

Southey Green Community Primary School and Nurseries

Crowder Avenue, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S5 7QG

Inspection dates 24–25 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Inadequate 4
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Inadequate 4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate 4
Early years provision		Good 2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate because teaching has been weak for too long. Too many pupils have not reached the standards of which they are capable in both English and mathematics by the time they move on to the next stage in their education.
- Pupils' progress is especially weak in Key Stage 1.
- Over time, pupils' achievement in writing across Key Stages 1 and 2 has been inadequate and shows only very recent improvement.
- The quality of teaching is too variable in quality across the school. The teaching of younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 has, up until very recently, been very weak.
- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Although in most lessons pupils are keen to learn, they sometimes lose interest when teaching is not strong.
- Leaders have not yet ensured that checks on pupils' learning, and the progress of groups of pupils, are carried out as widely across the school as they should be.
- Subject leaders do not yet do enough to check the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.

The school has the following strengths

- Children's learning within the early years is good, because of the strong teaching they receive.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school, their attendance, and punctuality have all improved. The school is an orderly community. Pupils say they are well cared for and feel safe.
- The school works well with parents, who are supportive of its work.
- Stronger leadership and new staffing are beginning to improve teaching.
- Governors are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and recent working with the Tapton Academy Trust has begun to bring about some improvements in Southey Green's performance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 31 classes; two of these observations were conducted alongside senior staff. Inspectors also made several shorter drop-in visits to classes.
- A scrutiny of pupils’ work was undertaken.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and to parents who picked up their children from the academy in the afternoon, and to a parent who telephoned the lead inspector during the inspection. Inspectors took account of 17 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, as well as school surveys of parents’ views about the academy. Inspectors also took account of 34 staff questionnaires.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, the Tipton School Academy Trust staff and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the academy’s records of pupils’ performance, evaluations of the quality of teaching over time, and its short and long-term plans for improvement. Safeguarding procedures were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and checked the school’s information about progress in reading.

Inspection team

Nigel Cromey-Hawke	Additional Inspector
Pauline Pitman	Additional Inspector
Keith Bardon	Additional Inspector
Melvyn Hemmings	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized primary school with more boys than girls.
- The predecessor school became a sponsored academy in January 2013.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, but there is an increasing number of pupils of other mixed heritage with English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above average and constitutes the majority of the school population. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is well above average.
- There is no validated data published for this recently opened academy so comparison against the government's floor standards cannot be made yet.
- The academy operates a before and after-school club which was included in this inspection.
- There have been significant changes in staffing, especially at a senior level, since the predecessor school became an academy.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve the effectiveness of teaching and raise pupils' achievement, especially in Key Stage 1, so that is at least good, by:
 - ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of what they should be learning in lessons and that, through guidance and feedback, they know what they have to do to make the best progress
 - making sure information on pupils' prior learning is used effectively to ensure that the work set for them is suitable for their needs and helps them to make the best progress, whatever their ability
 - making sure teachers check pupils' understanding and progress regularly in lessons; for example, through questioning, so that tasks can be quickly adapted to meet their learning needs
 - improving pupils' writing skills, especially their writing across a range of subjects, and developing their spelling, punctuation, grammar and presentation skills
 - making sure pupils in all year groups are inspired and motivated to work with greater enthusiasm and urgency.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on pupils' progress by:
 - rapidly developing the role of subject leaders so that they make regular checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility
 - analysing the progress of different groups of pupils in order to check how well they are doing and to target support more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Leaders have not been successful in ensuring that pupils have equal opportunities to make the progress they should throughout the school. Pupils' progress is too slow in some year groups. As a result, pupils' achievement overall is inadequate.
- Since becoming an academy, there have been considerable changes in staffing, especially at senior leadership level. Extensive support from the Tipton Academy Trust has resulted in first one executive headteacher and then, from midway last year, a replacement executive headteacher (part time) leading the school. Since arriving, the current executive headteacher has been supported by a full-time head of school. There are clear indications that under this arrangement the academy is now taking the steps required to ensure the necessary improvements are being made. Their early successes in some areas demonstrate the school's capacity to improve.
- Due to the newness in post of many leaders and managers, many systems and procedures have yet to become fully effective. Detailed checks on the quality of teaching through planned observations have been made by senior leaders, but the role of subject leaders in this area is still underdeveloped. Given the large size of the school this means that, as yet, the middle leaders have not done enough to help drive improvement forward. Helpfully, staff morale is high and all leaders are fully committed to making this happen.
- Leaders of the academy have begun to use the partnership with the Academy Trust to bring in specialist expertise in areas such as: the use of assessment, strategies for raising attendance, and behaviour management. The progress and personal development of individual pupils is checked closely. However, leaders at all levels have yet to make sufficient checks on the ongoing progress of different groups of pupils and there is still more to do to ensure that teaching is appropriately adjusted to meet pupils' learning needs.
- The academy's own most recent self-evaluation document clearly recognises the issues facing the school, especially pupils' underachievement in writing and across Key Stage 1. A detailed plan for raising achievement is now in place for the coming year. The local authority is aware of the academy's current performance and has provided appropriate support. It has confidence in the current leadership's ability to improve the academy's performance.
- The curriculum has been improved. Support programmes in key literacy and numeracy skills have been introduced this year, as well as a focus upon extending pupils' understanding of the wider world. The raised expectations and improved teaching are beginning to more support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially their understanding of fairness, democracy and justice through, for example, activities such as Black history week.
- The academy is using its additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils to provide additional staffing, training and resources. While the achievement of this group of pupils is still inadequate, inspectors identified early signs that it is improving.
- Government funding to extend pupils' involvement in sport and promote healthier lifestyles is being used to extend staff training and bring expertise to the academy. It is too early to identify any significant impact, although pupils spoke to inspectors about how they enjoy the wider range of opportunities this funding has made possible.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There is a clear sense of partnership between governors, academy leaders and with the Academy Trust. Governors are now confident and able to challenge leaders about the school's performance and pupils' outcomes. Governors are very familiar with data about school performance nationally and how the academy is placed in relation to this. They know that pupils' progress is too slow and have increasingly challenged the school's leaders to improve the impact of teaching upon learning. Governors have supported joint working with the Trust to improve expertise in many areas.
 - Governors have supported the robust use of performance management to bring about more productive links between staff performance and salaries. They have fully supported the considerable investment in new staff over the last year, and this is helping to drive school improvement.
 - Governors ensure that specific funds, such as the pupil premium and the primary school sport funding, are spent in line with requirements and that statutory safeguarding responsibilities are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Although in most lessons pupils are keen to learn, they sometimes lose interest when teaching is not strong. Many pupils do not yet have a sense of urgency and tend to work too slowly.
- School records show that, over time, a minority of pupils do not behave well, but the adults follow the good school procedures in these cases and manage such situations effectively. Much behaviour currently in the school is good.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults. Teachers and pupils enjoy positive relationships and pupils' movement around the school when not in lessons is often very good. Pupils' good conduct was demonstrated, for example, during a very large assembly of the upper part of the school, which celebrated the new behaviour policy and the incentives provided by the end of week 'golden time' which operates as a reward for pupils' endeavours and behaviour. Conduct in the dining hall is usually good.
- The school provides good pastoral support for all its pupils. Productive relationships with parents are fostered, and the school works with a wide range of outside agencies to support the welfare of pupils and their families.
- Parents and pupils appreciate the daily before- and after-school clubs that make a good contribution to a prompt and calm start to the school day. These clubs also provide sporting and learning opportunities that would not otherwise be available.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and pupils say they feel safe and well cared for in the school and inspectors found the school to be a calm and welcoming place. Staff supported this view unanimously through their inspection survey returns, as did a parent who telephoned the lead inspector to praise the work way the school provides for her children's needs and welfare.
- Pupils display a good understanding of all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Incidents of bullying are not frequent and, when encountered, are dealt with rapidly and effectively, often by specialist staff within the school such as learning mentors and behaviour support staff. A few of the very small proportion of parents who responded through Parent View expressed concern over the level of bullying in the school. Inspection evidence indicates that, when it does occur, the school deals with it very well. A recent whole-school survey, which had a high level of response, showed that the vast majority of parents are happy with this aspect of the school's work.
- Attendance in the past has been well below average but has risen rapidly and is now close to the national average. This reflects the highly effective work by the academy staff to challenge persistent absenteeism, which, although still above national levels, has been dramatically reduced. Punctuality to school has also been significantly improved by close monitoring through a 'minutes lost' scheme. There are clear sanctions and rewards in place, and increasingly interesting learning experiences on offer, that serve to motivate pupils to attend promptly and regularly.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Although teaching is improving, it has not been good enough over time, except in the early years, to ensure that pupils make the progress that they should in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Extensive scrutinies of last year's pupils' work show that they made inadequate progress because of weak teaching. Current pupils' work, however, is starting to show they are making better progress. The findings also show emerging improvements in pupils' learning. This is due to the very recent focus upon the quality teaching in Years 2 and 6 that has resulted in improved performance by pupils in some aspects in the end of key stage assessments.
- Pockets of weak teaching are still evident across both Key Stages 1 and 2. Nevertheless, teaching is strengthening and some effective learning takes place, which enables pupils to catch up on the lost ground due to the widespread inadequate teaching in the past. Too often, however, pupils are not able to get off to a good start in their lessons because teachers do not explain fully what pupils are supposed to be doing or learning. This results in confusion among some pupils and they lose interest in their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not always check pupils' progress carefully enough; for example, by questioning, or looking at pupils' work, to ensure that mistakes are corrected, misunderstandings clarified and activities and tasks adapted to meet pupils' changing learning needs. This hampers learning and slows

progress.

- Recent improvements in assessing pupils' progress have resulted in much richer information to help teachers plan their lessons. Increasingly, this leads to pupils tackling interesting and challenging, yet manageable tasks, which help to move their learning forward. The use of this information is variable across the school and some tasks are either too easy or too difficult for some pupils because teaching does not take account of what they already know and are able to do.
- The weak teaching of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics is reflected in pupils' limited learning and progress over time in these areas. Changes of staff last year have brought stronger teaching into Years 2 and 6 in particular, which has begun to improve pupils' learning.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) has been underdeveloped in the past, thus limiting pupils' reading and spelling skills. This was clearly evidenced in the abilities demonstrated by pupils when they read to an inspector. The school has a clear focus upon the teaching of reading within its plans for this year but the impact of this has yet to be seen in terms of widespread improved learning.
- The teaching of writing shows a similar picture. Only very recently have teachers and teaching assistants begun to rigorously promote the correct use of spelling, punctuation, grammar and clear presentation of work. There is a new marking policy directed towards this and improvements are evident in the work of older pupils, but are not yet apparent in Years 1 to 4.
- The teaching of pupils with particular learning needs has also led to their inadequate progress. Until recently, pupils' special educational needs have not been properly identified so teaching and support has been pitched wrongly. Staff training and reorganisation is beginning to get to grips with these problems.

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate because they do not make enough progress during their time in the school, especially in Key Stage 1 and in writing. This is despite making a good start in the early years.
- Despite some improvements that started in the summer term of last year, when new leadership and staff were introduced, pupils' work, discussions with pupils, and the school's own performance data show that, over time, pupils are underachieving, especially in Key Stage 1 and in writing across the school.
- Many pupils reach the upper part of the school with too much ground to make up. It is difficult for them to reach the expected levels by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 because teachers have to constantly fill gaps in their understanding before they can move on to the work expected for their age.
- Since the school converted to an academy, pupils' attainment at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 has remained significantly low in relation to national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements in reading and mathematics mean that floor standards for attainment are likely to be met for last year; but within this, attainment in pupils' writing, especially at the higher levels, in national testing in Year 6 last year declined even further from the very low levels seen in previous years.
- The school leaders recognise that while there is considerable catch-up in Year 6, progress is too slow in other year groups. The proportions of pupils making expected and more than expected progress for this key stage are still significantly below national averages. This means that pupils' proficiency in numeracy and communication skills are not good enough for them to make a successful start in the next stage of their education.
- Girls outperform boys in reading at Key Stage 1, but there is no significant gap in their performance by the time each group leaves the school.
- As the academy has only been open for one year, there is no validated test data that compare the achievement of disadvantaged pupils with other pupils in the school or nationally. However, in-school data shows that, currently, disadvantaged pupils are underachieving, as are many other pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. There is evidence that their performance is now improving due to the recent changes brought about in teaching by the school leadership.
- The most able pupils have not been doing as well as they should over time. Too often, teaching has not sufficiently challenged them to make the best progress; however recently raised expectations and better teaching have begun to redress this, with the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in national testing in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2014 getting closer to, but still significantly below, the level seen nationally in 2013.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children settle into the early years setting quickly, helped by the good preparations made by staff to identify their learning needs and interests. Children are quickly assessed and well-planned programmes put in place to move their learning on. Staff within the setting have high expectations and are led well by the early years leader.
- The skills of the vast majority of children who enter the early years are below those typical for their age, especially in language and communication skills. The school's own data and inspection evidence show that, in the early years, children make good progress from these starting points and most are well prepared for their start in Year 1.
- Children make good progress because of the good teaching and high levels of care they receive. Clear routines are established with the result that behaviour is good, children feel safe and are interested and enjoy their time in the early years setting.
- Regular assessments are made of each child's learning and the information gathered is used to good effect to inform planning. There is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, with a clear focus upon developing children's language and communication skills. This helps children move on in their learning and to develop self-confidence.
- Staff are especially skilled at communicating with parents about their children's development, involving them extensively in constructing a profile of each child's learning, and providing regular sessions in family learning.
- Staff make the best use of the school site, although it is sometimes difficult for children to move easily between the indoor and outdoor areas. They make every effort to overcome this in their planning and daily activities. Inspectors witnessed high levels of enjoyment and good learning in the nursery when, for example, a demonstration by a professional hairdresser was used to good effect by teachers to extend children's understanding of the wider world and to develop their speaking and listening skills.

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	139133
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	447865

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	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	682
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Senior
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Lant, Executive Headteacher Mr Barry Stevens, Head of School.
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0114 232 6879
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	headteacher@southeygreen.sheffield.sch.uk

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