

# Regents Park Community Primary School

Arthur Street, Birmingham, B10 0NJ

**Inspection dates** 12–13 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Assessments of children’s skills and abilities when they enter school are inaccurate and do not form a secure basis for planning children’s learning.
- Teaching is not good. Too much requires improvement.
- Teachers do not always correct pupils’ grammar, punctuation or spelling errors.
- The school does not have a consistent and coherent whole-school approach to the teaching and assessment of reading. In 2014, standards in reading were low compared to other schools nationally at the end of each key stage.
- Leaders do not analyse behaviour concerns, including the actions taken by staff, thoroughly enough.
- Safety is not good because staff do not always follow agreed procedures when reporting and dealing with first aid and racist incidents.
- A very small number of parents believe that their concerns are not always listened to, particularly regarding pupils’ comments that refer to skin colour or religion.
- Pupils in every class, including Nursery and Reception, do not make good progress. Consequently, too few pupils reach the standards expected nationally in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

### The school has the following strengths

- The arrangements for the protection of the most vulnerable pupils are good.
- School leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. They are bringing about the necessary improvements to teaching and pupils’ learning.
- Governance is improving because of effective support from a National Leader of Governance.
- Checks carried out on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough.
- The subjects that pupils study support their personal development well. They can talk about their feelings and they are aware that others may have beliefs different to their own which must be respected.
- Children behave well in the Nursery and Reception classes.

## Information about this inspection

- The school was inspected under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 because of concerns regarding pupils' achievement and the quality of leadership at the school.
- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, including one observed jointly with the executive headteacher. Inspectors also made short visits to lessons. Inspectors listened to pupils read and reviewed the work in pupils' books.
- The team observed pupils' behaviour during break time and lunchtime.
- Inspectors talked informally to many pupils and held a more formal meeting with a group of Key Stage 2 pupils.
- Inspectors talked with staff and considered the 61 responses to the staff survey.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor. Inspectors also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Members of the inspection team talked to parents at the start and end of the school day. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also met with parents and carers who requested an appointment with the lead inspector.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a range of documentation including the school's own records of pupils' progress, recorded evidence from senior leaders' checks made on teaching, written policies, documents regarding the management of staff performance and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Jacqueline Wordsworth, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Matthews	Additional Inspector
Julia Rapsomanikis	Additional Inspector
Merryl Ford	Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is above average in size for a primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, including those known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, is considerably higher than that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high. Almost all of the pupils are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. Pupils of Somali heritage comprise the next largest group.
- Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language. Few pupils are at an early stage in learning to speak English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has a below average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The early years provision in the school consists of two Nursery and three Reception classes.
- The school's results in the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2013 were declared null and void by the Department of Education due to maladministration.
- The substantive headteacher and deputy headteacher resigned in October 2013. The school has been led by a series of interim executive headteachers since that time. The current interim leadership team consists of an executive headteacher and interim headteacher from Story Wood Primary School, an outstanding school, which forms part of the Greet Teaching School Alliance.
- The school received a no formal designation visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2015 in April 2014 because of concerns regarding the leadership of the school. Leadership was judged as requiring improvement.

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

- Improve teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better, and raise pupils' attainment by making sure that teachers :
  - plan work for pupils of different ability, particularly the most able, that is matched closely to what they already know and can do
  - check regularly how well pupils are learning during each lesson, so that they can be moved on to harder work as soon as they are ready
  - provide pupils with the more specific guidance they need to correct their errors
  - demand high quality work and do not accept mediocre work from any pupil
  - develop a whole-school approach to the teaching of reading so that all staff are clear about the strategies they should use to teach reading, particularly early reading, systematically and securely in all classes
  - ensure that all children learning to read are given decodable reading books - that is, books that are 'closely matched to pupils' developing phonic knowledge and knowledge of common exception words' (tricky words) - to read in school and practise at home
  - ensure that pupils are encouraged to read regularly and often, including at home, so that they have more opportunities to practise and develop their skills
  - provide further training for teachers and teaching assistants so that all become skilled in teaching phonics as well as comprehension and more advanced skills, such as inference and deduction.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - systems for recording of incidents of poor or racist behaviour are analysed and used to inform the actions that will be taken to improve behaviour
  - all governors continue to improve their skills by attending further training to allow them to provide good challenge and support to the school
  - communication with parents is improved so that all parents have confidence in the leadership of the

school to deal with their concerns

- leaders in the early years understand how to assess and record children’s skills and abilities when they enter school
  - leaders of reading make sure that teachers teach reading effectively, and accurately assess pupils’ skills and abilities on a regular basis.
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## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because there is still work to do to make sure that all pupils make good progress and that teachers' judgements about pupils' attainment and progress are accurate, particularly in the early years and in reading across the school.
- Recent appointments have strengthened the leadership team. Leaders, including phase and subject leaders, are now more effective. They understand their roles and responsibilities in holding teachers to account for pupils' progress. Their actions are beginning to lead to better progress being made now compared with last year.
- Senior leaders and most middle leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and are implementing appropriate action plans. The impact of these plans can be seen in the recent improvements in teaching and the faster rate at which pupils are learning. Leaders have rightly not made any plans to develop a new approach to assessing pupils' attainment until they have confirmed that the current data are accurate.
- The executive headteacher and interim headteacher hold staff accountable through much improved performance management procedures. This includes staff being responsible for tracking the progress of pupils in order to identify and help any pupil who may be falling behind. Staff are held to account for the progress of individuals and groups of pupils at regular meetings with senior leaders.
- Careful account is taken to make sure that additional money to support disadvantaged pupils is spent wisely. Current information shows that the additional funding has been used appropriately to support this group of pupils and that their attainment is beginning to rise.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and meets statutory requirements. Children enjoy the clubs organised by the school. Older pupils benefit from an annual residential trip. Visitors come to share their knowledge and experience with the pupils, and this helps them to learn about life in today's world.
- By the time pupils leave school in Year 6, they are confident and articulate with a strong sense of right and wrong. They make good progress in their moral and social development but their spiritual and cultural development is not as strong. Pupils are benefiting from the school's increasing emphasis on the teaching of different religions, arts from many cultures and visits to places of worship. Leaders are also actively promoting British values, including the rule of law and democracy. Consequently, pupils are increasing their understanding of Christianity and other faiths, as well as a range of other sets of beliefs and values.
- All pupils have equal access to all the school has to offer, even though there are a few incidents of pupils referring to skin colour or religion during disagreements.
- The school has appropriate arrangements for spending the primary school physical education and sport funding to improve and widen pupils' opportunities to take part in sports activities. Several clubs have been established which pupils attend regularly. The funding is appropriately used to improve teachers' skills and to enable pupils to improve their sporting skills.
- This was a 'light touch' school for the local authority because it was graded outstanding at its previous inspection and because of its above average results. Once officers became aware of the issues surrounding the maladministration of the statutory tests, they acted quickly to secure stable interim leadership. Since their appointment late in the summer term, these new leaders have brought much needed stability and order to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors carried out a review of their effectiveness after the monitoring visit from Her Majesty's Inspectors in April 2014. As result of this review, the governing body was disbanded and a new

governing body formed. Governors are currently working with a National Leader of Governance to help them to improve further.

- Governors have a developing understanding of the school's priorities. They are becoming increasingly aware of their role to challenge the school's leadership to ensure that the right priorities are being pursued. They are developing an understanding of the impact of actions taken to improve teaching. Governors are fully aware of their responsibility for the performance management of staff and have sought help to make sure they have appropriate procedures to ensure any salary increases are clearly linked to the quality of teaching.
- Governors have a growing understanding of data showing pupils' attainment and progress and know they need further training before they can robustly question senior leaders about pupils' achievement. Governors are aware of how the pupil premium and the physical education and sport funding is being spent, but have yet to check on the impact this money is having on improving standards. They have made sure that the school's policy for keeping pupils safe has been amended to reflect the guidance from the Department for Education, *Keeping children safe in education*. They ensure that safeguarding procedures meet current legal requirements.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils report that there are incidents of name calling, including some comments about skin colour and religion. Some pupils and parents feel that these incidents are not always dealt with appropriately by staff. Inspectors found that some of the documents that record how such matters are resolved are not detailed enough to allow leaders to follow up any issues that may arise.
- Teachers keep class behaviour logs but no one has a strategic overview of behaviour. This is because senior leaders do not monitor these records regularly enough.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and especially in the playground and at lunch times is generally good. All pupils know the school rules well and are aware of how to behave appropriately. They have good manners, are polite, and generally show respect for others' feelings. They are helpful and courteous.
- Leaders keep careful records and monitor patterns of absence well. Staff have worked well with parents to encourage pupils to attend regularly and to come to school on time; as a result, attendance is broadly average. However, a number of parents and carers take their children out of school during term time. Last year, 565 school days were lost to holidays. The school is beginning to make more use of fixed-penalty notices to deter holidays in term time.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Procedures for first aid and the recording of accidents are not checked often enough to ensure that staff are following guidelines. For instance, this inspection found that many items in the first aid boxes were out of date and some accidents were not recorded correctly.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe from harm well. Systems to keep pupils safe from risks associated with radicalisation and extremism are effective. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying, and are clear what to do if they have any concerns. Older pupils appreciate the opportunity to work as 'peer mediators' to younger children to sort out any minor difficulties they may have, and know when to refer problems to an adult.
- Girls also have a good understanding of the risks associated with some cultural practices that could put them at risk of harm, including forced marriage and female genital mutilation because the systems to keep pupils safe from such risks are effective.

**The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not led to good achievement and there is not enough good teaching. There are inconsistencies in practice both within year groups and across subjects.
- Leaders are aware that the teaching of the sounds that letters make (phonics) and other reading lessons are not organised well enough to make sure that all pupils get the most from these sessions. Some teachers do not have the skills to teach early reading well enough. Leaders have planned appropriate training to improve their skills.
- Reading corners in some classrooms are neglected, with little done to engage pupils in reading. Pupils across the school say they do not enjoy reading and do not regularly read at home. As a result, pupils do not develop a love of reading or have confidence in their ability to tackle new words. Lower-ability pupils are not heard to read on an individual basis regularly enough and there are no home-school reading records. This limits parents' ability to help their children. Suitable plans are in place to eradicate these weaknesses but these have not been implemented. In contrast, the library is particularly well stocked with books displayed well to attract pupils' attention.
- Teachers plan appropriately for most pupils and ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are catered for well in lessons. Where pupils are grouped by ability for writing and reading, their work is not as challenging as it should be, particularly in Key Stage 1. The most-able pupils in some lessons are set work that does not extend them so that they can achieve higher levels of attainment.
- There are good examples in the marking of pupils' work, in which suggestions on how pupils might improve are made. However, this is not a consistent feature of teaching and the inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work found some perfunctory and inaccurate marking. Some of the teachers' comments were written with incorrect grammar and spelling, thus setting a poor example for pupils. In contrast, in Years 5 and 6 pupils' work was corrected with care and pupils were provided with ideas to make their work even better.
- Most lessons are well structured, pupils are managed well and positive relationships are developed. Pupils' good behaviour and keen attitudes to work contribute well to their learning. They sustain their concentration and interest for lengthy periods, particularly when involved in solving open-ended problems in mathematics. Displays around the school are bright and reflect the wide range of opportunities on offer to the pupils.
- Pupils' progress is improving in mathematics because teachers focus on making sure that pupils understand key ideas, use the correct mathematical terms and build their confidence in tackling mathematical problems.
- After intensive training, teachers are getting better at checking on how well pupils are doing in lessons to make sure that they are concentrating and making good progress. Teachers' questioning is improving across the school so that they are beginning to probe and extend pupils' thinking. Leaders are aware that further work is needed with this aspect if pupils are to make more rapid and sustained progress.

**The achievement of pupils** requires improvement

- The results of the 2013 national tests for the end of Year 6 were declared null and void by the Department for Education because of maladministration. Results in the 2014 tests for pupils in Year 2 and 6 fell dramatically from above to well below those found nationally and showed inadequate progress for all groups of pupils whatever their background, abilities or starting points.
- Although improving, pupils' current attainment in mathematics, reading and writing fluctuates across classes and year groups, which reflects the inconsistent teaching.

- Children join the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are just below those typical for their age. They make expected progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and start Year 1 with skills that are just below those expected for their age.
- Current pupils from Year 1 to Year 6, including those from Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Somali backgrounds most of whom speak English as an additional language, make broadly expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics with a few pupils doing better than this. Pupils do not routinely exceed the expected rate of progress because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, particularly in Reception and in Years 2 and 4 where teaching is not demanding enough.
- Progress in Years 5 and 6 is brisk in writing and mathematics, and pupils are beginning to reach the level of which they are capable. They do well because the teachers successfully build on what pupils know and can do, and have a good understanding of how to teach these subjects.
- Teachers and support staff do not correct errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar well enough, so pupils continue to make the same mistakes. Some pupils have not developed a neat style of joined handwriting and not all teachers insist on good presentation, and so some pupils produce mediocre work.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates. This is because teachers and teaching assistants make sure they provide them with the support they need to complete their work.
- Disadvantaged pupils make expected progress. The gap between these pupils and other pupils in the school is showing very early signs of narrowing because senior leaders and governors keep a watchful eye on their progress. Current attainment information shows that they are one term behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. However, when compared to all pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils are four terms behind in reading and around three terms in mathematics and half a term in writing.
- The most-able pupils make expected progress but do not always reach the standards of which they are capable, particularly in reading where too few pupils gained the higher Levels 3 and 5. Attainment in reading is not as strong as in other areas of learning. This is because expectations of what and how often pupils read are not made clear or checked.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified that there is work to do to ensure that boys attain as well as girls across the school, particularly in reading and writing. In response to this, teachers are increasingly planning activities which interest all pupils. Visits to classrooms during the inspection indicated that there are encouraging signs of boys responding as enthusiastically as girls towards their work in different subjects.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- The leader with responsibility for the early years understands that further work is needed to make sure that all members of the early years team have well-developed knowledge of the early years assessment requirements.
- Systems for checking on the progress made by children require improvement because the assessment of children's starting points is inaccurate and so does not provide a firm basis for planning children's learning. Leaders have suitable plans in place to make sure that this is tackled quickly.
- Teaching is inconsistent across the Nursery and Reception classes. It is good in the Nursery. Daily opportunities for painting and experimenting with the effects of paint and colour support the children's creative development well.
- In Reception, some adults do not always intervene effectively to support children's learning.
- Children, whatever their starting points or backgrounds, make expected progress in early reading and

writing rather than good progress. This is because teachers do not link the teaching of early reading with that of early writing well enough. Adults do not insist that children form letters correctly when they teach the sounds that letters make.

- Reading books, when used, are not closely matched to children’s developing phonic knowledge, such as their knowledge of letter sounds and common spelling patterns in words. This is because although children learn about the sounds that letters make, they do not always use this knowledge to read unfamiliar words.
- Leaders correctly identified that children’s communication skills are less well developed than their skills in other areas of learning when they join the school. However, leaders have not made sure that all adults working with children ask questions which encourage extended responses.
- Leaders strive to improve the provision for children through a consistent approach to teaching and learning across both Nursery and Reception. The early years curriculum was reorganised the week before the inspection took place. This new way of working is too new to have had an impact on children’s learning.
- Children’s behaviour is good. There is a caring ethos where the adults encourage children to co-operate and take turns. As a result, children quickly learn to treat each other with care and kindness. Their attitudes are good and they show a growing willingness and enthusiasm to work hard and do their best. Children are looked after well and are encouraged to play and work together with other children sensibly.
- The youngest children have settled well into the routines of the Nursery. Adults know and look after their children well and set them tasks that are usually interesting and linked to their own experiences. Children are kept safe.

## 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>	103193
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	452280

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<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>	575
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Abrar Dawood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alan Beale
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 464 6746
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