

Pear Tree Community Junior School

Pear Tree Street, Derby, Derbyshire DE23 8PN

Inspection dates

16–17 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Until recently, senior leaders have not put in place effective support to improve the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- Pupils make poor progress throughout the school and the attainment of pupils is consistently below the national average by the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's behaviour policy has been consistently applied. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is inadequate. Pupils say that there is too much poor behaviour.
- Leaders have not evaluated effectively the impact of the pupil premium and sports premium funding. They do not know, therefore, what is working well and what is not.
- The skills of middle and subject leaders need further development to help them to raise standards throughout the school.
- Pupils' spelling is weak. Pupils misspell too many words that they should know.
- The previous interim executive board (IEB) has not been effective in its role of raising standards at the school.
- The former IEB has not kept a careful enough check on the school's safeguarding arrangements to ensure that the arrangements are being carried out appropriately.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is too low. Too many do not attend school regularly enough. Their progress was inadequate last year.
- Work for the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not matched to their needs often enough.
- Too many pupils do not have a good enough grasp of basic number skills and they are not careful enough when solving problems or recording their work.
- The most able pupils are not challenged enough. This means that they do not make the progress of which they are capable.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher and senior leaders, supported by the two local leaders, are determined to put things right.
- There is some effective teaching in the school.
- Several strategies have been introduced to improve teaching and learning, but it is too soon to judge their impact.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - ensuring that the interim executive board (IEB) fulfils all of its statutory responsibilities, such as ensuring that arrangements for safeguarding are effective
 - ensuring that the school's website meets statutory requirements
 - ensuring that the additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively, so that pupils who are entitled to it make the progress of which they are capable and the difference between their achievement and that of other pupils nationally is minimised
 - analysing the effectiveness of the school's use of the PE and sports premium funding and ensuring that the school is delivering high-quality physical education (PE) lessons
 - improving the skills of senior and middle leaders, including those with responsibility for subjects and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they can improve the quality of teaching, provision and outcomes in their areas of responsibility
 - increasing opportunities for teachers to learn from the best practice within the school in order to improve their practice
 - make better use of assessment information to hold teachers to account for the progress that all pupils make.
- Improve the behaviour and personal development of pupils by:
 - ensuring that all adults have high expectations of how pupils should behave and that they apply the school's behaviour policy consistently
 - improving the school's outdoor playground environment, providing more opportunities for pupils to play together cooperatively at breaktimes
 - providing training for midday assistants in how to engage pupils in purposeful play
 - improving pupils' engagement in lessons, so that low-level disruption is reduced
 - raising awareness of the importance of high attendance and punctuality among parents and pupils to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and the punctuality of the minority of pupils who arrive late.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and rapidly improve outcomes for pupils, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve

- giving the most able pupils tasks that are suitably challenging and appropriate, including by questioning them effectively to challenge these pupils' understanding
- setting work at the appropriate level for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to enable them to make good progress
- developing the accuracy of pupils' mental recall and calculation skills in mathematics and improving their skills of reasoning and problem-solving
- ensuring that the teaching of spelling is consistently effective in all classes and is taught across a range of subjects
- providing more opportunities for pupils to read in a wider variety of situations and for more to read to an adult.

An external review of governance should be undertaken, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Senior leaders have not been able to halt the decline in the quality of teaching across the school and the subsequent fall in standards at the end of key stage 2 since the last inspection. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement is inadequate.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 has been significantly below the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and in English grammar, punctuation and spelling since the last inspection. Unvalidated assessment data at the end of key stage 2 shows that progress was poor in 2016, particularly in reading and mathematics. The school's data shows alarming gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in different year groups throughout the school. Too many pupils are not working at the level expected for their age.
- Leaders have not checked closely enough that the pupil premium funding is used to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, leaders do not know which intervention programmes have made a difference in minimising the differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. The outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in 2016 were significantly below those achieved by other pupils nationally for reading and mathematics.
- Performance objectives for teachers have not been effective. Insufficient checks have been made on the performance of teachers. This process has not had the intended impact of improving the quality of teaching or helping to raise standards.
- Middle leaders have been ineffective in their attempts to raise standards in their subject areas. They have not received suitable professional development and training to keep them abreast of changes in their subjects and have not had the necessary training and support to make accurate judgements. This is now beginning to change.
- There has been a high turnover of staff. The school has found it difficult to recruit experienced teachers to replace those who have left. Until recently, staff morale was low.
- The acting headteacher, with the support of the phase leaders and two local leaders of education, is now showing the necessary ambition and determination to improve things. A range of new systems and structures have been put in place. Staff are responding positively and eagerly to the changes, but these are too recent to have been fully established and embedded.
- Strategies for checking on the quality of teaching and learning are becoming better established. Leaders have a better understanding about the quality of teaching and learning than has been the case until recently. They are now providing timely support and intervention for those who need it. There is good teaching evident in the school. Leaders are beginning to use the examples of good teaching to model good practice, but they are at an early stage in the process.
- Too much inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour has been allowed to persist. Leaders have not ensured that the school's behaviour policy has been applied consistently. Moreover, not all staff have high enough expectations of how pupils should behave. As a result, pupils say that there are regular fights in the playground.

- When teaching is less effective, there is also evidence of persistent low-level disruption, which pupils say stops them from learning. The leaders have made improving pupils' behaviour a high priority since September 2016 and that has led to greater consistency in the application of the school's policies and systems, but the pupils' behaviour remains inadequate.
- The curriculum is not planned well enough to enable pupils to develop and embed the key skills of writing and mathematics in other subjects. In some year groups, there are more opportunities for the pupils to apply their writing skills. For example, Year 4 pupils have written about the human body or their locality.
- The inspectors found very few examples of pupils having applied their mathematical skills in other subjects. Pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in mathematics.
- Pupils are presented with opportunities to visit places of interest, as part of the themes they are studying. For example, pupils have visited Dovedale. Visitors to school also enhance pupils' learning. For instance, the police helped to educate pupils about the dangers of drugs.
- Leaders have not analysed whether the PE and sports premium funding has increased the participation of different groups in extra-curricular sporting activities. In addition, leaders have not checked on whether the school is delivering consistently high-quality PE lessons and, therefore, cannot evaluate how effective the funding has been.
- Pupils know the British values of democracy, respect and tolerance. Pupils do not always respect each other and pupils told inspectors that bullying does happen at the school and they would like behaviour to be better.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not as good as it should be. Although they learn about different religions such as Sikhism and Judaism, this is not in any detail.
- Parents are concerned about the school's decline since the last inspection. For example, one parent wrote '[The] last 12 months has seen a noticeable drop in organisation, chaotic lunchtime arrangements and poor information to parents. The teaching staff deserve...consistent leadership.' Almost a quarter of those parents who responded to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) indicated that they would not recommend the school to other parents.
- Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Governance of the school

- The former IEB has not acted swiftly enough to improve leadership and the quality of teaching at the school since the last inspection. It has failed to deal with the decline in pupils' outcomes.
- The arrangements for safeguarding do not meet statutory requirements. The previous IEB has not maintained effective oversight of the school and has not ensured or checked that safeguarding arrangements are effective. Consequently, the IEB does not know if staff are implementing the school's policies effectively.
- The former IEB has not kept a careful enough check on how the pupil premium and PE and sports fund budgets have been allocated or spent and has not been provided with accurate information about the impact this spending has had on pupils' outcomes.

- The local authority, worried about the lack of decisive, effective and concerted action by the previous IEB, raised its concerns with the Department for Education and the regional commissioner.
- There has been significant turbulence in the membership of the IEB over the past few months. The chair of the IEB resigned along with the other members of the original board. A new IEB has since been formed.
- In a short time, the new IEB is taking decisive action to hold school leaders to account for standards and quality.
- A review of the pupil premium has recently been undertaken. This found too little focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and too little action. A subsequent action plan has been constructed, but needs to identify more precisely targets for pupils' outcomes. A financial audit of the school has also been commissioned.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The school's safeguarding policy has recently been reviewed and is ready for approval by the IEB. It is based on the local authority model, which covers all of the required elements, but has not been customised to make it specific to the school.
- Leaders have led valuable training with the staff regarding safeguarding processes and procedures. Despite this, not all staff have a clear enough understanding of safeguarding processes and procedures.
- Systems for logging incidents such as bullying, poor behaviour and racism are completed inconsistently and do not allow information to be gathered to track trends and patterns.
- The designated leader for safeguarding keeps detailed records, when a concern has been raised about the welfare of a pupil. Swift action is taken by leaders to protect pupils and they work with a range of agencies to meet the needs of pupils and their families. Staff have received training in how to protect pupils from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- Following the resignation of the headteacher and other key staff, the acting headteacher has assumed many roles, including safeguarding. The acting headteacher does not have the time or the resource to manage all of these roles effectively. The IEB recognises this. Plans are well developed to recruit new staff in order to increase capacity.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The effectiveness of teaching has declined since the last inspection and is now inadequate.
- Until very recently, teaching was not planned well enough to meet the needs of pupils, particularly those pupils who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or the most able. The work teachers provide to the pupils is not matched well enough to the abilities of the pupils and, therefore, most do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers' planning has become sharper since the beginning of the academic year.

Senior leaders, with the support of local leaders of education, have worked intensively with staff and work is now being matched better to pupils' needs and abilities. This is shown in an increased range and volume of work.

- The most able pupils are not challenged enough. They are provided with the same work as other pupils and do not make sufficient progress. Teachers do not probe their understanding well enough and teachers' questioning does not develop and extend their thinking sufficiently.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have also made insufficient progress in reading, writing and mathematics because work was not matched well enough to their needs. A concerted effort is being made by leaders to deal with this weakness, but strategies are at an early stage of implementation and not embedded.
- The teaching of mathematics is weak. Pupils do not get enough opportunities to improve their mathematical understanding by developing their reasoning skills. Pupils' ability to calculate mentally is also underdeveloped.
- Too many pupils lack precision when setting out their work in mathematics, or make careless mistakes when calculating. This means that pupils do not make good progress. Provisional outcomes at the end of key stage 2 show that progress was significantly below average and in the lowest 10% nationally.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to read a variety of texts in different situations. Sometimes, the text provided by teachers does not engage, interest or motivate the pupils. For instance, in Year 6, information about the siege of Sarajevo in the Bosnian war did not sustain pupils' interest well enough.
- Too few pupils read to an adult. Actions have been taken to address this, but this has not yet had an impact on standards of pupils' reading.
- The pupils who read to an inspector during the inspection used their phonics skills and other clues, such as pictures, suitably to tackle unfamiliar words. Most read mechanically and with little intonation. Younger pupils were more fluent than the older pupils. Unfamiliar vocabulary proved challenging for some pupils. Reading logs are often incomplete.
- Pupils' spelling is poor across the school. Leaders recognise this and have implemented a spelling programme to remedy the problem; however, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to apply their newly learned spellings in an appropriate context.
- Pupils do not always copy words down accurately. For instance, pupils in Year 6 were gathering interesting words to use in a later piece of extended writing, but many copied them down inaccurately.
- Pupils' handwriting is improving. A combination of better teaching of skills, more opportunities to write in a variety of situations, and higher expectations from the teachers is increasing pupils' pride in their work. For instance, in Year 6, pupils were provided with several opportunities to write in different ways in their science investigations about healthy foods and light and sound.
- In addition, the areas for improvement identified by teachers are not always challenging enough. For instance, in Year 5, some pupils could work out the interior angles of a triangle but were not challenged to explain their reasoning.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Pupils are not aware of the qualities that they need to demonstrate successful learning.
- When pupils are given tasks that may challenge them, pupils do not concentrate or demonstrate resilience as well as they should. This means that they are not productive and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils and parents say that bullying does happen. Most pupils who completed the online survey said that teachers deal with bullying well when it happens. The school has a system to log incidents of bullying and poor behaviour, but the log is not always completed accurately. Therefore, the school finds it difficult to generate good-quality information to track the frequency, range and type of incidents.
- Pupils have a suitable knowledge of how to stay healthy and some attend after-school clubs such as football, multi-skills, dance and table tennis. The school has not completed an in-depth analysis of whether participation rates have increased or not and which groups of pupils attend and which groups do not.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is low. The overall attendance of all pupils has increased, but has only kept pace with improvements nationally. Attendance remains below the national average.
- A range of suitable strategies has been implemented to increase parents' and pupils' understanding of the need to attend school regularly. Good links are established with the education welfare officer, who works closely with the schools and families.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. The number of recorded incidents of poor behaviour is high. There are some signs that these are beginning to decrease.
- The recent decrease is because the acting headteacher and senior leaders, with the support of local leaders of education, are working with all staff to ensure that the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently. However, too many incidents of poor behaviour remain.
- Not all adults have had high enough expectations of how pupils should behave. Although training has been provided for some midday supervisors in helping pupils to play better together, this has not been extended for all.
- Low-level disruption is evident in those classes when teaching is less effective. Some pupils disengage from their learning, if they find the work challenging, and some do not always sustain their concentration when they are expected to work independently.
- The playground is a stark and barren place. There is not enough for pupils to do at lunchtime and so many pupils simply chase around at breaktimes. Collisions are frequent, which sometimes escalate into arguments or fights. There are opportunities to play ball games on one part of the playground, but younger pupils say that older pupils often steal their ball and throw it over the fence to provoke a reaction.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is significantly below average and many leave school with attainment that remains significantly below average. The previous inspection required leaders to raise attainment. This has not happened.
- Unconfirmed outcomes for the end-of-key-stage assessments indicate that attainment in all subjects is exceptionally low overall. The proportion of pupils who achieved age-related expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling was below the national average. Too few low- and middle-attaining pupils attained the expected standard in reading and mathematics.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils and of those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities remains too low. Unvalidated outcomes in the 2016 assessments at the end of key stage 2 show that the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was low in reading, writing and mathematics. Too few disadvantaged pupils were working at the level expected by the end of Year 6 in 2016. Pupil premium funding has not been used effectively to target this group.
- The attainment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities was also extremely low in reading and mathematics.
- Unconfirmed end of key stage 2 data for 2016 shows that pupils' progress was in the lowest 10% nationally for reading and mathematics. Leaders have failed to increase progress sufficiently since the previous inspection.
- Progress made by pupils in writing was not significantly different from that found nationally.
- The school's internal data shows that pupils' attainment remains extremely low in all year groups, but especially so in the current Year 5. At the time of the inspection, leaders were unable to present data to indicate rates of progress made by pupils in each year group since the start of the academic year. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows progress to be stronger in writing than in mathematics since September 2016.
- Too many pupils do not spell words correctly that they should know at their age.
- There are gaps and weaknesses in pupils' mathematical knowledge. They do not have swift recall of number facts, lack precision and accuracy when setting out their problems and do not take enough care when solving their problems.
- Pupils say that they enjoy reading, but opportunities to read in school vary considerably from class to class.
- Most-able pupils, including most-able disadvantaged pupils, are not challenged consistently in their learning. For example, some reading comprehension questions did not require pupils to think hard and to write detailed answers.
- Most pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education because of the weaknesses in reading, mathematics, and English grammar, spelling and punctuation skills.

School details

Unique reference number	112727
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10019543

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	348
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Jill Wilkinson
Acting headteacher	Rachel Blurton
Telephone number	01332 760610
Website	www.peartreej.derby.sch.uk
Email address	head@peartreej.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements for the publication of information on its website because it does not provide the most up-to-date key stage 2 results, curriculum information, evaluations of the impact of pupil premium and PE and sports funding expenditure on pupils' outcomes, or the required information in the school's special educational needs statement.
- The school is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The vast majority of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Those from Gypsy/Roma and White Other backgrounds form the largest other groups. Most pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs support and the proportion with a statement of educational need or an education, health and care plan are above average.

- More pupils than average leave or join the school other than at the usual starting times.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2015, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Attainment on entry is significantly below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons or parts of lessons and attended a whole-school assembly. Five observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made several short visits to observe learning and small-group activities at other times.
- The inspectors held meetings with representatives of the IEB and the local authority. They also met with school staff, including phase and subject leaders.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including teachers' planning, the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, information on pupils' attainment and progress, records of behaviour and safety, the monitoring of teaching and management of teachers' performance, minutes of IEB meetings, and safeguarding documents.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, as well as informal conversations with them during lessons and at breaktimes. The inspectors listened to pupils reading and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- The inspectors took account of 16 responses to the online parental questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. The questionnaires completed by 20 pupils and 26 staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Paul Weston, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Annabel Bolt	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Harvey	Ofsted Inspector

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