

Thanet Primary School

Tedworth Road, Bilton Grange Estate, Hull, HU9 4AY

Inspection dates

12–13 February 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.

- Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body have an overgenerous view of the school's effectiveness. They have not responded quickly enough to a decline in standards since the last inspection. Consequently, pupils' achievement is inadequate.
- Standards overall are significantly below average by the end of Year 6, including for those pupils supported by the pupil premium funding.
- All groups of pupils do not make fast enough progress and are inadequately prepared for secondary school.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate. Work is often too hard for some pupils and insufficiently challenging or interesting for others. When this is so, some pupils, especially boys, do not concentrate and progress slows.
- Marking overall does not help pupils to improve their learning.
- Teachers do not always check in lessons whether pupils understand what they are learning.
- Pupils do not have sufficient chances to practise mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation are often too low in lessons where literacy is not the focus for learning.
- Behaviour requires improvement in lessons. When teachers' expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour are not high enough pupils do not complete enough work and their progress is slow.
- Attendance is below the national average and too many pupils are absent too often.
- Subject leaders do not have the skills to drive improvement quickly enough or understand how well pupils are performing in their subject.
- The governing body has an incomplete understanding of teaching and achievement throughout the school and is therefore unable to hold it to account or support it in moving forward.

The school has the following strengths

- Children achieve well in Reception classes because of good teaching.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in Reception and Key Stage 1 is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel secure and safe.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which four were observed jointly with either the executive headteacher or head of school.
- The inspectors observed break times and lunch times, attended an assembly listened to pupils read and watched intervention groups.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, governors, senior and subject leaders and a senior representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 15 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at the school's work, including documents about pupils' progress and their attendance and behaviour. They also looked at samples of pupils' work, the school's plans for improvement, records of the checks made on the quality of teaching, safeguarding arrangements and governing body minutes.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Davis	Additional Inspector
Edward Price	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

- The school is much larger than most other primary schools.
- The school acquired Foundation School status in April 2013 and is in a hard federation with Foredyke Primary School. The two schools share the same executive headteacher and a governing body. It is part of the wider Hull Cooperative Learning Schools Network.
- A well-above average proportion of pupils is supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families).
- Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds and most speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The executive headteacher is a Local Leader of Education. The literacy and numeracy leaders are Specialist Leaders of Education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to accelerate progress and raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics, by making sure that:
 - work for pupils of all abilities enables them to build well on what they know, understand and can do
 - marking of pupils' work tells them what they have done well, the next steps to take and teachers check that pupils have acted on their guidance
 - all teachers check how well pupils are learning in lessons so that pupils' misunderstandings in lessons are corrected quickly
 - pupils get opportunities to practise mathematics skills in other subjects to help them to improve the specific skills that they have learned
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation in all their writing tasks.
- Improve pupils' attendance, their attitudes to learning and their behaviour in lessons by:
 - continuing to work with parents to further reduce the number of pupils who do not attend school regularly
 - teachers providing interesting and good quality learning activities, especially for boys
 - teachers having high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the amount and quality of work they expect pupils to complete to the best of their ability.

- Urgently increase the impact of leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, so they improve teaching and pupils' achievement quickly by ensuring that:
 - all senior and subject leaders have the training and skills to carry out their roles fully and effectively
 - leaders check and report back accurately on their areas of responsibility, particularly the rate of pupils' progress, so that the school has a full picture of the performance of all areas of its work
 - the school's targets for improvement are measureable and focus on the most pressing weaknesses
 - the governing body has a full understanding of the school's work, including by finding out information for itself, so that it can both challenge and support the school more effectively.

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

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Standards in English and mathematics are well below average. Although girls generally do better than boys, neither make fast enough progress, therefore by the end of Year 6 pupils are not prepared well enough for the next stage of their education.
- The school's information shows that Year 6 pupils in 2014 are not making the progress expected of them and are not on track to reach the challenging targets set. Standards continue to be well below average, particularly in writing. The gap between the school's writing results and those achieved by pupils nationally has widened since the last inspection.
- Throughout the school pupils' writing skills are weak. While some pupils produce well-constructed sentences, which are lively and descriptive, teachers' expectations are variable. Overall, pupils lack the skills they need to spell and punctuate accurately, and to write sentences that describe clearly what they are writing about.
- Children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement. Children enter the Nursery with levels of attainment below those which are typical for their age. They make slow progress because key workers are not allocated to support specific groups of children and activities do not cover fully all of the required areas of learning for children of this age. Progress is stronger in the Reception classes due to good teaching, although girls are more prepared for Year 1 than boys.
- In Year 2, the school's data point to pupils making steady progress in reading and mathematics, but progress is too slow in writing. Progress is also variable between pupils in the same year groups, where the quality of teaching varies from one class to another.
- Throughout the school too few pupils achieve higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. The most-able pupils are not given work that enables them to really think, weigh up their findings and use what they know in unfamiliar situations. As a result, they do not reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Although the school's data show some improvements in the rate of pupil progress, these improvements are patchy. The sample of Year 6 exercise books showed that lower ability pupils were making good progress in some work, but the most able were not.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding receive additional help through, for example, the employment of an extra teacher in Years 3 and 6, an outdoor play project and the use of the local authority library service. The impact of this extra support is not yet being seen. In the 2013 national assessments pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were between three and four terms behind the non-eligible pupils in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make inadequate progress particularly in writing and mathematics, because support is not planned carefully enough.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Too much teaching requires improvement or is inadequate; this results in pupils making slow progress throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching practices and expectations, even within year groups and subjects are too variable in quality. Too often pupils find work either too easy or too hard. The most-able pupils, in particular, are not stretched sufficiently to enable them to achieve as well as they can. Some tasks are mundane and repetitive. Those who are less able become bored and restless because they do not understand what is required of them and, therefore, they cannot keep up with their classmates.
- In some lessons, boys in particular do not get involved in their learning because the teaching does not inspire them. However, when tasks are engaging, all pupils make good progress and learn well, as seen, for example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson when pupils solved problems

about measurement, because they liked making decisions and learning for themselves.

- Although some teachers have very high expectations, to which pupils respond, other teachers accept untidy and small quantities of work, which show little care. Presentation of the work of some of the most-able pupils seen in Year 6 was poor, but in a different class the most-able pupils' work was very neat and well laid out. These inconsistent expectations contribute to pupils' inadequate progress in writing.
- The quality of marking is very variable; although some tells pupils very clearly what they have done well and is extremely helpful, other marking fails to correct pupils' misunderstanding. In too few books, teachers tell pupils exactly what they need to do next and check that pupils have taken their advice.
- Not all teachers check learning during the lesson to ensure that it is pitched correctly and that pupils understand what they are being taught. In some lessons teaching assistants provide valuable support for the least-able pupils and this contributes well to their rate of progress, as seen, for example, in the progress made over time by lower ability pupils in Year 6. This quality of support is not evident in all lessons and contributes to the inadequate progress of those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- Some teaching is good and this enables pupils to make good progress, because they have to think hard. Where pupils learned well, teachers used questioning skilfully to move pupils' learning on.
- The teaching of phonics is good. In the national Year 1 check on phonics, the proportion of pupils achieving the required standard last year was close to the national average, including for pupils supported by pupil premium funding. Results showed a big improvement from 2012, which were well below average. This is because there is a focus on practising words as part of speaking, reading and writing which pupils enjoy, because they are incorporated into lots of different activities.
- Teachers are building into all lessons regular chances for pupils to practise reading and writing skills and this is helping those pupils who struggle to retain what they have learnt. There are, however, fewer opportunities throughout the day for pupils to practise what they have learned in mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils spoken to say they get on well with their classmates but also say that the behaviour of some could be better. In lessons which do not interest them, the attitudes of a few pupils, both boys and girls, deteriorate. They become restless and do little work.
- Attendance is below average. Although pupils' rates of attendance have improved over the last three years and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has also fallen, too many pupils are still absent too often and this limits their progress.
- Many pupils are excellent ambassadors for their school in respect of their good behaviour and manners and their helpfulness towards others. They like school and wear their uniform proudly and smartly. They like their classrooms, which are bright and have lots of displays. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are getting very good at settling to learning quickly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe because they trust the staff who supervise playtimes and lunchtimes and quickly put a stop to any behaviour that is less than good. Although there are occasional incidents of bullying, pupils say that staff sort these out quickly. Most parents agreed that their children feel safe in school.
- Pupils speak knowingly about the possible dangers of using the Internet and how to stay safe.
- Pupils have a few responsibilities, such as Year 6 lunch time monitors, which they carry out maturely and conscientiously.
- Through assemblies, lessons and after-school activities and visits, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is supported appropriately. Pupils know it is wrong to treat others unkindly by word or action, whoever they are or how they live.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- As a result of inadequate leadership over time the school's effectiveness has deteriorated since the last inspection in all aspects of its work and especially in the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching. Achievement in mathematics, which was an issue at the last inspection, has declined further. Writing standards are low throughout the school. Leaders have not ensured that pupils are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders are overgenerous in their evaluation of the school's performance. Leaders of Thanet Primary, from the executive headteacher down, cannot explain the deterioration or do not think the school has declined. As a result, issues such as declining standards have not been tackled promptly. There are marked differences in the rate of progress of pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium funding and the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Leaders have not been successful in ensuring that teaching is effective. Senior leaders who observe lessons record their findings about teaching in detail, but do not focus well enough on the quality of learning for all groups of pupils. Although during the inspection, senior leaders' judgements of the teaching observed matched accurately those of the inspectors, over time the leaders' evaluation of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning is overgenerous.
- All leaders are very committed and try many different ways to raise pupils' achievement. The head of school has introduced much more stringent and detailed checks on pupils' progress for which all staff have accountability and which teachers in charge of subjects oversee. However, not all subject leaders have the skills or training to carry out their roles as effectively as possible. Specific responsibilities and expectations are unclear so that, for example, there are variations in middle leaders' knowledge of progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Senior leaders have set targets to improve the performance of staff. Targets reflect the school's urgent need to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards. Although some targets are measureable and can be used to hold teachers to account for pupil progress, others are too vague to ensure the desired outcome.
- Staff receive regular training to support improved teaching and leadership, including with the school to which they are federated. Despite staff speaking highly of it, this is not driving improvement quickly enough.
- The local authority knows that the school's evaluation of its performance is inaccurate, but has only recently strongly recommended that leaders focus more on pupils' progress. Due to its concern, the school is now being monitored by a local authority adviser and has already been given support to improve teaching and achievement within literacy and numeracy.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.
- The school is introducing the new national curriculum early through topics, which pupils enjoy. The focus of the school remains on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy. However, pupils do not have an equality of opportunity to be successful, when compared to pupils in other schools, because they underachieve over time and are not prepared adequately for the next stage in their education, especially in terms of their literacy and numeracy skills. They do, however, enjoy an interesting and wide range of after-school clubs, such as construction and fencing which help them to develop a myriad of skills.
- Pupils benefit from the additional sport funding, which has resulted in pupils' improving and more varied skills in a range of activities. More pupils participate in sporting activities as a result, which help them to keep them fit and healthy.
- The governance of the school:
 - Overall, the governing body is unable to hold the school to account, because its knowledge about the school's performance is not detailed or comprehensive enough and it is insufficiently pro-active in trying to improve its understanding.
 - The governing body is proud that Thanet Primary is a happy school, which most pupils enjoy attending. Although the headteacher gives the governors a lot of information about the

school's work, governors do not have a complete understanding, including of the quality of teaching. Governors do not know, for example, why progress in mathematics has been inadequate for the last two years, although they are aware that writing is an issue. Governors are starting to link with more subject leaders or members of staff with a specific responsibility to help them to find out more about the school's work. For example, a governor now meets regularly with the special educational needs coordinator. The governing body has had some training about national performance data and has an awareness of how pupil premium money is spent and procedures for performance management. However, questioning, for example, with regard to performance-related pay for staff is insufficiently probing.

- The governors help to make sure that safeguarding procedures meet the statutory requirements.

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	117820
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull City Council
Inspection number	440824

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	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	456
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Sharp
Executive Headteacher	Elaine Butler
Head of school	Jo Machon
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2010
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