

# Castlechurch Primary School

Tennyson Road, Stafford, ST17 9SY

## Inspection dates

19–20 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
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.

- Pupils do not make enough progress, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- The work for the more-able pupils is often too easy and does not ensure they develop their skills well enough.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make less progress than other pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is variable and not yet good enough.
- Teaching is inadequate. Work set for pupils does not build effectively on what they already know.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with clear enough guidance or feedback that will help them understand how to improve their work.
- Leaders do not use information about pupils' attainment and progress effectively to review how well different groups of pupils are achieving.
- School leaders and governors have not ensured that standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Staff have not been held to account for pupils' achievement and information on how well pupils are doing has not been accurate.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Nursery settle quickly and make a good start to their learning.
- Pupils feel safe at school and are well looked after by the adults around them.
- There is a good range of out-of-school activities available for pupils, including opportunities to participate in sport and music.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 28 lessons or part-lessons, a number of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with other leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account the 74 responses to the online Parent View survey, discussions with parents at the start of the school day and letters sent directly to the inspection team.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in survey responses from 15 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding procedures.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

## Inspection team

Lucy Maughan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Jones

Additional Inspector

Michael Appleby

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

- This primary school is larger than average.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding which, in this school, is for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those that are looked after by the local authority.
- The school's breakfast club is available to pupils each morning.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by making sure that all teachers:
  - take account of what pupils already know and can do when teaching, especially more-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
  - have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and the quality of work that they produce
  - provide pupils with precise guidance on how to improve their work.
  
- Raise pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by insisting that teachers:
  - make sure pupils read frequently and support them to develop their fluency and understanding
  - teach pupils how to spell correctly, use grammar and punctuation appropriately and write legibly
  - expect pupils to solve harder mathematical problems
  - make sure pupils use and extend their reading, writing and mathematical skills and knowledge in different subjects.
  
- Ensure that all leaders and managers:
  - use accurate information on how well different groups of pupils are doing to compare their progress and provide additional support where needed
  - undertake training to develop the skills they need to check carefully the quality of teaching and pupils' learning
  - contribute to school development plans that identify clearly and specifically what improvements are needed and how they will be achieved, who is going to monitor the actions and how the impact of the actions will be assessed.
  
- Make sure that governors develop their skills so that they can hold leaders and managers to account for pupils' progress.

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

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Pupils do not make enough progress during their time in the school, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Overall standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have fluctuated over time. Having dropped to below average in 2012 they improved in 2013. However, the proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment were still below average in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress varies between classes and subjects because of weaknesses in teaching. Although pupils sometimes make expected or good progress in lessons, pupils' work confirms that they do not make enough progress over time. In some classes, the standard of individual pupils' work has deteriorated since the start of the school year.
- In 2013, standards at the end of Year 6 were broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing. Standards were below average in mathematics, because the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels was below the national average. The proportion attaining higher levels in reading was also smaller than the national average.
- The school's assessments show that current standards are low. The achievement of all groups of pupils, particularly the most-able, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is inadequate. This is reflected in the limited progress seen in pupils' books. Pupils' written work is often marred by poor spelling, punctuation or use of grammar.
- Some pupils supported by pupils premium funding receive extra help with their reading, writing and mathematics. Senior leaders do not rigorously check the impact of this spending on the achievement of pupils in all year groups to see if the gap in attainment between these pupils and their peers is closing. Pupils supported by pupil premium funding make inadequate progress over time. In 2013, these pupils were over a year behind their classmates in mathematics and writing and just under a year behind them in reading.
- Work set for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is often too difficult and not well matched to their needs. Consequently, pupils struggle to complete their work without a lot of help from an adult. This slows down the progress that they make.
- More-able pupils make inadequate progress because their work is often too easy.
- Children start the Nursery with a varying range of skills and understanding. Children settle well and make initially good progress. Staff place a strong emphasis on developing their speaking and listening skills. The progress that children make through the Early Years Foundation Stage prepares them well for the start of Year 1.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- The quality of teaching over time has not secured good progress for pupils across the school. Although inspectors saw some effective teaching, the work in pupils' books showed that too much was not good enough.
- Teachers do not take enough account of information about what pupils can already do to make

sure that the activities they ask pupils to do are at the right level of difficulty, particularly the most-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. In some lessons, the tasks are too hard for some pupils and too easy for others. Often, activities do not build on what pupils have learned before. This slows progress and causes gaps in pupils' understanding.

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of producing are too low. Pupils produce too little work and do not always write neatly in books.
- Teachers' marking does not always give pupils sufficient or clear guidance on how and what to improve. Even when marking is more explicit, teachers do not always expect pupils to respond to the points they raise.
- Evidence from pupils' books indicates that pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics are not developed well enough in other subjects. Pupils' books show that they are not expected to write at length.
- In mathematics, pupils rarely have the opportunity to solve difficult problems. Not all teachers give pupils the chance to apply their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. This prevents them from deepening their understanding and limits their progress.
- Teaching assistants do not always provide appropriate support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They do not encourage the pupils to think enough for themselves.
- During the inspection, there were occasional examples of more effective learning. In a mixed Year 2 and Year 3 class, for instance, pupils had to write a newspaper report about the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. The teacher asked probing questions and had high expectations of the quality of work the pupils would produce. This expectation promoted enthusiasm for learning and ensured that pupils made good progress.

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

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In some lessons, pupils lose concentration and display a lack of interest, especially when activities are uninspiring. This slows their learning and occasionally leads to disruption of other pupils' learning.
- Pupils assured inspectors that behaviour is mostly acceptable. Most parents are satisfied with the standards of behaviour in the school, although a few expressed some concerns.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well around the school and they get on well with each other. However, occasionally, pupils run down corridors. When pupils misbehave, it is usually because adults' expectations about behaviour are too low.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school meets statutory safeguarding requirements.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and are aware of what is an unsafe situation. They know how to keep themselves and others safe; for example, when using the internet. Pupils stated that they feel confident that they can talk to an adult if they have any concerns.

- The breakfast club provides a well-managed, safe environment for pupils at the start of the day.
- Attendance is broadly average.

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

- The work of the school's leaders, at all levels, has not ensured that the school's previous good performance has been maintained or that outcomes for pupils have improved sufficiently. This means that the school is not demonstrating the capacity to improve.
- Leaders collect a range of information about pupils' achievement. However, there is lack of rigour in checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments. This has contributed to an overly positive view of how well pupils are doing and how effective the teaching has been.
- Senior leaders meet regularly with staff to discuss the actions that need to be taken to help individual pupils make faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, they do not make sure that agreed actions are implemented and make a difference to pupils' achievement.
- The varying rates of progress by different groups, and underperformance overall in Key Stage 2, particularly for those pupils supported by pupil premium funding, mean that the school is not providing equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- School development plans do not spell out clearly enough what needs to be done to bring about improvements. The plans lack rigour and do not make it clear how pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching will be improved.
- When managing staff performance, leaders do not identify specific objectives for improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Staff were positive about the training and support they had been given but this has not yet led to improvement in the overall quality of teaching.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.
- Senior leaders and subject leaders make checks on teaching, including by observing lessons, but this process is not rigorous. New subject leaders have gathered an accurate view of teaching and learning in their subject and are taking steps to improve them. However, this has not had a measurable impact on standards.
- The school's curriculum and the numerous sporting and musical enrichment activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development appropriately. However, they do not always inspire pupils. In a few lessons observed, some pupils showed little interest in their work.
- Sports funding has been used to employ staff with specialist knowledge to work alongside staff when teaching physical education. The funding has also been used to add to the good-quality sporting clubs and activities. Pupils' level of participation in sports has increased and they have recently won local sports competitions.
- The local authority was aware of the school's declining standards and expressed concern. The local authority's education officer has challenged the headteacher about aspects of the school and provided advice and support to school leaders. However, this has had limited impact. The governing body has found the central training provided to governors useful and appreciated the

guidance given in the past by the local authority's human resources department.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body does not hold the school rigorously to account for the progress pupils make. In the past, it has relied too heavily on the information given by senior leaders about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Recently, governors have received training relating to the information available on the school's performance and have started to challenge leaders on the impact of their actions to improve the school.
- Governors know that the school receives funding for the pupil premium and how it is spent, but have not made checks on the impact it is having. Governors understand the relationship between teachers' salary progression and pupils' progress. They know that the quality of teaching is not good but have not sufficiently challenged leaders on how they are going to improve it. Following the recommendation of the local authority, they have continued to commission an external adviser to help them set targets for the headteacher to achieve.



## 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>	124203
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	433306

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	415
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Esther Knight
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jonathan Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01785 356772
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