

The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School

Kingsland Gardens, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, NN2 7BH

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2014

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.

- Even though children join the school with skills and abilities typically expected for their age, standards are well below average by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 has declined for the past three years.
- Teaching is inadequate. Teachers do not always set work at the right level of difficulty, so it is often either too easy or too hard, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils are sometimes unclear about what they are learning.
- Pupils generally behave well around the school, but not when lessons are uninteresting.
- Leaders, managers and governors have been unable to turn around declining standards and poor teaching.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to write at length in different subjects.
- Some newly qualified teachers and teaching assistants have not been given sufficient support and training to become effective.
- Many parents are dissatisfied with their children's education. Over one third of those who completed questionnaires said they would not recommend the school to others.
- The acting headteachers have not clarified their separate roles and responsibilities. This has created confusion among the staff.
- Other leaders do not check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress effectively and are not held sufficiently to account.
- The former governing body was not effective in holding leaders to account for the school's decline. The current 'school committee' lacks educational expertise.

The school has the following strengths

- There has been some improvement in pupils' progress this year, particularly that of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The school is good at keeping pupils safe and caring for them.
- Physical education and music are taught well by specialists.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 17 lessons, many jointly with the acting headteachers. In addition, inspectors saw a number of short parts of lessons, coaching sessions and sessions where pupils were supported in small groups.
- The inspection team heard pupils read and, with the acting headteachers, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the executive headteacher designate, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and representatives from the local authority and the Diocese of Northampton.
- The inspectors considered the 49 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, letters and emails from parents, and spoke informally to parents.
- The inspectors considered the staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Dawn White

Additional Inspector

Wendy Hiscock

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

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost half the pupils, which is well above average, come from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which in this school provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- A nursery on the school site is run separately and did not form part of this inspection.
- Four newly qualified teachers were appointed to the school this year.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The acting headteachers took on their roles in January 2013 following the absence of the permanent headteacher. At the time of the inspection, an executive headteacher had been appointed to oversee the school from 3 February 2014.
- The executive headteacher is the headteacher of another Catholic primary school in Northampton, which, together with two others and The Good Shepherd, forms the Thomas of Canterbury Federation of Northampton Catholic Schools. This came into existence in June 2013 and shares a governing body over all four schools. Each of the schools also has a 'school committee' specific to that school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate inadequate teaching and make it consistently good by ensuring that:
 - pupils understand where their learning is taking them
 - lesson activities interest pupils and inspire them to do their best
 - teachers use questioning effectively to make pupils think hard.
- Raise achievement in Key Stage 2 by making sure that:
 - work in mathematics is not too hard but demanding enough for pupils to make rapid progress, particularly the more-able pupils
 - pupils have plenty of opportunities to write at length in different subjects
 - all subjects are taught in sufficient depth to develop pupils' key skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management so that:
 - newly qualified teachers have all the support they need to improve teaching rapidly
 - teaching assistants have the skills to make a difference when supporting pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium
 - key stage phase leaders have a good understanding of the progress of pupils in their areas

- and are held to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' performance
- the roles of senior leaders are clear to all staff and lines of communication are well known
- all parents have confidence in the school
- the new governing body strengthens its capacity to hold the school to account, especially in making sure there is sufficient relevant expertise on the 'school committee'.

Ofsted has made recommendations on actions for governance to the authority responsible for the school. This will include an external review of governance.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- There has been considerable underachievement in Key Stage 2 as a result of previously inaccurate tracking and ineffective checks of teaching and learning, which allowed inadequate teaching to persist for too long. In 2013, standards were well below average at the end of Year 6 in mathematics and writing, and below average in reading.
- The proportion of pupils who made the expected two National Curriculum levels of progress was below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress was well below average.
- The value the school adds to pupils' education has got worse year on year. By this measure, it was in the bottom 3% of all schools in 2013.
- Typically, pupils join Reception with skills and abilities in line with those expected. The quality of teaching for the youngest children varies but, overall, their progress in Reception requires improvement.
- The school's own performance information shows that this year there has been some improvement for pupils in Years 5 and 6. However, the information also shows that, across the whole school, progress is not rapid enough to overcome the legacy of underachievement built up over several years. This has a similar impact on all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The school has identified that pupil premium spending in 2013 did not have a positive impact on pupils' attainment or progress. The gaps in attainment in Year 6, between eligible pupils and others, widened to more than three terms in mathematics and four terms in reading. Eligible pupils were more than two terms behind in writing, and there is no trend to show that these gaps are narrowing. Not enough of the designated funding was spent on improving eligible pupils' performance, and teaching assistants had not been given the necessary training to bring about rapid improvement.
- Pupils' performance is weakest in mathematics. More-able pupils, in particular, are often set work that is too easy for them, and are not moved on quickly enough to more demanding tasks.
- The quality of pupils' writing varies across the school. Older pupils have more opportunity to write at length but they do not write enough in different subjects such as history or science.
- The school responded to disappointing results in Year 1 last year by introducing a new approach to teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make). This has only just begun, so it is too soon to see any clear impact. Younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics to sound out unfamiliar words, while older pupils speak with enthusiasm about the books they enjoy.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have made similarly inadequate progress to their classmates in the past. However, the help and guidance provided for them this year has focused more effectively on their individual needs, and this has resulted in more of these pupils making accelerated progress.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Teaching is not good enough to accelerate pupils' progress across the school. There is still a significant amount of inadequate teaching. This is also reflected in pupils' progress and the quality of work in their books.
- One of the key weaknesses of teaching is that work is not set at the right level of difficulty for pupils in some classes, slowing the progress they are able to make. For example, in a guided reading session the whole class, except for the group working with the teacher, was given the same task to do, which proved far too difficult for some and very easy for others. As pupils were not clear what was expected of them and could not make progress, noise levels increased, and many pupils were not engaged at all in learning.
- Where teaching is unengaging, pupils lose interest and become distracted from learning. Sometimes, they do not see the relevance of the tasks they are being asked to do, or where the activities are leading. Year 4 pupils were asked to look at different types of rhyme but soon grew tired of this. They did not realise that this was to help them write their own rhyming poem later in the week.
- Some teachers rarely make pupils think hard by asking searching questions or giving pupils opportunities to reflect in depth on their learning.
- Reception staff keep careful records of children's achievements, and these are displayed in attractive 'learning journeys' that children and their parents enjoy seeing. While there are some interesting activities for the children, which help to develop their early writing skills for example, at other times they become disengaged because they do not have enough to do and the teacher does not make learning interesting for them.
- There are a few examples of good and even outstanding teaching. On these occasions, teachers use teaching assistants effectively to work with small groups, make crystal clear to pupils what they are learning and respond sensitively to pupils' ideas. An example was seen when older pupils were preparing for a debate about a proposal to build a theme park near a river, and were discussing arguments for and against the idea. The teacher skilfully managed the discussion and pupils were able to work together to come up with their own points, respecting one another's opinions.
- Physical education is taught well by specialist coaches, whose good subject knowledge means that all pupils are actively engaged and learn new skills; for example, in controlling a football around some cones.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. While most pupils behave well around the school and show respect for one another and for adults, when teaching fails to engage them they rapidly lose interest and can become restless and inattentive.
- Not all pupils take a pride in their work. Some do not push themselves to do well and, if the teacher is not making expectations clear, will settle for mediocrity and exert very little effort. By contrast, when teachers' expectations are high, pupils rise to meet them and can produce work of high quality.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Strong values underpin its caring approach and this makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development. For example, the 'liturgy group' of young chaplains helps run acts of worship and leads reflections and prayers.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that bullying is not an issue. They understand about different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Discrimination is not tolerated.
- Pupils work together well to raise funds for different charities. The 'green finger club' works to improve the local area; for example, in picking litter. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility as buddies to help the younger children.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance and punctuality. As a result, attendance is now in line with the national average.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils and for child protection meet current requirements.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management have not been good enough to overcome a legacy of underachievement since the previous inspection. Many of the areas identified for improvement remain weak. These include more rigorous checking of teaching, making work sufficiently demanding, developing writing skills and improving links with parents.
- Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed because standards are too low in Key Stage 2 and not enough teaching is good or better. A significant amount of inadequate teaching persists. The four newly qualified teachers have not received the training and support they should have had to become consistently good teachers.
- The school has been through a very difficult period in the past 18 months. During the absence of the previous headteacher, the acting headteachers combined running the school with fulfilling key teaching commitments in Reception and Year 6. They have had to deal with some complex and challenging issues around staffing matters, the relocation of the school when asbestos was discovered, and beginning to tackle inadequate teaching.
- There has been some confusion over the roles taken by the acting headteachers, and communication has not always been sufficiently clear with parents and staff. This means that other leaders, such as the key stage phase leaders, are unclear about their roles and have not been held to account for the performance of pupils in their areas of responsibility.
- While the school welcomes pupils from all backgrounds and teaches them to respect one another's differences, it does not promote equality well because of poor teaching and widespread underachievement.
- Some parents are very positive about the school's work, but others have valid concerns about lack of communication and the progress their children are making. Parent View yielded many negative responses. Over a third of parents who responded would not recommend the school to others.
- Some aspects of the curriculum are inadequate. The amount of time spent on different subjects and the amount of work produced vary widely across classes and year groups. For example,

Year 4 had done very little science because of going swimming, and Year 3 had done very little work on their planned topics. By contrast, Year 6 pupils and Year 1 pupils had written much in their books.

- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of clubs, visits and visitors. These contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies consider spiritual and moral issues. Some pupils produce good-quality artwork and others do well in music and sport. The primary sport funding is being spent on additional coaching for pupils and training for teachers. The school has appropriate plans to measure the impact of this activity.
- The school has recently been receiving increasing amounts of external support from the local authority and consultants. It has been partnered with a local good school and is in discussions with the diocese and an educational trust about becoming an academy. None of this external support has so far had any great impact on improving the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The new governing body is very supportive of the school and fully aware of its troubles. As yet it has had very little impact on improving a deteriorating situation, save to move forward with appointing an executive headteacher. One of the problems it faces is that the local 'school committee' does not have anybody with the relevant educational expertise to challenge school leaders effectively. While governors have a general understanding of information on pupils' performance and the quality of teaching, they do not have a detailed enough knowledge to ask searching questions. They make sure that teachers are not given pay rises unless their performance merits it. However, they are not fully aware of the targets teachers are set to improve their teaching, or the impact of pupil premium spending for eligible pupils.

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	122039
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	431709

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	378
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hugh Williams
Headteacher	Jackie Robinson and Tommie Casey (Acting Headteachers)
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 February 2011
Telephone number	01604 714399
Fax number	01604 714672
Email address	head@thegoodshepherd.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

