

# Hill Avenue Primary School

Hill Avenue, Lanesfield, Wolverhampton, WV4 6PY

## Inspection dates

10–11 February 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders, including governors, have failed to take action to address the weaknesses of the school with sufficient urgency.
- Too many pupils make slow progress because teaching is not good enough to help them to achieve as well as they could.
- Until very recently, not enough has been done by leaders to improve teaching, and weaknesses persist.
- Teachers' assessments are not checked rigorously enough to give leaders an accurate picture of the progress being made by pupils.
- Inconsistencies in the way reading is taught mean that not all pupils at Key Stage 1 are able to use their knowledge of phonics (the sounds letters make) to help them to read unfamiliar words.
- Steps have very recently been taken to improve handwriting but there are still too many pupils at Key Stage 1 who are unable to write numbers correctly.
- Underachievement in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is due to teachers failing to identify accurately what pupils can already do to avoid unnecessary repetition.
- The physical development of children in Nursery and Reception is being constrained due to the lack of space and equipment for outdoor play.
- Systems to follow up the reasons for pupils being absent are not rigorous enough and there is confusion as to who has responsibility for this work.
- Leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness are not summarised in a way which allows governors and teachers to have a clear understanding of the expectations of senior leaders or to know if improvement is happening quickly enough to address historical deficiencies.
- Governors rely too heavily on the information that is given to them and they do not have the skills necessary to ask searching questions to challenge senior leaders.
- Governors have failed in their responsibility to prioritise the welfare of pupils. Supervision of pupils by adults is inadequate at lunchtime.
- Teachers and other adults who work with pupils have not received updated training to make sure they understand the threats posed by radicalisation and extremist behaviour, although this is planned.

### The school has the following strengths

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively helps pupils to learn about and respect the beliefs and traditions of others. Pupils have opportunities to reflect, consider and respond thoughtfully in assemblies and through the planned religious education curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the school and their attendance is improving overall.
- Pupils are polite and show respect for each other and other adults and say there is no bullying.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 16 lessons, of which two were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, a number of shorter visits were made to lessons, sometimes accompanied by senior leaders, and an inspector attended an assembly.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and looked at the pupils' work in their books.
- A formal meeting was held with a group of pupils from Key Stage 2 in which an inspector listened to them read. Inspectors also talked informally to pupils and observed lunchtime and playtime activities.
- The headteacher and both interim assistant headteachers met with inspectors to talk about specific aspects of the school's work.
- Meetings took place with a group of governors, an adviser from the local authority and two external partners who have been providing support for school leaders to help them to improve the school.
- The views of 33 parents and carers who had recorded their views on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, since September 2014 were taken into account. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 questionnaires returned by staff.
- A variety of documents were examined including the school's own information on pupils' achievement, records of safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, the school improvement plan and minutes of governing body meetings.

## Inspection team

Denah Jones, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deana Holdaway

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Croghan

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and has a one-and-a-half-form entry.
- Children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery class where they attend on a part-time basis. Reception children attend full time.
- There is an above-average proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium funding because they are known to be eligible for free school meals, or are in local authority care.
- Almost two-thirds of pupils are of White British heritage meaning there is a larger than average proportion of pupils from other backgrounds. The largest of these other groups are of Indian heritage and this accounts for almost a fifth of pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who are believed to be at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language is about average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Following the last inspection in June 2014, the headteacher and deputy headteacher left the school and the Chair of the Governing Body stepped down from the role. A new Chair was appointed in September 2014 and the interim headteacher, who was appointed to cover the period until December, has now been made permanent.
- A new deputy headteacher is due to start in the school in April and there are two temporary assistant headteachers sharing senior leadership responsibilities with the headteacher in the interim.
- Support is given to the school by a Local Leader of Education which has been commissioned through Manor Primary School.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that inadequate teaching is quickly eradicated and all teaching is at least consistently good in all subjects by making sure that:
  - teachers know how to assess accurately what pupils already know
  - teachers use their assessments to plan work that will build on what pupils can do to deepen their understanding further
  - teachers use their assessments to fill gaps in learning which have resulted from previously inadequate teaching
  - the teaching of phonics in the early years is consistent in its organisation and effectiveness and that older pupils are encouraged to use their phonics skills when trying to read unfamiliar words
  - pupils solve problems for themselves and are able to use the information that is available to them more readily, rather than relying on other adults for help
  - teachers' subject knowledge of mathematics is developed further.
- Secure further improvements to leadership and management of the school by making sure that:
  - all leaders understand their roles and responsibilities and have high enough expectations so that improvements are driven quickly
  - the checks on learning in books and in classrooms, which have been recently introduced, continue and clear targets are set for teachers which become a focus for future checks on their work

- action is taken to check rigorously on pupils' attendance and follow up any concerns.
- Significantly improve governance by taking immediate action to:
  - make sure that all governors have the necessary skills to enable them to use and challenge the information that is given to them so that leaders are held to account
  - carry out a review of how well the school keeps pupils healthy and safe while on the school site and take immediate action to address any concerns raised, such as improving lunchtime supervision and staff training
  - address all improvement areas previously identified by the reviews of governance and the use of pupil premium with a greater sense of urgency.
- Make arrangements for pupils in Nursery and Reception to have access to suitable space for outdoor play to allow them to practise activities such as balancing, climbing, racing and chasing games so that their physical development is not constrained.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders have failed to take the necessary action, with sufficient urgency, to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- Insufficient progress has been made with many areas of the school's improvement plan, which has only recently been revised and shared with governors.
- Capacity to improve the school further is limited as current leaders have not been able to prevent the decline in attainment and slow progress seen in 2014. School improvement is heavily dependent upon the support provided through a local teaching school and a Local Leader of Education.
- Both interim assistant headteachers have been promoted from subject leader roles in the school. These changes have led to heavy workloads for the interim assistant headteachers as they continue to lead their previous areas. Not enough responsibility for leading other areas of the school is given to other members of staff.
- Effective external support from a Local Leader of Education is being provided for the two interim assistant headteachers in developing their leadership and management skills. Early signs of improvement are evident in the effectiveness of the interim assistant headteachers' areas of responsibility.
- There is a lack of trust between school leaders and the local authority which means support and challenge provided to the school are failing to make any difference.
- Leaders' actions to improve teaching are only just starting to take effect and there is still some teaching that is inadequate. As a result, pupils are underachieving, especially in mathematics.
- Records of checks made on the quality of teaching show that teaching is improving, particularly in Key Stage 1. However, teachers are not routinely set targets further to develop specific aspects of their work.
- More accurate identification of pupils who need additional support has led to an appropriate reduction in the numbers of pupils who are recorded as being disabled or who have special educational needs.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences are planned through the religious education curriculum, which makes links with moral understanding, cultural diversity, spiritual reflection and consideration for others. Pupils have the opportunity to experience a well-planned range of subjects which include opportunities for them to learn about people from other faiths or backgrounds. A Year 6 pupil summed up her recent learning about Hindu celebrations when she said, 'It's nice to learn about different cultures.'
- Christian values such as respect, forgiveness and humility contribute to the themes of assemblies which provide time for pupils to reflect, consider and respond in thoughtful ways. Pupils know about British values such as democracy from the way in which they voted for school council representatives. They are being appropriately prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Nursery and Reception pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to allow them to practise activities such as balancing, climbing, racing and chasing games to promote their physical development.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is being used effectively to support teachers in planning PE activities for pupils and to provide sports coaches for soccer and lunchtime sport sessions.
- Parents who met with inspectors at the end of the school day made reference to very recent improvements in the school which mean they are much happier with the way in which the school is led; they feel their concerns are more likely to be listened to and any improvements needed will be made.
- Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.

- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is not effective. Governors have been overly reliant on the information that is given to them and have not questioned this information sufficiently to make sure they have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Information on gaps in attainment and progress for disadvantaged pupils in the school compared with other pupils nationally is not routinely presented to governors, who are therefore unable fully to evaluate any difference being made by the pupil premium funding.
- Although a review of governance and a review of the use of pupil premium have been carried out, governors have been slow to address the recommended actions. Weaknesses remain such as gaps in governors' knowledge or skills where training has yet to be completed.
- Governors have not been sufficiently involved in linking teachers' pay to the performance of their pupils and recently approved the increases in pay for all teachers eligible for pay progression, although standards in the school have declined. This has very recently changed and teachers have now been set more challenging targets.
- The health and safety committee of governors has not met this academic year and have therefore failed in their responsibility to prioritise the welfare of pupils.
- Two governors have recently completed safer recruitment training and they make sure at least one of them is involved in interviewing for new staff.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

are inadequate

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some younger pupils in the dining room need adult help to support them in developing good eating habits, such as cutting their food.
- At break times, pupils do not have enough resources or planned activities to keep them occupied and this sometimes leads to incidents of rough play.
- Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They understand systems to help them manage their behaviour and are eager to remain in the 'green for good' section. Pupils are able to explain the consequences of poor behaviour and this is consistently applied by their teachers.
- School leaders keep detailed records of incidents of unacceptable behaviour and their analysis shows a reduction in the number of incidents being logged. Pupils are polite and show respect for each other, adults and their school environment.
- There are no recorded incidents of bullying and this was confirmed by pupils, who say they are not aware of any bullying.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate.
- Leaders have been slow to ensure important aspects of up-to-date training for teachers and other adults who work with pupils. As a result, staff are not sufficiently aware of the threats posed by radicalisation and extremist behaviour, female genital mutilation or child sexual exploitation. Training is planned for the near future.
- Adult supervision at lunchtime on the playground is insufficient. No back-up cover is available if the one adult on duty is called away to deal with an emergency.

- Attendance is improving. The previous below-national-average figure for attendance is likely to change as attendance is already higher than for the same point last year. The numbers of pupils who are frequently absent, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, is reducing.
- The new deputy head role is likely to involve monitoring of attendance, but in the interim while the post remains vacant, attendance is not monitored well enough and reasons for absence are not followed up quickly.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using computers. In a lesson on themes for an e-safety day, pupils confidently talked about 'not clicking on pop ups' to avoid buying games inadvertently and who to tell and what they should do if they had any concerns.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Teaching over time is inadequate because too many pupils have underachieved in the past.
- Not enough work has been done to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' work. Teachers have recently started to check other teachers' marking in pupils' books but external partners have not yet been invited to give independent validation.
- Too much teaching is having to fill gaps in learning due to historical weak teaching, which is slowing progress overall for current pupils.
- Pupils, particularly younger ones, are overly reliant on adult help in lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants intervene too quickly so pupils do not always have sufficient opportunity to try to solve problems for themselves or to try to do so using information that may be available in the classroom.
- Pupils do not always use their knowledge of phonics (the sounds letters make) to help them to read unfamiliar words. Although skills are taught systematically every day, pupils do not always apply these skills.
- Classrooms and the library do not sufficiently promote the enjoyment of reading, invite pupils to explore the work of famous authors or encourage the investigation of particular topics.
- Work planned for pupils in mathematics is often overly repetitive rather than developing understanding further. In a combined class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils too much time was wasted in repeating work on the column method for multiplication that they had already done with another teacher.
- There are gaps in some teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics. Inconsistencies in the teaching of number lead to Key Stage 1 pupils writing numbers incorrectly.
- Teaching is not yet having sufficient impact on closing the gaps in achievement for disadvantaged pupils compared with others in the school.
- Parents of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are not given enough advice about how to support their children's learning at home.
- Teachers use subject-related vocabulary and model the use of key words well for pupils. However, where teachers have low expectations, they do not always expect pupils to adopt and practise such terms for themselves in their responses to questions or tasks.
- Teachers have developed appropriate expectations of pupils' sentence structure, punctuation and spelling. Their frequent focus on handwriting has helped pupils to improve successfully the standard of their work and writing skills are transferred well to different subjects.

- Marking is improving and pupils are now given more time to read the detailed comments that teachers make in marking their pupils' work and pupils have more time to do their corrections.
- Pupils work very well together in lessons. They listen to each other and share their ideas well.
- Recently, teachers have adopted a more consistent approach to their systems and methods in response to senior leaders' higher expectations and 'non-negotiables' introduced for practice in the classroom.

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Achievement over time is inadequate as school leaders have not established a regular picture of improvement.
- At Key Stage 1, there has been an historical declining pattern in attainment and pupils have reached lower standards than other pupils nationally by the end of Year 2.
- A similar declining pattern in attainment is seen for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils at this school reach much lower standards than in other schools by the end of Year 6.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils in the school is similar to that of other pupils, as both groups of pupils have underachieved in the past. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils attained broadly similar standards to those of their peers in mathematics and reading; in writing they were about two terms behind. These pupils were about three terms behind other pupils nationally in reading and in mathematics, and about four terms behind other pupils nationally in writing. Gaps in attainment are indicated to narrow for current Year 6.
- School records of assessment information show that attainment is improving, and pupils are making better progress, especially in reading and writing. However, no external checks on the accuracy of this information have been carried out and 2014 results were significantly worse than those predicted by teachers.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have historically underachieved and have not made the progress they should. This has recently been addressed by one of the interim assistant headteachers who has responsibility for checking the progress made by these pupils, and this group are indicated to be making better progress as a result of more tailored support to meet their needs.
- In Year 1, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in phonics is similar to that seen nationally. Disadvantaged pupils have poor phonics skills and a much smaller proportion than other pupils in the school reach the expected standard. Disadvantaged pupils are less likely to catch up than others in the school and reach the expected standard in Year 2.
- The small number of most able pupils do less well than they should, particularly in mathematics. Where teachers have weak subject knowledge of mathematics, more able pupils are not given appropriate work to enable them to develop a deeper understanding of the subject. The tasks and activities set were sometimes seen by inspectors to be less demanding than the work set for lower ability pupils.
- Information presented on the progress made by different groups of pupils including the most able, those who are at the early stages of learning to speak English, disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs are not analysed sufficiently by senior leaders, or compared with national standards, to drive improvement. The school's efforts to promote equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination are therefore not sufficiently effective.

### The early years provision

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is inconsistent. Where teaching is good children are provided with purposeful activities in a calm setting which secures their progress. Where



teaching is weaker, expectations of children's behaviour are too low and simple routines are not adhered to. In these sessions, children wander aimlessly from task to task because simple explanations and appropriate tools have not been provided. Some children in Reception are too noisy and distract others from their learning as their behaviour is not always managed as well as in the other class.

- In a lesson on phonics (the sounds that letters represent) observed during the inspection, one teacher pronounced the letter sounds precisely, quietly and clearly. The children listened attentively, correctly identified the letter and accurately wrote it on whiteboards. These children made good progress in the session. The same lesson was also taught by other adults but they allowed children to call out answers and the children became noisy and inattentive. The children could not hear the pronunciation with sufficient precision and they took little care to write the letters accurately. The children's weaknesses and errors were not picked up by the adults and they failed to develop their knowledge or skills during the session.
- The majority of children enter the Nursery unable to name common objects or form sentences to make their needs known. Many are highly dependent upon adults and are not used to listening to stories or nursery rhymes. There are no marked differences between the skills of girls and boys.
- Teachers quickly and accurately assess children on entry to Nursery so that children's individual needs are identified. Children with disabilities and those who have special educational needs are also recognised speedily and suitable support is provided.
- Parents are involved in keeping learning journals up to date so that an accurate and detailed overview of a child's development is recorded. Teachers use this information well to identify gaps in development and to plan activities to help children to catch up. Children are kept safe.
- The early years outdoor area is limited in space. As a consequence, children have little opportunity to develop their sense of balance on suitable equipment. The school has a large playground area which is used by older pupils at break times and lunchtimes. There has not been enough thought about how Nursery and Reception children could make better use of this facility to develop further their physical skills.
- The school has established on-going links with a local children's centre. This partnership ensures that the particular needs of both children and families are known and support is maintained where appropriate.
- One of the assistant headteachers provides knowledgeable leadership of the early years. She has established thorough systems to track children's progress and identify children who are in danger of falling behind. She has increased staffing levels to accommodate a recent, unexpected arrival of Reception children and is suitably aware of the challenges of ensuring consistently good teaching.
- Last year a similar proportion of Reception children to national figures achieved a good level of development by the end of the year. They entered Year 1 with an appropriate level of skills and knowledge.

## 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>	104326
<b>Local authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	461185

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	322
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Verity Cox
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Walker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 558750
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 558751
<b>Email address</b>	hillavenueprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2015

