

Wilkes Green Infant School (NC)

Antrobus Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, West Midlands B21 9NT

Inspection dates

6–7 December 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders do not have rigorous systems in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's work. They have not taken the necessary actions to bring about the improvements identified at the previous inspection.
- The governing body is not effective. Governors do not have an informed view of the quality of teaching in school and how this affects pupils' outcomes. They do not challenge and support school leaders to bring about the required improvements.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate. Teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough. As a result, pupils, especially the most able, are not sufficiently challenged.
- Outcomes at the end of Year 2 are well below those seen nationally. Pupils' rates of progress are too slow in reading, writing and mathematics because the tasks they are given are not well matched to their abilities and needs.
- While phonics is now taught systematically across the school, the teaching of reading for understanding is less effective.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and apply reasoning in mathematics.
- The early years provision requires improvement because the outdoor environment is not used effectively to promote learning.
- Leaders do not have robust and accurate systems to assess pupils' progress. As a result, teachers do not have a secure understanding of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons requires improvement because, at times, they become disengaged and restless when tasks are not well matched to their ability.
- Despite the efforts of the school to improve attendance, the number of pupils who are absent or miss school regularly remains too high.

The school has the following strengths

- The school actively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- The school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe and secure are good.

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:
 - leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
 - there are robust systems in place for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work
 - school leaders make effective use of the assessment information they have to monitor pupils' outcomes and to hold teachers to account
 - governors have a clear and realistic view of the school's performance and fully undertake all their statutory duties
 - the approaches the school uses to promote the importance of good attendance are understood and followed by parents.
- Improve outcomes achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 by ensuring that:
 - pupils of all abilities are enabled to make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - disadvantaged pupils receive the necessary support to help them achieve in line with other pupils nationally
 - pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive support that is closely matched to their needs.
- Improve the quality of teaching so it is at least good by ensuring that teachers:
 - have high expectations of all pupils, especially the most able and the most able disadvantaged, and set appropriately challenging tasks
 - provide better opportunities for pupils to develop their spoken communication skills
 - develop pupils' thinking skills so that they reflect more deeply on their learning
 - develop pupils' comprehension skills so that they have a better understanding of what they have read
 - plan and deliver activities that allow pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to increasingly difficult problems.
- Improve the early years provision by developing the use of the outdoor classroom so that children are able to make independent choices and initiate their own learning.

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

- The systems that leaders use to evaluate the school's effectiveness lack rigour. Leaders have not taken action to deal with the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. As a result, pupils' outcomes are inadequate and there is too much teaching that is not effective.
- There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection. While this has hampered the leadership team in bringing about improvements, the actions that have been taken have not been effective in ensuring that pupils are consistently well taught. Many leaders are new in post and they are not all clear about their roles and responsibilities. Consequently, they have had little impact on pupils' outcomes to date.
- School systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have not been effective. As a result, leaders have not had a clear understanding of the outcomes of groups of pupils as they move through the school. This has meant that leaders have not been in a strong enough position to hold teachers to account for the attainment and progress of pupils. A new system is now in place, but leaders still do not have information about the current attainment and progress of groups of pupils within school. This lack of information results in a mismatch of activities and, in some cases, a lack of challenge for the most able pupils.
- Leaders have not established a cohesive approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching across the school. Observations of teaching and learning have resulted in reports that are not evaluative and do not identify clearly enough what needs to be improved. Areas identified as needing improvement have not always been followed up rigorously enough, although the leadership team has tackled some issues of inadequate teaching.
- The senior leadership team has a vision for the school but lacks the capacity to bring this about. The headteacher has not ensured that there has been a strategic and cohesive approach to school improvement. The school improvement plan is wide ranging but it is not specific enough in identifying exactly what actions need to be done and by when. The plan makes virtually no mention of the low outcomes of pupils compared with those of other pupils nationally and does not set clear targets and expectations for improvement.
- External support has not been as effective as it should have been. The local authority has not kept a close enough watch on the progress of this school or helped leaders to tackle issues quickly enough.
- The pupil premium funding has been used to employ staff to provide additional support to eligible pupils, including sessions to help the development of phonics skills and handwriting or to support pupils' emotional well-being. Additional resources have also been purchased, including a range of new books for the library to encourage the pupils to read for pleasure.

- Leaders use the physical education and sport premium funding effectively to increase pupils' participation in sport, create opportunities for competition with other schools in the Handsworth area and to support the development of teachers' subject knowledge. Additionally, fitness equipment and outdoor activities have been purchased for use at lunchtimes to encourage all pupils to become involved in more physical activity.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and mathematical skills across a range of different subjects. A new curriculum has recently been introduced in order to further develop pupils' creativity and make links between different subject areas. The school also provides pupils with a range of extra-curricular opportunities such as reading, mathematics and sports clubs, a new 'mad science' club and music lessons that enrich pupils' experiences.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Across the school, pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils learn about people from different cultural and religious backgrounds and are encouraged to show tolerance and respect. A 'hero of the week' is chosen by each class for actively demonstrating school values, and the children are acknowledged in celebration assemblies.
- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is inadequate.
- Despite the external review of governance that took place following the previous inspection, governors do not have a secure and informed view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There has been a considerable turnover of governors and a number of posts on the governing body are currently vacant. The chair of the governing body only took up the role very recently, on a temporary basis.
- The governing body does not offer sufficient challenge to school leaders in order to ensure school improvement. This is because governors do not have a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. They are almost completely reliant on the headteacher for all information. They have not had any training to support them in understanding the range of external assessment information that is available to them that would allow them to compare the school's performance with that of other schools nationally.
- Governors do not have a sufficiently secure understanding of the impact of the additional funding that the school receives on pupils' outcomes, including for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Governors do not fulfil all their statutory duties. For example, the performance management of the headteacher has not been undertaken for the last three years.
- Governors have a much stronger understanding of the school's systems for ensuring that pupils are safe, secure and well protected.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- This aspect of the school's work is well led and the strong safeguarding team, led by the deputy headteacher, ensures that safeguarding has a high priority. All staff have had appropriate training to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe and are clear about what they should do if they have any concerns. Records are of a high quality. Leaders have a good understanding of the specific safeguarding concerns that relate to the context of the school and are alert to issues, including children missing from education, extremism and radicalisation. They work well with external agencies and follow up where they feel agencies are slow to respond or do not provide necessary information. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know whom to talk to if they have any worries.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching across the school is too variable and, as a result, pupils in too many classes do not make enough progress. Since the last inspection, there have been many staffing changes and these have resulted in a lack of continuity of learning for some pupils. Leaders have worked with teachers and teaching assistants to introduce a common set of expectations to be used in all classrooms. However, due to the turnover in staff, these are not yet embedded. As a result, teaching remains inconsistent.
- Teachers do not have access to the robust assessment information that they need to identify individuals and groups of pupils who are at risk of falling behind or not making enough progress. As a result, teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of pupils and they do not set activities that allow the pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not secure. For example, a teacher was seen incorrectly modelling letter formation, while some teachers use incorrect grammar in their written feedback to pupils about their work. In mathematics, there was evidence in books that the teaching of three-dimensional shapes was inaccurate due to the use of two-dimensional images.
- Teachers do not use questioning skills effectively enough to support pupils' learning. They do not use strategies to encourage quieter or less confident pupils to take part, accepting answers that are shouted out, or from those pupils who demand their attention.
- Phonics is now taught systematically across the school and the majority of pupils are able to work out unfamiliar words. However, the teaching of reading for understanding is less strong and many pupils do not have the comprehension skills they need to make good progress. In recent weeks, leaders have introduced a new approach to the teaching of reading, particularly in Year 2, to support pupils to read for meaning. However, it is too soon to know whether this is effective.

- The most able Year 2 pupils read fluently and with expression. They read books matched to their ability, although they do not always understanding the meaning of the words that they read. The least able pupils do not readily apply the approaches they have been taught to help them read unfamiliar words.
- The work in pupils' books shows that many pupils have made little progress since the start of term, especially the most able. Teachers' expectations are often too low and many pupils are given tasks that are easily within their capabilities. This lack of expectation contributes to pupils becoming disengaged and losing interest in their lessons.
- Pupils sometimes sit passively and wait for others to finish. This slows the progress they are making. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils, who are regularly expected to wait for others in the class to complete a task before they can move on.
- Teachers do not always follow the school's policy for marking. This means that pupils make the same simple spelling and grammatical errors or write numbers incorrectly for longer than they should.
- Teachers do not always promote opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their spoken language. Teachers too often accept one-word answers rather than encouraging pupils to give a fuller answer, or do not give pupils sufficient time to think about their responses. This has an adverse impact on the language development of the considerable number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- In mathematics, teachers plan lessons to support a range of needs. However, their expectations are often too low and pupils are not given work at a level appropriate for their age. Pupils' number, problem-solving and reasoning skills are undeveloped. This limits the progress of all pupils, but especially the most able.
- Through the new, more creative curriculum, pupils write at length in a range of engaging contexts. As a result, pupils' use of vocabulary is improving. However, the range of punctuation used is often limited to full stops.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Attendance at school remains below the national average and the number of pupils who regularly miss school is too high. Leaders track attendance carefully and promptly follow up any absence. They are alert to the possibility of children going missing from education and work with external agencies to minimise any risk. Leaders are now actively working with parents to promote attendance and ensure that they are aware of the importance of ensuring that their children come to school regularly and on time. Pupils are also more aware of this, as attendance figures are displayed in each classroom.

- Pupils are given opportunities to take on responsibilities such as those of peer mentors or buddies and representing their class on the school council. Recently, all the pupils were involved in a cultural day, linked to the celebration of Diwali, including Indian dance, drumming and Rangoli art. Pupils also took part in Black History Month and celebrated Chinese New Year with a parent-led assembly.
- Pupils report feeling safe in school and are clear about whom they can speak to if they have any worries. They know about keeping themselves safe, for example when using the internet. While pupils identified some unkind behaviour, they were clear that incidents of bullying were rare and would be dealt with by the teachers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Most pupils behave appropriately in lessons. However, inspectors observed some pupils becoming disengaged and drifting off task in lessons, usually when the work was not challenging enough for them. This has a direct impact on the amount of progress they make.
- At breaktimes and lunchtimes, behaviour is good and pupils are well supervised.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Children enter the school with skills and knowledge that are below, and sometimes well below, those that are typical for their age. In particular, children have underdeveloped speech and language skills.
- Pupils' progress by the end of key stage 1, regardless of their ability, was significantly below that of their peers nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Provisional assessment information for 2016 indicates that pupils in Year 2 achieved outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics that were well below those seen nationally. Too few of the most able pupils achieved the higher standards of attainment.
- Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes were similar to those of other pupils in school but both were low compared with those of other pupils nationally.
- Almost two thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language. There was no significant difference in outcomes between different groups of pupils including those from different ethnic backgrounds or boys and girls.
- Outcomes in the 2016 phonics screening check were in line with those seen nationally. This was an improvement on 2015, and reflects the more effective systematic teaching of phonics now in place across the school.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities varies. There is some good support for individual pupils, but work does not always match their ability or needs. Outcomes in the 2016 phonics screening check for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were above those seen nationally.

- A lack of robust assessment information meant that leaders were unable to show the progress pupils had made over the previous academic year. Assessment information for current pupils does not yet provide convincing evidence that their progress and attainment are improving.
- Evidence gathered during the inspection, including from a scrutiny of pupils' work and learning in lessons, indicates that many pupils, especially the most able pupils, currently in school have made little progress since the start of term.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement because there is a lack of consistently good teaching across all classes. Teachers and other staff do not consistently plan and teach tasks that are matched accurately to the needs of the children. This means that some children, especially the most able, are not being sufficiently challenged. Where learning is more effective, activities stimulate children's interest and provide them with opportunities to develop their language skills. However, in some cases, activities are not set at the right level and are too easy for some children and too difficult for others.
- The two recently appointed early years leaders are developing an understanding of the priorities for improvement but have yet to establish a clear approach to promoting progression across the key stage. They are not using assessment information consistently well to improve teaching or to address the needs of specific groups of children.
- In both Nursery and Reception classes, the indoor learning environment supports the different areas of learning and children are able to choose from a range of activities. Adults support the children effectively and model the use of language well. However, across the early years provision, the use of the outdoor environment is limited and children do not have enough opportunities to make choices, and this limits their physical and personal development.
- Links with parents are being developed and this has supported the transfer of information between home and school. The majority of children settle quickly and parents are positive about their child's start to school. The school has introduced a new approach to recording children's progress and the leaders are developing ways in which this can be shared effectively with parents.
- Children are safe and staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues. The children are encouraged to eat healthily and have clear routines. All statutory welfare requirements are met.
- In 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development increased and was closer to national outcomes, although still some way below. The majority of children left the early years ready for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	103308
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10019997

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Ingram
Headteacher	Heather Brookes
Telephone number	0121 5541104
Website	www.wilkgrni.bham.sch.uk
Email address	enquiry@wilkgrni.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website about the allocation of the pupil premium funding for the current academic year and its impact on pupils' outcomes in the previous academic year.
- The headteacher was in post at the time of the last inspection. There have been significant changes in staffing, with eight members of staff leaving at the end of the summer term 2016. There are currently two classes being taught by temporary teachers. New leadership structures have been in place since September 2016.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has been supported by the Birmingham Education Partnership and St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy and Nursery.
- This is a larger than average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.

- Almost all pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost two thirds of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with average.
- A small number of pupils attend the school's breakfast club. This provides a safe and caring environment and helps pupils make a positive start to the school day.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 16 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also made additional short visits to most classrooms to gather evidence on particular aspects of the curriculum or pupils' learning.
- Inspectors met with pupils and listened to pupils read. They looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils formally and informally. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, lunchtime and around school, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with two representatives from the teaching school providing external support and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. The lead inspector also met with three governors, including the acting chair of the governing body.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans; the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance; minutes of meetings of the governing body; and information relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through the 42 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to parents on the morning of the first day of the inspection and considered three free-text responses from parents. The 22 responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Adam Hewett	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rowena Green	Ofsted Inspector
Anna Smith	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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