

Percy Shurmer Academy

Longmore Street, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, B12 9ED

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not yet good enough to promote good progress and raise pupils' attainment to above national averages.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, too few pupils attain the higher level National Curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not generally achieve as well as other groups of pupils.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge the most able pupils in their classes. As a result they do not always achieve the progress rates of which they are capable.
- Marking in pupils' books is helpful, but teachers do not check that pupils use it to improve their work. As a result, some continue to repeat the same mistakes.
- Until recently, teachers have not been provided with clear guidance about how their teaching can be improved. Consequently, there is not enough good teaching to ensure pupils' good achievement.
- The understanding of roles and responsibilities of some of the senior leaders, including governors, is not as clear as it could be. As a result, governors do not consistently challenge the headteacher and executive headteacher on order to hold them to account for their performance.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress due to good teaching.
- Pupils who receive support through the additional pupil premium funding make good progress.
- Teachers make effective use of other adults, who are highly skilled, to support pupils' learning.
- New initiatives in English are raising achievement rapidly.
- Very good relationships between pupils and staff help create a positive learning environment.
- Pupils feel safe and generally behave well both around the school and during lessons.
- Attendance is above average and rising due to some excellent work by staff.
- The current executive headteacher and headteacher have provided positive leadership. As a result the school is steadily improving.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, nine of which were seen jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Members of the inspection team also observed pupils during lunch and break times.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and members of the senior leadership team. Three separate meetings took place with representative from the Academies Enterprise Trust and two meetings were held with groups of pupils.
- The inspection team took account of the 22 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 41 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team scrutinised a range of documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils, school improvement planning and self-evaluation, and the progress pupils are making. They reviewed records of governors’ meetings, and records of how the primary sports funding and the pupil premium grant, is being used. The team reviewed evidence regarding the quality of teaching over time and information relating to the behaviour of pupils and their attendance.
- Inspectors also heard pupils read, both formally and informally during lessons.
- The school has a designated resourced provision for pupils with hearing impairment. These pupils use spoken language supported by sign language as well as their residential hearing.
- The inspectors were accompanied for part of the time by a sign language interpreter.

Inspection team

Ronald Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Calvert

Additional Inspector

Linda Rowley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Percy Shurmer Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of a nursery class and two reception classes. The rest of the school has two classes per year group.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding to support pupils who are entitled to a free school meal or who are in the care of the local authority, is well above average.
- Most pupils are from a range of minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average and many are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- There is a resource base for pupils who are deaf, which contains 30 pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school became an academy, sponsored by the Academies Enterprise Trust, in September 2012. The executive headteacher and headteacher are both on long-term secondment from another local academy to provide the school with stable leadership.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by making sure that:
 - senior leaders build on successful strategies to provide advice and support to all staff to help improve their practice further
 - all staff use both written and verbal feedback effectively to make sure pupils know what they are doing and how to improve their work.
- Raise achievement by:
 - consistently challenging the most able pupils so they make faster progress and reach the higher National Curriculum levels
 - building on the current strategies to improve the progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - accelerating the initiatives in mathematics to raise progress rates to the same as those in English
 - helping pupils to overcome any mistakes they are making through effective marking.
- Improve leadership and management through discussion with the Academies Enterprise Trust to ensure that:
 - all members of the senior leadership team are clear about their roles, responsibilities and accountability
 - the governing body is clear about its role in the school and areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' progress across the school is beginning to accelerate, but they are not yet achieving as well as they should be. In 2013, attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 was below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, and it has not yet risen significantly. By the end of Year 6 not enough of the most able pupils are reaching the higher National Curriculum levels of which they are capable.
- The disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action and school action plus are making slower progress than their peers. The previous initiatives to improve this situation have not as yet raised their achievement, although the new initiatives in English are beginning to bring about more rapid progress in their reading and writing skills.
- Pupils in Year 1 achieved well in the national phonics screening check. This was due to the positive work teachers and the other adults who support learning carry out in developing the children's skills in letters and words and the sounds they make (phonics). The pupils' progress in these areas continues throughout the school as was clearly shown by the pupils who read to the inspectors during the inspection.
- A review of the pupils' books shows that progress across the school is good in English and mathematics. Scrutiny of other books such as science and topic work also shows that over time progress is rising. Books for this year for example, show clear improvement from the start of the year to current points.
- Achievement in mathematics currently lags behind that in English, but is improving steadily. The school has rightly had a strong focus on developing pupils' language and communication skills, which are rapidly improving. The senior leadership team has recognised the weakness in mathematics and introduced initiatives to rectify this situation. At this stage, it is too early to measure the results of this work.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium make better progress than their peers across the whole school. One-to-one support, small group work and good use of resources resulted in these pupils leaving Year 6 in 2013 with attainment above that of their peers in school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children enter the school with skills and knowledge below those typically seen at their age. Due to good teaching, careful monitoring of the children's progress and well-designed lessons, children make good progress across all key areas of learning. Many children also join the school in the early stages of learning English. The school provides good one-to-one support, specialist language support where needed and a range of resources designed specifically for them. This has resulted in these pupils making good progress in developing English as an additional language and in their other subjects.
- Pupils with hearing impairment generally make good progress in their language and communication skills. This is particularly so in the development of their writing skills and spoken language. Younger pupils were in the early stages of reading but lesson observations showed they were making good progress from low starting points. Some older pupils were heard reading with fluency and expression.
- Pupils' progress in physical education is good. The primary sports funding has been used highly effectively to provide high-quality sports coaching for all the pupils and high-quality training for

the teachers. Behaviour has improved rapidly due to the wide range of games and sporting activities at break and lunch times. Pupils have been given a strong sense of achievement through their coaching and leadership roles.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is improving and this is beginning to accelerate, but not yet enough is good or better to raise achievement to consistently good levels. Where learning is most effective, lesson activities are well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils. .
- Teachers do not consistently challenge the most able pupils and so they do not make the progress they might in lessons. This in turn means that in Year 2 and Year 6 these pupils do not have the skills to reach the higher National Curriculum levels in the national assessments. Where teachers do provide challenge, pupils are fully engaged and make good progress. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were observed plotting graphs and said they felt the work was highly challenging and enjoyable.
- Teachers across the school provide good written feedback to help pupils improve their work. Pupils in turn make written responses to these comments. However, teachers do not routinely make sure that pupils correct and improve their work. This in turn means that some pupils continue to make the same mistakes and so their progress slows.
- Where learning is at its best, teachers and the other adults who support learning gather information on the progress their pupils are making to modify and improve their lessons. However, in a small number of lessons teachers do not consistently provide pupils with appropriate feedback during lessons. This means that pupils are not always sure about what they are learning and how to improve during the lesson.
- In the main, common weaknesses in teaching have been quickly noted and teachers provided with support and further training, especially for those members of staff who are at the early stages of their career or who need extra support. This has resulted in teachers' questioning skills improving across the school, and more effective use of information on pupils' progress by staff to inform planning. Nevertheless, there is not enough good teaching to raise pupils' achievement to the next level.
- The senior leadership team and subject leaders have begun to improve teaching through regular checks and tight monitoring of pupils' work and progress information. They have ensured that the national *Teachers' Standards* are being met and cross-reference these with all lesson observations, work scrutiny, training needs and pay rises.
- The teaching of pupils with hearing impairment is good. Specialist resources such as hearing aids linked to sound fields and other amplification technology helps support the pupils learning across the school. Sign language support and symbols are used effectively by all teachers of the deaf and support staff. In mainstream classes, teachers make sure they can be seen by the pupils at all times when they are talking to them. Support staff also give further help in these lessons to make sure all their needs are met.
- These pupils are also taught in small group sessions and the teaching in these sessions is good. Pupils were seen in several mathematics sessions learning a variety of skills. Teachers and the other adults who support learning all used a variety of communication methods to make sure pupils understood their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have positive attitudes to learning and behave well around the school. Where learning is effective pupils fully engage and clearly enjoy what they are doing. In an English lesson on complex sentence structures, pupils stated they really enjoyed the work and there were no distractions as everyone wanted to do their best. In the pupil discussions this was a common view.
- The parents, staff and pupils all rightly feel that behaviour across the school is good. Behaviour and exclusion logs are kept well and show a steady decline in behavioural incidents. Pupils feel there is little or no bullying in the school, and if any occurs this is dealt with effectively.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All pupils spoken to said they felt safe in school and this was supported by the views of the staff and parents. Pupils know how to stay safe both in and outside school. They have a good understanding of internet safety and the various types of bullying. The site and buildings are in a good state of repair and are safe and secure.
- The different groups of pupils in the school get on well. Pupils with hearing impairments, for example, stated they were treated in exactly the same way as everyone else by the pupils and staff. This was clearly seen in lessons. Discussion with them during lessons confirmed that they enjoyed the mixed approach of their own group learning and being integrated into the main classes. All pupils spoken to regardless of their background stated they felt part of the school. They felt teachers treated them equally and there was no discrimination.
- Attendance has been a key focus for improvement and this has resulted in a rapid rise in pupils' attendance, which is now above the national average.
- The pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted through all aspects of the school's work. Displays around the school clearly show that it provides opportunities for pupils to discuss other religions and cultures. Pupils confirmed that they discuss social issues and events in a variety of ways.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The senior leadership team has been in post for just less than a year. They have written a robust improvement plan, based on an accurate awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have begun to make positive changes. However, many of the changes and initiatives have not as yet had time to raise the quality of teaching enough. This in turn means that attainment has not yet risen to above national averages.
- The middle leadership team has recently been strengthened in the form of three assistant headteachers and creation of new subject leaders. However, the leadership team have not as yet raised teaching to consistently good or better and so attainment is below the national average at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The senior leadership team has worked well with other local schools, external consultants and the Academies Enterprise Trust to develop and improve the school. In some instances, they are not always clear about the roles and responsibilities each has, and who the senior leaders are accountable to, particularly for their performance.
- The school's links with the Academies Enterprise Trust has produced a number of positive

results. It supplies termly reviews of the work of the school by a team of specialists. This in turn is used to commission further training and support for the school. However, there is not as yet a rigorous system in place to evaluate the results of this work.

- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good as teaching provides the children with a positive start to their education, resulting in children making good progress.
- The leadership and management of the hearing impaired provision are good. Staff are well trained and carefully check on the pupils' progress both within the resource base and when pupils are in the main school setting. This ensures that all staff know how well each pupil is doing, what they need to do to improve and what specialist support they may need during lessons. This results in the mainstream teachers adapting their lessons accordingly and so pupils make good progress in English and mathematics.
- The senior leadership team has developed a positive system for monitoring the quality of teaching through checking of the work in pupils' books, lesson observations, discussions with pupils and analysing information on pupils' progress. The systems used for collecting and tracking pupils' progress are robust and easily accessible by all staff. There is a positive use of external moderation by the Academies Enterprise Trust, external consultants and other schools of the work of the school.
- The senior leadership team gives the pupils' safety a high profile. All procedures to keep the pupils safe are carried out effectively and meet current national requirements.
- The subjects the pupils are taught have been modified and improved since the senior leadership took control of the school. They have made sure that English and mathematics are at the centre of all learning. Teachers regularly link subjects together so that pupils can practise their skills in a range of situations.
- Leaders promote equality well by making sure that pupils who benefit from pupil premium funding are effectively supported through additional teaching, resources and have opportunities to access all aspects of school life. The morning breakfast club, for example, gives all pupils who attend the opportunity to have a good start to the day. Its importance was summed up by a Year 6 pupil who stated, 'During the SATS we all went to breakfast club. It really helped us concentrate and so do better.'
- Parents and staff all feel that leadership and management are good and this has made a lot of difference to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are passionate about improving the school, but do not as yet provide sufficient challenge to the leadership team. This is due to confusion about their responsibilities and roles in relation to those of the Academies Enterprise Trust. However, they do have an understanding of the quality of teaching and are using performance management procedures effectively to help raise its quality. The Academies Enterprise Trust has begun to work with the governors and senior leadership team to remove these barriers and uncertainties. Governors review information regarding the progress pupils make and have an accurate view of the school's successes and weaknesses. The governing body evaluates the impact of all financial spending on pupils' achievement, and especially the primary sports funding and pupil premium grant.

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	138410
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	426887

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	461
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Elkington
Headteacher	Joe Purnell
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0121 4643451
Fax number	0121 4643896
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