

# Helme Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School

Helme, Meltham, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire HD9 5RW

## Inspection dates

18–19 January 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Inadequate</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Inadequate</b>
Early years provision	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Leadership has been ineffective in preventing the decline in standards and progress.
- Assessment information has not accurately identified pupils who are falling behind.
- Senior and middle leaders do not check and evaluate the progress of all groups of pupils well enough to ensure that they are making the necessary progress.
- The school is not accurate in its self-evaluation. As a result, plans for improvement do not prioritise the weaknesses well enough.
- The governing body has not challenged leaders or held them sufficiently to account for pupils' progress. Consequently, most groups of pupils have made inadequate progress.
- While there have been some recent improvements, leaders and governors are not presently demonstrating the capacity to rapidly improve outcomes for pupils.
- Teachers do not always provide enough challenge, including for the most able pupils. As a result, current pupils are not making fast enough progress, particularly in writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not receive the support they need to make good progress from their starting points.
- Weak leadership of early years means that children do not make enough progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- The staff team work together to maintain a strong safeguarding culture where pupils are safe and feel safe.
- Attendance for all groups is above average.
- Pupils' courtesy and good behaviour contribute to a harmonious school community.

## 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, including governance by ensuring that:
  - assessments of pupils' learning are accurate and are used rigorously to check progress and to quickly identify those who are at risk of falling behind
  - leaders' plans for improvement are sharply focused on raising pupils' outcomes
  - leaders carefully evaluate how additional funding is used so that effective plans are put in place to help pupils make better progress, especially disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - leadership capacity is strengthened so that senior and middle leaders have the skills to monitor and evaluate their areas of responsibility and contribute strongly to school improvement
  - leaders' checks on teaching pay greater attention to the progress that all groups of pupils are making in relation to their starting points
  - the governing body has sufficient and accurate information to provide robust challenge and to hold senior leaders to account effectively.
- Urgently improve teaching in all key stages so that it is consistently good over time by ensuring that:
  - teachers have high expectations of what all groups of pupils can achieve
  - teachers use assessment information to match learning appropriately to meet the needs of pupils from their different starting points
  - all teachers make more effective use of additional adults to support the learning and progress of identified pupils
  - successful teaching strategies are more frequently shared and used to improve teaching across school
  - teachers acquire the essential subject knowledge to improve outcomes in phonics and writing.
- Rapidly improve outcomes for all groups of pupils at every key stage to make sure that they are at least good by:
  - accelerating pupil progress and diminishing differences between all pupils compared with other pupils nationally with the same starting points, including the

most able.

- Improve the provision and outcomes in the early years for all children by making sure that:
  - leaders have the knowledge and skills to identify what improvements must be made to raise children’s achievement
  - assessment information is used to set targets which are suitably challenging to enable children to make the necessary progress.

An external review of the school’s use of pupil premium funding 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

- Over time, leaders and governors have been too slow to halt the decline in standards.
- Leaders have had an inaccurate view of some of the school's weaknesses and have not responded quickly or effectively enough to address the known weaknesses. Leaders' self-evaluation does not show high enough expectations and uses a culture of excuses to explain poor pupil outcomes.
- The school improvement plan and performance management targets lack precision in relation to school development priorities and are ineffective in bringing about the rapid improvements needed.
- Checks on teaching and learning are overly positive and do not focus on the outcomes of pupil groups such as those who are most able, disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders do not routinely identify staff training needs based on what is helping or hindering pupils' learning or where subject knowledge is weaker.
- Senior and middle leaders are not being held to account well enough for their areas of responsibility, which means that they are ineffective in improving outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders have not suitably evaluated the use of the extra funding to support disadvantaged pupils or analysed its impact on the attainment and progress of this group of pupils.
- External support provided by the local authority through a local leader of education has not had the desired impact in bringing about the rapid improvements needed. Additional support for the school has recently been arranged and is due to begin soon.
- The acting headteacher understands the school's urgent priorities, but he has only been in this role for a very short time and so is yet to demonstrate the impact of his work. He has quickly introduced a target-setting system that is starting to provide governors and teachers with clearer information about pupil progress.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of learning opportunities both within and beyond the school day. The themes studied interest pupils in their learning and the design and content support pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development very well. However, it is not effective in helping pupils to acquire new knowledge and to develop skills at a level which will challenge them to think more deeply.
- The physical education (PE) and sports funding for primary schools is used well to develop teachers' skills and to provide a wide range of sporting opportunities both in PE lessons and after school. This has led to increased participation, success in local and regional sporting competitions and pupils' sound understanding of how to keep fit and healthy.
- The school has adopted the Olympic and Paralympic values as their school values. Pupils understand these well and live them in action, demonstrating tolerance, respect and cooperation with each other. Displays and assemblies proudly celebrate pupils'

achievements.

- The lead inspector is of the opinion that the school may appoint newly qualified teachers (NQTs) when staff vacancies arise.

### **Governance of the school**

- Until very recently governors had an overgenerous view of the school's performance and have simply accepted leaders' evaluations. Governors have since had frank discussions with a representative from the local authority and are now acutely aware of the decline in standards. They have recently received training from the local authority to support them in understanding the school's data so they are better able to fulfil their responsibilities with regard to providing robust challenge and strategic direction for the school.
- Governors have not made sure that the school's use of the pupil premium has improved achievement for disadvantaged pupils. This is also the case for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say they are able to talk to staff about any worries they have. Staff feel secure about safeguarding procedures due to the induction and continued training they receive. They know the school's procedures for making a referral if they have a concern about a pupil, and follow them appropriately. School documentation shows that leaders promptly follow up concerns and there is liaison with external agencies when necessary to protect children from further harm.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Inadequate**

- Over time the impact of teaching and assessment on pupils' learning has been inadequate. The standards pupils reach based on their starting points are too low. The current rates of progress remain too slow for pupils to catch up quickly.
- Assessment information has not been suitably focused or accurate enough to provide meaningful data for teachers. As a result, teachers do not always appropriately match activities to pupils' precise learning needs with an awareness of pupils' starting points, current performance and end of key stage targets.
- Teaching is not quickly eradicating the gaps in pupils' knowledge and maximising progress for all pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Training for teachers has not focused on developing the necessary subject knowledge to improve pupils' progress, for example in phonics and writing. Where the teaching of writing is at a higher standard, there is not enough opportunity for this to be shared with other teachers.
- Teachers do not consistently use questioning to gauge pupils' understanding and then adapt their teaching accordingly. Where questioning is used to good effect, teaching is sharply targeted and moves pupils' learning on more quickly.

- Teachers do not use additional adults effectively. Opportunities to provide further challenge or to check pupils' grasp of the learning in order to address any misconceptions are often lost.
- The teaching of phonics is not developing children's skills quickly enough. Teaching lacks the pace needed to enable pupils to become proficient in using and applying the new sounds they have acquired.
- Pupils appreciate the feedback that they receive from teachers. They told the inspector that by assessing their own work and responding to feedback from staff they are able to keep improving.
- Some creative teaching in Year 5 and 6 captures pupils' interest and is supported by strong subject knowledge. As a result, the pace of learning is quicker and pupils are making better gains with their learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils concentrate well on their activities in class. They take pride in the work they produce and show interest and enthusiasm in their learning. For example, pupils arriving at school were keen to share their volcano homework projects as they brought them into school.
- The curriculum stimulates pupils' interest and is successful in developing their confidence, for example through the range of activities planned, such as the Year 5 and 6 pupils who were developing their leadership and organisational skills while making films as part of an English project.
- Pupils have developed a strong sense of right and wrong and are very tolerant of differences. They can clearly articulate what equality and fairness mean to them.
- The wide range of extra-curricular sport helps pupils increase their physical health and learn about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunity to take responsibilities such as being play leaders at break and lunchtime. They are cooperative and supportive of each other. They say that it is lovely being part of a small school because everyone knows all the other pupils and staff know every pupil, which makes them feel safe.
- Pupils know how to respond if someone is unkind to them and say that bullying does happen occasionally but they know they can trust the teachers to put a stop to it. They understand about different forms of bullying, such as cyber bullying, and know how to stay safe on the internet.
- Parents on the whole are very positive about the school, particularly regarding pupils' personal development. They say how their children are well cared for and supported by staff to become confident individuals.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are respectful and well-mannered as they move around the building and in lessons. They conduct themselves with high standards of behaviour and talk about how the school values help them to be tolerant of others and treat each other with respect. Pupils earn rainbow awards by demonstrating the values in action and these are successful in raising pupils' awareness of the school's values and celebrating pupils' success and achievements.
- Pupils say that although there are only a small number of occasions when pupils make the incorrect behaviour choices, an adult will always sensitively remind them of the expectations and they soon get back on track.
- Attendance is above average for all pupil groups and only a very small minority of pupils are regularly absent from school.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Inadequate

- Progress is consistently low in a range of subjects and across key stages over time. Standards have fallen since the school was last inspected.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2 was well below the national average in 2016, with reading and writing in the bottom 5% of schools nationally.
- Progress in writing has continually declined for a number of years throughout the school. The school's own assessment information confirms that this has not improved for current pupils.
- By the end of key stage 1 in 2016, pupils did not make enough progress from their starting points in writing or in mathematics.
- Outcomes in phonics at the end of Year 1 have been below the national average for the last two years. By the end of Year 2, however, pupils have caught up and the proportion meeting the standard is above the national average. Phonics assessment information was not available for current Year 1 pupils so it is not possible for leaders to check the proportion who are on track to meet the standard later this year.
- The tracking and analysis of the achievement of different pupil groups is not focused precisely on pupils' starting points, progress and attainment. As a result, the information is not used to identify whether pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making sufficient progress.
- Most-able pupils are not making enough progress. This is because teachers are not challenging them sufficiently during lessons, and expectations for them are too low in some year groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils are not catching up. Their progress is too slow because the pupil premium funding is not being used well enough to provide targeted support to meet their needs.
- The progress for current Year 5 and 6 pupils has recently improved. However, a legacy of underachievement for these pupils means that there is still a significant amount of

progress needed for them to catch up to where they should be.

- Displays around the school demonstrate examples of high-quality work produced by pupils across a range of curriculum subjects.

## Early years provision

## Inadequate

- Leadership in early years is inadequate. An action plan to improve outcomes in early years was not available during the inspection. There is currently insufficient leadership capacity to develop provision and improve outcomes in early years.
- Progress is too slow during Reception and this sets the pace of learning and the limited expectations that continue throughout most parts of school. Despite strong starting points, only 58% of children reached a good level of development in 2016. This is significantly below the national average. As a consequence, many children at the end of Reception are not ready for the expectations in key stage 1.
- Assessment information shows that nearly all children enter Reception with skills that are at least typical for their age. Some enter with skills beyond what is typical for their age and these children do not always make enough progress by the end of the year.
- Leaders and teachers do not use assessment information to set appropriately challenging targets for children. For example, the target of 70% for 2017 is not ambitious enough for some children, especially the most and least able, to make even the expected level of progress based on their starting points.
- The use of pupil premium funding is not targeted to improve outcomes for these disadvantaged children, and leaders are consequently unable to evaluate its impact.
- Staff model spoken language well and this supports children's vocabulary development when they work alongside an adult. However, language, including the written word, does not feature strongly enough in the learning environment to support children's reading.
- Partnership with parents begins before children start school and involves home visits and information meetings. Plans are uploaded to the school's website each week and parents appreciate finding out what children are learning. As a result, parents are well informed about what their child is learning at school.
- Children have good attitudes to learning and enjoy the activities and interactions with staff. The outdoor area offers a range of opportunities for learning and development. One group thoroughly enjoyed filling bags of different size with sand and describing which felt heavier or lighter. Children are also confident to talk about their learning with each other, for example when finding the difference between two numbers using cubes.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Staff ensure that children are well supervised and safe and the statutory welfare requirements are met.



## School details

Unique reference number	107746
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10003358

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body/Local authority
Chair	Reverend Dennis Shields
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Dempster
Telephone number	01484 222607
Website	<a href="http://www.helmeschool.com">www.helmeschool.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office.helme@edukirklees.net">office.helme@edukirklees.net</a>
Date of previous inspection	2–3 November 2011

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of specified information on its website about pupil premium spending.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British, with a small number from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below

the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has just arranged the support of a local leader of education and a national leader of governance.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was absent from work. Two teachers have joined the school since the last inspection and one is on maternity leave at present. Two out of the five classes are currently being taught by temporary teachers.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in every class. The observations were undertaken jointly with the acting headteacher. The inspector listened to pupils read, talked to pupils about their school and evaluated the quality of work in a sample of pupils' books.
- The inspector held meetings with the acting headteacher, a representative from the local authority and five representatives of the governing body. The inspectors also discussed the school's work with the early years teacher and the leader of English. Discussions took place with teachers and support staff about the help and development they receive.
- A range of documentation was considered, including the school's self-evaluation; records of the monitoring of teaching and learning; the school improvement plan; the school's performance and target-setting information; external support records; information relating to the attendance and behaviour of pupils; and safeguarding and child protection records. Documents outlining the arrangements for the use of pupil premium and sports funding were also considered.
- The inspector spoke to parents both formally and informally at the start of the school day and took account of the 25 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Nine responses to the staff questionnaire and 18 responses to the pupil questionnaire were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Kirsty Godfrey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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