

Pear Tree Community Junior School

33 Pear Tree Street, Derby, DE23 8PN

Inspection dates 12–13 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- There are gaps in the previous learning of pupils across the school that result in them making uneven progress.
- Standards are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The behaviour of a small minority of pupils is not consistently good, especially at lunchtimes.
- Some pupils do not speak English confidently and do not readily join in discussions.
- Pupils do not practise their reading often enough to develop their skills to a higher level.
- Pupils do not spell or punctuate their work very well or develop the ability to write longer and more descriptive pieces of writing.
- The level of challenge for some pupils, including the more able, is not always high enough.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and not always revisited to ensure weaknesses are addressed.
- The newly appointed subject leaders have made a good start but have not had time to bring further improvements.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving rapidly in all areas of its work because, since requiring special measures, the right priorities have been identified and acted upon with resolve.
- The process of improvement is driven by the strong, very determined focus on achievement by the headteacher, well supported by senior leaders.
- Pupils from a wide range of cultures are welcomed and valued for their individual talents. The school helps them to develop a growing understanding of British values.
- Leaders have been successful in recruiting many new staff to the school who share their ambition to bring about further improvement.
- The quality of teaching has considerably improved in the last year. As a result, the progress made by pupils in Year 6, last year, improved considerably on the previous year.
- Staff work well together as a team, with a clear recognition that more remains to be done to ensure consistently good progress for all.
- Daily activities to help pupils learn about letters and the sounds they make (phonics) are leading to better progress in reading.
- The local authority and the interim executive board, acting as a governing body, have supported leaders well in taking the difficult decisions needed to address the underperformance of staff and pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 19 lessons. Some of these were carried out jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked in detail at the work in pupils' books and heard several pupils read.
- Planned and informal discussions were held with pupils throughout the inspection.
- There were discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the literacy and numeracy leaders, staff with interim responsibility for special educational needs coordination and the Community Development Officer.
- Inspectors spoke to a member of the interim executive board. A discussion was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- There were five responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) which was insufficient to generate data for inspectors to view. Inspectors also spoke to several parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of the 45 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress. They also took account of documents and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Bucktin	Additional Inspector
Peter Stonier	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized junior school.
- At 93%, most of the pupils are from a range of minority ethnic groups. This proportion is well above the national average. Currently, 53% of pupils are of White Gypsy Roma heritage and 28% of Pakistani heritage. More than three quarters of these pupils speak English as an additional language. A total of 24 languages are spoken by pupils, with the main home languages being Czech, Slovak, Roma and Punjabi.
- Mobility in and out of the school other than at the usual time is much higher than the national average. Many of the Roma pupils are new to formal education when they arrive in the school.
- At 59%, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Currently, the proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is around 16%, which is about the national average.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2013. A deputy headteacher has since been appointed and new leaders for literacy and numeracy took up their roles this term. Eight new teachers have been appointed to the school since September 2013, many of them this term. There are now year group and phase leaders for different age groups. A Community Development Officer has been appointed. Teaching assistant posts have been reviewed. Several staff in a range of roles have left the school in the last year.
- The school works with a Local Leader in Education as Chair of the interim executive board, which undertakes the responsibilities of a governing body.
- In 2013 the school did not meet the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching in all classes consistently matches the quality of the best in the school by:
 - checking that activities contain an appropriately high level of challenge for those of different abilities and especially for the more able
 - making sure that the marking of pupils' work regularly identifies what they need to improve and such areas are revisited in subsequent work.
- Accelerate the rate of progress made by pupils and raise their attainment by:
 - ensuring that pupils develop their speaking skills by providing plenty of opportunities for them to discuss their ideas and extend the range of words they use
 - checking that pupils have regular and frequent opportunities to practise and develop their reading skills
 - enabling pupils to spell and punctuate their writing accurately and develop the capacity to write at greater length and depth.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - extending the role of staff with additional responsibilities, including the special educational needs coordinator, in checking the progress pupils make and identifying areas for further improvement
 - robustly monitoring all aspects of school life to ensure that the behaviour of a small minority of pupils does not adversely affect the well-being of others.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management currently require improvement because, while there have been significant changes and developments in key areas since the previous inspection, there is further to go. Although activities to bring improvements are reducing the impact of pupils' underperformance in the past there are still some inconsistencies in addressing the gaps in pupils' prior learning. Pupils' progress has improved over the last year and increasingly they have the same range of opportunities to raise the standards they attain.
- Several subject leaders are new to their roles. While they have made a good start to checking the work in pupils' books and the progress made in lessons, they have not had sufficient time to implement the plans they have for further improvements. There is currently no substantive special educational needs coordinator in post. A new appointment has been made to start next term. As a temporary measure, other staff are fulfilling this role.
- Following the judgement that the school required special measures, the local authority appointed an interim executive board (IEB) to address inadequacies in the leadership of the school. Over the last year, under the direction of the IEB, leaders have worked with urgency and determination to address long-standing issues and tackle the weaknesses identified in previous inspections.
- There are now several strong aspects to the leadership and governance of the school but they have not yet had a marked impact on the standards the pupils achieve by the end of Year 6. The headteacher has heightened expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve, and is successfully establishing an ethos in which pupils can succeed.
- The dynamic leadership of the headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, is now driving school improvement forwards at pace. They have a clearly articulated vision for the school and understanding of how this is to be achieved. One member of staff, reflecting the view of others, noted that, 'The headteacher has an incredible vision of all children achieving their potential. No barriers!'. This has been pivotal in moving the school forward and increasing the rates of progress made in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Targets for the management of teachers' performance are linked to school priorities and firmly rooted in the progress pupils make. There is an effective programme of professional development that has led to improvements, including in the effectiveness of teaching assistants.
- Joint lesson observations with inspectors show that senior leaders accurately identify what makes teaching effective and what remains to be improved. Leaders are working with teachers to establish consistently good teaching throughout the school and monitoring the teachers' performance closely.
- The school has benefited from the close support of the local authority, particularly in making difficult decisions about staffing. The support for the leadership team by a Local Leader in Education has been effective, as has work with other schools in adapting planning, teaching and learning.
- The work of the Community Development Officer is effective in liaising with families who are hard to reach. Additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils and ensure that they have equal access to resources, including sports kit, uniform and school activities.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used in several ways, including work with sports coaches to help improve the skills of staff and pupils. Many pupils say they like learning skipping and circus skills. They rightly believe this is helping improve their coordination and levels of fitness.
- The curriculum is broad and appropriately balanced, with a firm focus on the development of skills in literacy and numeracy. The school prioritises the development of British values and helps prepare pupils

for life in modern Britain. For example, a week's residential visit to London included visits to the Houses of Parliament and other famous institutions.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. This is through a range of activities including celebrations of several festivals and in assemblies where, for example, tolerance is promoted through pupils considering the themes such as of 'Love thy neighbour'.
- Very few parents responded to the online questionnaire. Discussions with a few parents indicate that most are pleased with the quality of education and care provided. A small minority, however, do not think communication with parents is good enough. Inspectors found that the school has developed many innovative ways of communicating with parents. The new Community Development Officer works effectively with parents to involve them in the life of the school and in supporting their children's education, although much remains to be done to involve a greater number of hard to reach families.
- With the many recent changes of teaching staff, improvements in progress and a clear programme for monitoring and evaluating the impact of activities to bring further improvements, the school is well placed to continue to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school provided by the IEB is effective and has helped the school to improve in the last year. The IEB was put in place following the judgement that the school was in special measures and that leadership and governance were weak. The IEB not only supports the school but also holds senior leaders to account for the progress pupils make. IEB members understand and discuss in detail what the data tell them about the progress of different groups of pupils. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and check that the monitoring of activities is accurate and linked to the management of performance. The IEB take account of a range of information when making decisions about teachers' pay and progression and ensure that any pay rises reflect the progress pupils make. They have been fully involved in the process of making difficult decisions about staffing. The IEB carries out its statutory duties effectively, including checking that the arrangement to keep pupils safe meet requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because it is not consistently good. The behaviour of a small minority of pupils, particularly at lunchtimes, has been identified as a concern by pupils, parents and staff. Midday supervision is not always rigorous or effective enough to improve the behaviour of a small number of pupils. Support for pupils who have difficulty managing their own behaviour is much more successful in lessons than at other times.
- In the last year, the school has developed a much firmer approach to managing behaviour and has developed a zero tolerance to poor behaviour. This is clearly communicated to everyone, including parents. Better procedures and clearer sanctions have led to a rise in exclusions. However, as everyone has become more aware that anti-social behaviour will lead to exclusion, the incidences of exclusion have started to fall. The support provided, for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion, has often been successful in enabling them to remain in school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are usually positive. Many say that they like school and that they particularly enjoy physical education activities.
- The school works successfully with the local community to stress the importance of regular attendance and to reduce holidays in term time. As a result, attendance has improved in the last year and is now only a little below the national average. Persistent absence is declining.
- The pupils' books show that most try hard with their work, especially in Year 6. However, across the school, some pupils do not readily join in discussions or share their ideas with others. This does not help them to widen the range of words they use or develop their confidence in speaking. While a number are

very new to learning English, this reluctance is shared by different groups.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Pupils, staff and parents recognise that there are some elements of bullying and racism that occur, sometimes influenced by out-of-school activities. Pupils know that this will not be tolerated by school leaders.
- Pupils have a reasonable understanding of how to keep themselves and their friends safe, and many recognise that their behaviour has an impact on others. Most pupils can explain what bullying is and recognise this is 'several times on purpose' and to 'start telling other people'. The pupils understand the dangers of social media and that calling each other names is hurtful. They are confident that there are people to talk to in school should they have any worries.
- Procedures to check the suitability of adults to work with children are followed carefully. The school site is secure.
- Representatives of the emergency services and organisations that work with young people visit the school to talk to pupils about how to keep safe in a range of situations.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has considerably improved in the last year and particularly this term. While the work in pupils' books, data about progress and classroom observations indicate that much of this is now good on a day-to-day basis, over time the impact of teaching on pupils' progress has been weaker. There are gaps in some pupils' learning that are not yet being addressed as well as they could be.
- Staff plan activities to provide different levels of challenge for those of differing abilities. This is mostly successful in promoting pupils' progress. However, scrutiny of their work shows that sometimes the more-able pupils are not always challenged enough. Very occasionally staff do not expect enough of the pupils and accept work that was not good enough. This was the case, in a Year 3 art lesson, where pupils were drawing fruit.
- The marking of pupils' work follows a prescribed format and, in some cases, is clear and pertinent. However, the quality of marking is variable and some is not detailed enough in identifying what the pupils need to do to improve. Where marking is carried out, this is not always revisited well enough by pupils or staff to ensure misconceptions are addressed and corrections made.
- The management of pupils' behaviour in school is good, as illustrated in Year 6 lessons and assemblies. This is achieved for example through a quiet word or a gesture that demonstrates the good relationship between staff and pupils, and pupils' understanding of teachers' expectations. This ensures that pupils listen well to others and behave well. All staff have strong working relationships with pupils, who say that they like the adults that they work with.
- Staff explain things well to pupils and make clear to them what they are expected to do. Time is used well to ensure that pupils maintain their concentration and complete the work planned for the lesson. Where learning is most effective, staff use questions well to check pupils' understanding and prompt higher level answers. This was evident when Year 6 pupils investigated the relationship between fractions and decimals and improved their explanations of how the numbers related to each other.
- The teaching of a daily phonics lesson for all pupils is proving successful and is helping pupils of all abilities to improve their reading, spelling and writing. In mathematics, a strong focus on calculations and problem-solving activities is increasingly successful in helping pupils to apply their skills in everyday situations.
- Staff are skilled in working with pupils new to formal education and to learning English. For example, an activity teaching some of these pupils more about phonics (letters and the sounds they make) helped

them understand how to blend sounds together to work out how to say a range of words.

- The work of teaching assistants is of good quality, particularly in support of those new to English and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The school ensures that pupils do not become dependent on such support by also encouraging pupils to work together and as part of the whole class. This helps to build their confidence and self-esteem.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The skills and understanding of pupils when they join the school, in Year 3, are below those typical for their age. In addition, the school has a very high proportion of pupils who join it other than at the usual time. Many recent admissions have been of pupils new to the country and to speaking English. Many Roma pupils are new to formal education when they arrive at the school. The achievement of pupils requires improvement because it is not yet consistently good.
- The 2014 national tests at the end of Year 6 showed the proportion of pupils who made the progress expected of them, was close to the national average and far higher than in 2013. The proportion of pupils who made more progress than expected was close to national figures in reading and writing, and a marked improvement on last year.
- As a result of faster progress standards improved in 2014, although they remained well below average. Girls generally did slightly better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. School records indicate that this gap is now narrowing and the overall rate of progress increasing. This is because teaching is more effective, staff use assessment information well to identify pupils who are in danger of underachieving and support is quickly put in place.
- Pupils' attainment is weakest in English grammar, punctuation and spelling. This has become a key priority for improvement for the school. Daily phonics sessions are now in place for all pupils across the school, matched to their skills and understanding, to help to improve their reading and spelling.
- Records show that some pupils rarely read at home. In order to improve pupils' reading skills the school has extended the existing programme of activities to encourage parents to support their children's learning, including through the work of the new Community Development Officer. Activities are meeting with some success but not with all families that are hard to reach.
- As the result of a whole-school focus last year, attainment in writing has improved compared with previous years. Pupils of all abilities, including the more-able, do not always develop the skills to produce higher-level work by writing at greater length and in more detail.
- Standards, over the last three years, have been slightly better in mathematics than in reading and writing. Many pupils new to speaking English are able to make gains in their mathematical knowledge and skill at an earlier stage in their acquisition of English, than they are able to do in reading and writing.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were three terms behind other pupils in the school in mathematics and reading, and about two terms behind in writing. They were two years behind other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and a year and a half in writing. The school's recent monitoring of disadvantaged pupils' progress indicates these gaps are starting to narrow in all areas through more effective use of pupil premium funding, better assessment and well targeted support.
- The progress of more-able pupils requires improvement because these pupils do not always make better than expected progress, although this is slightly stronger in mathematics than other areas. Improved teaching is now taking greater account of the needs of this small group of pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to all other pupils. The school is successful in targeting the work of staff to individuals and groups of pupils and using the teachers' assessments and data to identify where this is needed most. As a result, these pupils' progress is increasing in keeping with others at the school.

- Pupils speaking English as an additional language often make rapid progress in their acquisition of key language skills and grow in confidence. Their attainment in national tests in 2014 was similar to other groups.

- The school works in imaginative ways to help improve the pupils' interest in developing a healthy lifestyle. Additional funding for physical education and sport is used to promote several activities, including skipping, which pupils from all backgrounds enjoy. The impact of this range of activities is shown in the greater number of pupils attending these and other sessions.

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	112727
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	447676

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Hassall
Headteacher	Kudisia Batool
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2012
Telephone number	01332 760610
Fax number	N/A
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