its capacity to improve strengthens by:

- providing training for leaders at all levels so they can accurately evaluate the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility, including through reviewing teachers' planning, observing lessons and scrutinising pupils' work
- making sure that senior and middle leaders check more carefully that all teachers are providing work that is well matched to pupils' varying abilities ensuring improvement plans are clear, identify specific outcomes in terms of pupils' achievement and include interim measures against which progress can be regularly evaluated
- improving the systems to manage the performance of staff so that they are held fully to account for the progress of pupils
- improving the skills and knowledge of the governing body so it is able to effectively hold leaders fully to account for rapidly improving teaching and pupils' progress
- undertaking an external review of governance, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership may be improved.

Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Between Years 1 and 6, pupils underachieve significantly in English and mathematics. Too many pupils make less than expected progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. They are not prepared well enough for the next stages of education because they fail to develop good enough basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Rates of progress over time have been well below those expected nationally.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are below that typically expected for their age. About one quarter of children enter at well-below expected levels. Learning gets off to a good start. Children make good progress in all areas as a result of good teaching, excellent partnerships with families and a stimulating, attractive indoor environment which helps to nurture their independence. Nevertheless, most enter Year 1 with still much ground to make up to reach the level expected for their age.
- Over time, however, pupils' progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 is too slow. Although the school's data from 2013 shows some improvement in levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement remains inadequate. Records about the achievement of current pupils, inspection evidence and scrutiny of the pupils' work reveal that too many pupils do not make expected progress. The proportion making more than expected progress is also too low.
- Work in pupils' books shows that too many activities lack challenge. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Learning is not challenging enough, particularly for the middle-ability and most-able pupils and so their progress is too slow. Lower-ability pupils, as well as the most vulnerable pupils regularly benefit from particular intervention work with teachers and support staff. This enables them to move forward in their learning at a better pace because work is more suited to their individual needs.
- Achievement in English is inadequate. Pupils lack accuracy in their use of grammar, spelling and punctuation. This hinders their achievement in writing. Pupils' work in books shows a lack of pride and, in some, a poor ability to form letters and numbers correctly. Pupils' phonics skills (linking sounds and letters) are weak; the teaching of phonics and reading fails to ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities are able to fully understanding what they read. Too many pupils are unable to read texts that are appropriate for their ages and abilities. Standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are too low overall and are not improving quickly enough.
- Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 are also not high enough. Pupils make inadequate progress in their mathematical understanding because they are given too little opportunity to use and apply their mathematical skills, such as through open-ended challenges which encourage them to further develop their mathematical thinking, especially in real-life contexts. This particularly hampers the achievement of the middle-ability and most-able pupils.
- Overall, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make slow progress in line with their peers in school in reading and writing. The achievement of the few pupils who attend the specially resourced provision is good. Dedicated staff in that provision ensure that learning is accurately personalised and encourages good levels of independence.
- The attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals has been about one year behind their peers in English and about six months in mathematics. The school is now starting to narrow this gap.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate overall because the progress of pupils, over time, in English and mathematics, has been significantly below what is expected nationally. Although some teaching seen during the inspection was good or better, most of this was in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Resource Provision; teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is not improving quickly

enough. Too much requires improvement and a small minority is inadequate. There are too many inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics to raise standards quickly. Good and better practice is not shared well enough to improve teaching to a good enough quality.

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are not high enough. Teachers do not use information about pupils' progress to plan lessons and provide work that meets the needs of pupils of all abilities and particularly to provide good levels of challenge, especially for the middle-ability and most-able pupils. Too often, tasks are not pitched at the right level. Too many pupils already know or can do what is being taught and find the work too easy. Sometimes, however, lower-ability pupils struggle to keep up because the work is too hard for them.
- Teachers do not always insist that pupils set out their work well, nor do they ensure that pupils' work is neat, with correctly formed handwriting, letters and numbers. Occasionally, in their demonstrations to pupils, staff do not always model these basic skills to pupils accurately or clearly enough. In some books, the majority of work completed was on worksheets. This hampers pupils' ability to develop their basic writing skills.
- Teaching sometimes fails to motivate and engage pupils enough in their work. Pupils often have to listen to the teacher for unnecessarily long periods of time as a whole class, leaving too little time for them to get on with their work or to develop their skills and knowledge. At such times, some pupils can find it difficult to maintain their interest and motivation and so their attitudes to learning are not always good.
- Pupils' independence in learning in many classes is held back because adults give them too much support. This means that when pupils are given opportunities to work on their own, they lack the confidence and skills to do so effectively, often relying too heavily on adult support. Teachers do not always use and deploy assistants and other adults well enough to promote learning and encourage pupils' participation.
- Pupils' work in a minority of books is unmarked. This means that some pupils do not know how well they have done or what to do to improve. In too many books teachers fail to give pupils advice on how to improve their work. Where advice is given, pupils are not always given the time to respond and learn from their mistakes.
- The good teaching, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, engages pupils in interesting tasks and purposeful activities. Teachers correctly model the high quality of vocabulary and written work that they expect from the pupils and use any additional adults to good effect by asking them to lead learning for different ability groups. In such lessons, pupils quickly move on to activities that are appropriate for their level of ability.
- In a Year 6 lesson, where teaching was good, pupils sensibly indicated to the teacher how they were getting on by placing various coloured tumblers on the desk, red if they were stuck, yellow if they were getting there and green when they felt they had fully grasped the new learning. This enabled the teacher to effectively target support.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour requires improvement because for too many pupils teaching is not developing independence in their learning. Sometimes in lessons, pupils lose concentration, become passive and disengaged. This is the case, for example, when the teaching does not motivate and interest pupils enough and when work is not set at the right level.
- Pupils rarely disrupt lessons, even when teaching is inadequate. They enjoy working together. In classes, behaviour is generally well managed by the whole-staff team. In some lessons, pupils are active, keen to learn more by asking relevant questions and display more positive attitudes to learning because the expectations of what they should achieve are high.
- Most pupils have impressive manners and are courteous around school and in the dining hall.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They say that when they need some help with a worry or concern, teachers and teaching assistants are very good at helping them. Pupils are knowledgeable about

cyber-bullying and e-safety. They say that on the rare occasion when bullying does occur, staff are quick to deal with it. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe because external professionals, such as the fire brigade and police visit school offering advice and guidance. Pupils are well cared for and staff ensure that pupils' emotional needs are met. One pupil, for example, told inspectors, 'Racism gets taken very seriously here.' Pupils acknowledge that staff will sort things out quickly if any racist incidents occur.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. This was seen, for example through good opportunities for reflection in an assembly led by the headteacher. Pupils show a good sense of care and responsibility for the school community.
- Attendance is improving and is now broadly average. The twice weekly nurture group, for identified pupils, funded by the pupil premium, along with the effective promotion of good attendance with pupils and their parents have all contributed to this improving picture.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders and managers lack the ability to improve the school quickly enough to ensure good achievement for all pupils. Standards are not rising as quickly as they should because leaders' actions to improve the school are ineffective. Too many pupils are underachieving as a result. The picture has changed little since the last inspection in 2010.
- The leadership of teaching is weak. For some time, the evaluation of the quality of teaching by leaders at all levels has been overgenerous. Weaknesses in teaching, therefore, have not been identified quickly enough, addressed or improved. As a result, the quality of teaching has deteriorated from good to inadequate overall.
- Leaders do not take enough account of the overall quality of teaching through observing lessons and by looking critically at teachers' planning and its impact on pupils' learning through a scrutiny of pupils' work. This means that teachers are not always aware of the leadership's view of their teaching quality or what they need to do to improve their skills.
- Pupils' inadequate progress and the quality of teaching in the school do not, in general, support the movement of teachers up the pay scale. Not enough is being done to hold staff to account for the progress of pupils or to ensure that the quality of teaching improves. Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.
- Improvement plans are not clear enough, particularly regarding expectations of pupils' achievement. The plans fail to indicate how leaders are to measure and evaluate the impact of their actions on improving pupils' progress and attainment.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders is too variable. As some have been in post for less than one term, the impact of their work is yet to be evaluated. Others have been in post longer and some improvements can be seen resulting from their work, for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, other leaders, such as the English and mathematics leaders, have had less impact beyond their own year groups. Their role in checking the quality of teaching, such as making sure that all teachers are providing work that is well matched to pupils' varying abilities, is underdeveloped.
- The school has strong relationships with its parents. Responses to the school's own questionnaires for parents were overwhelmingly positive. Some parents attend weekly Family Learning sessions which they say they find helpful in working with pupils at home. All parents who spoke to inspectors were happy with introduction meetings about children starting nursery or school and the school's communication with them. Leaders have successfully worked with parents to raise the importance of good attendance.
- Although the curriculum is enhanced well with trips which excite the pupils and there is a good range of after-school clubs, overall it is inadequate because it does not meet the needs of all groups of pupils effectively. There is an appropriate focus on developing skills in reading, writing and mathematics but these are not extended effectively. Too often, pupils of different abilities carry out the same tasks and not all pupils are sufficiently challenged. Pupils' inadequate achievement in Years 1 to 6 means that the promotion of equality is ineffective.

- The new primary school sport funding is used to provide weekly professional coaching for gymnastics and to support the other aspects of physical education (PE). There are coaching sessions after school, such as netball. It also funds a temporary leadership post which aims to develop the teaching of PE further throughout the school over the next two years.
- The school has received some support from other schools, as a result of its partnership alliance with them. The local authority has provided a range of support to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, this support has not resulted in enough improvement in teaching and in pupils' achievement over time.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body does not have the necessary knowledge and skills to hold leaders and managers fully to account for the school's performance. Governors do not have an accurate view of pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching. This is because they have not always questioned sufficiently the accuracy of the information they have received from leaders regarding pupils' achievement and teachers' performance. Records of the meetings of the full governing body over the last year, and discussions with some governors, reveal too little evidence of governors rigorously challenging senior leaders.
 - Governors have not ensured that leaders have addressed the weaknesses in teaching with enough urgency or checked that performance management is implemented effectively.
 - Governors ensure that the pupil premium funding is allocated to support the learning of those pupils for whom it is intended but have not checked closely whether this support has enabled these pupils to make good enough progress. Their knowledge about the receipt and use of the new primary school sports funding is not up to date.
 - Governors ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet government requirements. The safety and welfare of the pupils are a high priority.

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	105312
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	426290

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	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Tonge
Headteacher	Morven Stroud
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2010
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