

Holyhead Primary School

Holyhead Road, Wednesbury, West Midlands WS10 7PZ

Inspection dates

1–2 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
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders, managers and governors have failed to ensure that pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make the progress they should.
- Leaders and governors have an overgenerous view of the school's effectiveness.
- Progress is slow and attainment is too low across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Governors have not ensured that leaders have had the training, support and time to help them bring about rapid improvement in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders do not use pupil premium funding effectively to improve academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Teaching is ineffective. Work is often either too easy or too hard for the least and most able pupils. Pupils then lose interest and this slows their progress.
- The curriculum fails to meet the needs of pupils, especially the least and the most able. From the early years onwards, it fails to develop the literacy and numeracy skills of children and pupils well enough.
- Attendance is too low, especially for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Provision in the early years is not strong enough. Leaders do not evaluate accurately the quality of provision. As a result, teaching and the curriculum have not been tailored appropriately to meet children's needs.

The school has the following strengths

- Pastoral support for pupils most vulnerable to exclusion has been effective in supporting them with their learning.
- The school supports the emotional and social well-being of pupils effectively. Pupils are self-confident and have a keen sense of how to keep themselves safe.

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?

- Raise standards and improve pupils' progress quickly in reading, writing and mathematics by supporting teachers to:
 - develop pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills
 - extend pupils' writing skills by providing appropriate opportunities across the curriculum to write for meaning and purpose
 - make sure that pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds to develop their reading fluently
 - ensure that pupils read books that are appropriately challenging, especially the most able pupils
 - strengthen pupils' reading comprehension skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including in the early years, by:
 - ensuring that teachers make it clear to pupils how to improve and extend their learning
 - making sure that teachers assess pupils' attainment accurately and use what they know about pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding to set work that is challenging, especially for the most able and most-able disadvantaged pupils
 - making sure the curriculum provides sufficient challenge and rigour and meets the learning needs of all groups of pupils
 - ensuring that staff have the necessary subject knowledge and skills to teach the curriculum effectively
 - involving parents more effectively as partners in their child's learning and assessment
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve so that pupils have higher aspirations for themselves.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management and make sure that leaders and managers, including governors, drive rapid improvements, by:
 - rigorously tracking the progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities from their starting points to ensure additional funds are well spent in raising pupils' achievement

- giving leaders effective training and support to enable them to bring about rapid improvements in their subject or area of responsibility
- ensuring that leaders and governors hold teachers to account for pupils' progress from their starting points
- drawing up specific, targeted improvement plans that are informed by a thorough and accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

■ Improve pupils' behaviour and attendance, by:

- ensuring that pupils with poor attendance are helped to catch up on learning they have missed
- engaging more effectively with parents to reduce absence rates for those pupils who are persistently absent
- ensuring that pupils behave well and do not disturb others in lessons
- raising pupils' aspirations and skills so that they are effective learners and take greater interest and pride in their work.

The school should not make further appointments of newly qualified teachers.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have not focused closely enough on ensuring that pupils make the progress that they should from their starting points. Their evaluations of pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning have been too generous. Leaders do not use assessment information to secure a clear and accurate overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses to help inform action planning. Targets for improvement are not based on projections from pupils' starting points. Consequently, expectations of what pupils need to achieve have not been high enough. Pupils have not been helped to catch up and they continue to underachieve.
- Senior and middle leaders do not have an overview of standards and provision across the school. Senior leaders have not given subject leaders the time, training or support to carry out monitoring activities effectively. As a result, subject leaders' action plans are not focused sharply enough on addressing the barriers to pupils' learning. Actions to improve provision do not therefore have the necessary impact on accelerating pupils' progress and helping them catch up. The capacity of leaders to bring about improvements is not demonstrated.
- The impact of middle leaders on improving the quality of teaching and learning has been limited and not sustained over time. Teachers have received mixed messages about what they need to do to improve their teaching. They have often not had the right support because middle leaders lack the skills or subject knowledge to provide it. Middle and senior leaders have not always measured the impact of initiatives to make sure that training or support has made a difference. In addition, leaders have not used the performance management of staff to improve standards.
- The curriculum is not tailored to meet the needs of all pupils, especially the least and the most able. It does not help pupils develop basic literacy and numeracy skills. Consequently, pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, are not well prepared for secondary education. However, the curriculum does provide some meaningful learning opportunities that stimulate pupils' interest and engagement. For example, the recent visit to the Roman baths in Bath provided a contextual stimulus for pupils' learning. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about the trip and what they had learned.
- The school receives a substantial amount of pupil premium money. It has been used to help disadvantaged pupils to have access to wider life experiences and to support their inclusion in school. Overall, leaders do not spend this funding effectively. They do not focus enough on making sure that the different learning needs of disadvantaged pupils are met. As a result, this group of pupils continues to underachieve.
- Leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving. However, in the past the additional special educational needs funding has not been spent in a way that has led to improvements in progress for this group of pupils.
- Leaders use the primary school physical education and sports funding effectively to enhance opportunities for participation in a range of competitive sports. Rising numbers of pupils take part in sporting competitions run by the local sports

partnership. Pupils spoke very highly about competing in a recent girls' football competition. In addition, the school successfully increased pupils' participation rates by putting on an after-school club in archery.

- Pupils have a secure understanding of British values. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they believed in the rule of law because 'rules help us to get along together'. Pupils also understood the principle of fairness and ensuring everyone's views are heard and valued.
- Pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The majority of pupils have a sound understanding of right and wrong, tolerance and an understanding of different faiths and cultures. The school has successfully used the range of diverse cultures and beliefs in school to celebrate the uniqueness of the school community. Pupils spoke with pride about learning about the others in the school from different cultures, religions and countries. One pupil stated, 'There are lots of differences at our school and we think it's good to be different. We all have something to learn from each other.'

Governance of the school

- Governance is inadequate.
- Governors have not been effective in holding leaders to account for pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching.
- Governors have relied too much on the school's self-evaluation which takes too positive a view of the school's performance. Internal assessment information is inaccurate, and as a result governors have not been able to effectively measure the school's success. Governors have lacked training and support to improve their work in measuring and monitoring the school's success and in bringing about improvements.
- Governors have also received mixed messages about the school's effectiveness from recent external evaluations, some of which have been overgenerous. The local authority's recent evaluation was more realistic. Such conflicting information has made it difficult for the governing body to establish the true position of the school because governors lack the expertise to evaluate information accurately.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and governors have created a safe and nurturing culture in school. Staff and governors have received appropriate training and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's safety or welfare. The designated safeguarding leads have a good understanding of the school's responsibilities and keep records correctly. The school site is well maintained and secure.
- The vast majority of parents who spoke to inspectors or responded to the Ofsted parent questionnaire (Parent View) expressed confidence in the school's work to keep children safe. Pupils said that they feel safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have not acted swiftly enough to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers do not receive effective feedback on their performance. This is because the focus is not on what practice needs to improve but on compliance with school policies and procedures. This approach neglects to identify the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and outcomes.
- Difficulties in recruiting high-quality staff and retaining effective staff have led to significant staffing instability. This has had a negative impact on leaders' ability to sustain improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, the quality of teaching has not been good enough to accelerate pupils' progress over time to make up for previous underachievement.
- Teachers do not use assessment information effectively to identify the barriers to pupils' learning and to inform their planning. As a result, the work set for pupils is often not at the right level of challenge, especially for the least able and the most able. Consequently, differences in outcomes for different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are not diminishing. Teachers' expectations are too low.
- Teachers do not organise the curriculum effectively in order to meet the different learning needs of pupils. For example, in mathematics pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn strategies that will support them to reason or solve increasingly difficult problems.
- Teachers' feedback does not help pupils to correct mistakes or misconceptions, to deepen their understanding or to challenge pupils to extend their thinking or learning.
- The teaching of mathematics is not effective. Teachers do not support well enough pupils who find mathematics difficult, nor do they give enough attention to developing pupils' basic skills in number and calculation. Pupils do not have a secure understanding of the value of numbers and they struggle to explain the reasons for their answers. Inspectors' checks in pupils' books found that this weakness is widespread.
- Pupils are not taught to develop their writing skills successfully. The teaching of handwriting, and how to write in different styles, along with spelling, grammar and punctuation, is ineffective. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils should know and do.
- Pupils' reading and phonics skills are not developed well enough to enable them to read fluently and accurately. Pupils sometimes do not fully understand what they have read and this limits their progress and their ability to learn across the wider curriculum.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of how pupils will present their work. As a result, many pupils do not show enough pride in their work, their handwriting is poor and the layout of their work is messy. Many pupils do not push themselves because adults' expectations for them are not high enough. For example, some older pupils' writing targets in key stage 2 are those expected for pupils in key stage 1.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils do not have well developed, positive attitudes towards their learning. This is because leaders and teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils will know and do. As a result, pupils do not push themselves to improve their work to the highest standard and do not do well.
- The school keeps pupils safe and promotes their well-being. For example, the Change4Life programme promotes healthy eating and exercise which children say helps them to make good lifestyle choices. The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe from the dangers of digital media and pupils talk clearly about the risks and the advantages of using the internet and social media. The school works well with outside agencies to teach pupils about the risks of alcohol and drug abuse as part of the curriculum. Pupils develop positive relationships with the local police officers who work alongside pupils as adult readers. During this time, the police act as positive role models and show pupils how to resist the temptation to be unlawful or anti-social.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors were confident and self-assured. They said that they felt safe at school and knew how to judge risks to help keep themselves safe outside of school. Pupils were able to explain in detail the school's strategies to promote positive behaviour and the sanctions when pupils do not follow the rules. Pupils said that bullying is rare and adults deal with it effectively when it does happen.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Despite some recent improvements, attendance, including persistent absence, remains stubbornly low for a significant number of groups of pupils, especially for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have spent much of their time focusing on improving attendance because of the historic high absence figures. However, leaders' actions have been ineffective and there has not been sustained improvement in attendance over time.
- Exclusions remain high in particular for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's pastoral work has had some success recently in developing an effective nurture provision to meet the needs of pupils with challenging behaviours. Leaders are able to demonstrate recent successes in improving the behaviour of previously excluded pupils and show how their work has enabled the children to manage their behaviours more effectively, thus reducing their risk of further exclusion.
- When tasks are too easy or too hard for them, pupils lose interest, become disengaged from their learning and do not make the progress expected of them. They sometimes disturb the learning of others.
- In general, most pupils conduct themselves well around school. Pupils are courteous and show good manners towards each other and adults. For example, pupils playing on the new climbing frame held the rope for each other to help others onto the frame and

waited patiently to take turns using the equipment.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils are not making enough progress during their time in school. Work that does not match pupils' ability hinders their learning. As a result, many pupils do not reach the academic standards they should by the end of key stages 1 and 2. Results in national tests have been low for too long in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's assessments show that across all year groups, pupils currently in the school do not do as well as they should in reading, mathematics and especially in writing. Approximately two thirds of pupils are working below or significantly below the expectations for their age. Only a small minority of pupils in key stage 2 are working at age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's assessment information indicates that no pupils are working within the expectations for their age in writing in Years 3 and 6. The inspectors' review of pupils' work confirms this.
- School leaders have not done enough to raise standards at the end of key stage 1. In 2016, the unvalidated assessment results show that from pupils' prior starting points, significantly fewer pupils reached or exceeded the expected standard than those with similar starting points nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress is therefore too slow. No pupil achieved the expected standard in writing. The school was slow to identify concerns about the standard of pupils' work and did not act quickly to intervene to support these pupils.
- School leaders do not routinely check pupils' progress against their prior starting points. As a result, they cannot quickly identify pupils, and groups of pupils, who are falling behind their classmates. Leaders do not know how much progress pupils need to make in order to achieve age-related expectations. As a consequence, a large number of pupils are not making the progress expected of them and are not being well prepared for their next stage of education. They lack skills, knowledge and understanding in literacy and numeracy.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress they should because they are not given work that is sufficiently challenging for them. For example, inspectors heard a sample of key stage 2 most-able disadvantaged pupils read, and for the majority their current attainment in reading is well below what is expected for their age and what they are capable of. Outcomes for reading in the 2016 unvalidated assessments reflect this.
- The unvalidated results of tests and assessments in 2016 show that low- and middle-attaining disadvantaged pupils also underachieved in reading and writing. Inspectors found the same to be true for current work seen in pupils' books, especially in writing.
- Teachers do not make appropriate use of assessment information about pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make sure they match work to pupils' needs. As a result, this group of pupils underachieves in writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. This shows in the work seen in current pupils' workbooks.
- Pupils' progress in reading has not improved rapidly enough. Although the number is increasing, significantly fewer pupils than nationally reach the expected standard in the

year 1 phonics screening check. As a result, pupils lack the skills to help them read fluently. Pupils do not make the progress they need in reading by the end of key stage 1. They are ill-equipped to start key stage 2 because they cannot read well enough and their comprehension skills are poor.

- Poor reading and writing skills hinder pupils' access to the wider curriculum. As a result, pupils' standards of work are even lower in history and personal, social and health education than in English and mathematics.
- Teachers' assessments indicate that outcomes in science at the end of key stage 1 are above average and in key stage 2 are broadly average. However, the work in lessons and pupils' workbooks shows that pupils do not develop their scientific knowledge, skills and understanding effectively.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Leadership has not been effective. Leaders have not acted swiftly enough to bring about the improvements required from the previous inspection. Leaders' self-evaluation is not accurate. Provision in the early years is inadequate because leaders have not correctly identified what needs to be done to promote learning for a range of groups of children. As a result, children do not make as much progress as they could because teaching over time has not met their needs.
- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased each year for the past three years. However, progress has not been good enough because priorities for improvement have not focused sharply enough on raising achievement for groups of children. This is particularly the case for those who have the biggest gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding, especially boys, disadvantaged pupils, and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils have not secured the skills and knowledge in literacy and numeracy that they need to be well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching does not promote good learning. Teachers do not use assessment information effectively to tailor the curriculum to meet children's learning needs, especially for those children who have the biggest gaps in their literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers have only recently begun to plan from children's starting points. As a result, tasks are not always purposeful because teachers do not base them on a secure assessment of what children can do and need to learn next.
- Leaders do not use additional funding for disadvantaged children effectively to tailor the curriculum or teaching to meet their needs. These children do not make the rapid progress necessary to catch up to their non-disadvantaged peers or with other children nationally. Consequently, they are not prepared well enough for learning in Year 1 because their literacy and numeracy skills are not sufficiently well developed.
- Staff keep children safe and make sure that the statutory welfare requirements, including those for two-year-olds, are met. Adults and children have positive relationships and parents report that their children are happy to come to school. Parents said that staff were caring and approachable. However, parents do not

contribute to their child's learning as much as they could because staff do not draw on parents' knowledge or use them as partners in their child's learning.

- Children behave and conduct themselves well because adults have created a caring and supportive environment and have high expectations of behaviour. Routines, such as tidy up time, are well established and help children to develop good habits and responsible attitudes.

School details

Unique reference number	103927
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10020009

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Somerfield
Headteacher	Sandra Rex
Telephone number	0121 5560114
Website	www.holyheadprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@holyheadprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is part of the Wednesbury Learning Community Trust.
- The school runs a before-school breakfast club and after-school provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.
- Holyhead Primary School is smaller than most primary schools. Since the previous inspection the number of pupils on roll has been rising.
- The school is receiving support from a national leader of education from Harvills Hawthorn Primary School which is part of the Wednesbury Learning Community Trust.

- Approximately 40% of pupils are disadvantaged.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds within its early years and foundation stage.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 12 lessons or parts of lessons, including examples of teaching in every year group. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, staff and governors. The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority who monitors the school.
- The inspection team looked at pupils' workbooks in a range of subjects both from this academic year and last academic year to establish pupils' progress and the quality of their work over time.
- The inspection team talked to pupils during their lessons and at playtimes to find out their views about the school.
- The inspection team heard pupils read and observed their behaviour in lessons, around the school and at playtimes.
- Informal discussions were held with parents to gauge their views of the school. The inspection team took account of 38 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), including any free text comments that parents made during the inspection.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement, external monitoring reports, records of checks made by leaders and information on pupils' progress and outcomes. They also scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

John Demmerling, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kerri James	Ofsted Inspector

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