

Tonge Moor Primary School

Brierwood, Tonge Moor, Bolton, Lancashire BL2 2PF

Inspection dates

16–17 March 2017

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have failed to address adequately the deterioration in the school's effectiveness since its last inspection. The school's performance in all key areas has declined.
- Standards are inadequate across key stages 1 and 2. There are significant weaknesses in pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. In 2016, less than one in five pupils left the school with skills and knowledge at the standard expected for their age.
- The curriculum content for many subjects, including science, history and art, is poorly planned and lacks breadth and balance. As a result, pupils' progress in these subjects is weak and they are not prepared adequately for life in modern Britain.
- Middle leaders do not have sufficient knowledge and experience to bring about the rapid improvements that the school requires. The impact of middle leadership is limited.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate. Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to inform their planning, and so work is not consistently matched to pupils' learning needs. In many classes, teachers' expectations of pupils' capabilities are too low.
- Spelling and handwriting are not taught well. As a result, pupils regularly misspell simple words and their work is often poorly presented.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. Too many pupils, particularly boys, become distracted and silly when they find their learning uninteresting. Rates of exclusion have been well above average for a number of years and are only slowly reducing.
- Too many pupils are absent from school regularly, and this has a negative impact on their learning.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Children do not have sufficient access to writing and number activities when choosing their own learning. The outdoor environment is not consistently well used to promote learning across different areas.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has correctly identified the scale of improvements required and has secured the support of governors and staff.
- There are signs that work to improve outcomes in mathematics and for disadvantaged pupils is beginning to pay off.

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 quality of teaching in order to rapidly accelerate pupils' rates of progress and raise standards by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils should be achieving across the curriculum
 - ensuring that teachers make better use of assessment information so that they plan activities that meet pupils' different learning needs
 - ensuring that learning time in lessons is not lost and pupils' learning is not unnecessarily interrupted
 - ensuring that teachers plan lessons that pupils, particularly boys, find engaging and challenging
 - ensuring that handwriting and spelling are taught effectively in order to reduce the number of spelling errors in pupils' work and improve standards of presentation.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and prepares pupils appropriately for life in modern Britain
 - developing the skills and knowledge of middle leaders, including subject leaders, so that they are able to monitor standards and drive improvements within their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that the school's new assessment system is used consistently well by teachers and leaders to identify and address areas of weaker performance.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - reducing the proportion of pupils regularly missing school so that rates of attendance improve to be at least in line with the national average
 - continuing to work to improve provision for pupils at risk of exclusion and so reduce exclusion rates.
- Improve provision in the early years by:
 - providing children with more access to activities that develop their writing and mathematical skills
 - when using the outdoor space, making consistently effective use of the area to develop and enhance children's learning across a range of areas.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- In the time since the school's last inspection, leaders and governors have been unable to stop a significant drop in the quality of education provided. They have failed to ensure that the school has kept pace with changes to the curriculum and assessment, and this has contributed to a marked decline in outcomes for pupils, which are now inadequate.
- Leaders have not ensured that the good quality of teaching seen at the last inspection has been maintained. Inadequacies in the school's assessment procedures, and in teachers' use of assessment information, have led to a decline in the effectiveness of teaching.
- The curriculum in key stages 1 and 2 fails to prepare pupils properly for the next stage of their education. Work in pupils' books shows that the progress of the majority of current pupils is too slow. It also highlights that the curriculum is not suitably broad and balanced, and that teaching in subjects such as science, history and geography is highly inconsistent and typically lacks challenge. Activities in these subjects are frequently used as a vehicle for further English teaching, such as science lessons being used to teach aspects of grammar. Where this is the case, pupils' scientific learning is significantly lessened.
- The narrowness of the curriculum has a negative impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are some strengths in this provision, such as in pupils' learning about different religions and the respect that this encourages pupils to have for people's differences. However, pupils' restricted access to a broader curriculum hinders their development, while their understanding of fundamental British values is limited. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2015, and many other leaders in the school have taken up their posts since then. A number of leaders have only been in their current roles for a matter of weeks, and some leadership positions, such as for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are currently filled on a temporary basis. Capacity to improve is weak. Many leaders do not have the knowledge and experience needed to effect the required rapid change in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- The leader responsible for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has worked in the school for less than two terms. She is bringing greater consistency to provision for these pupils and has ensured that targeted support is now in place to support their individual needs. However, it is too early to judge whether these changes have had a significant impact on outcomes for pupils and therefore represent more effective use of the school's additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The headteacher and governors are working hard to tackle weaknesses in teaching. Current arrangements for teacher appraisal show that teachers are being held more closely to account for pupils' progress. The headteacher has also ensured that staff now have greater access to professional development opportunities, but much of the recent staff training is yet to be fully embedded in improved practice.

- Pupil premium money has been used to provide additional academic and pastoral support for disadvantaged pupils. The school has identified a number of barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils often face, and has targeted funding accordingly. For example, subsidised places in breakfast club are offered and additional small-group support sessions arranged. This is having a positive impact in school, where disadvantaged pupils are regularly achieving at least as well as their classmates. However, gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally are still too wide.
- Leaders make good use of the additional funding for primary physical education and sport. Pupils benefit from specialist sports coaching while funding is also used to develop teachers' skills and confidence in delivering physical education. The school has a tradition of successfully competing in local sporting events.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead with drive and passion, and are getting to grips with the school's complex and challenging position. They are aware of the scale of improvements required and have secured the support and trust of staff and the large majority of parents.
- The local authority has provided the school with an increasing level of support over recent years, and the headteacher has been proactive in bringing in further support from external consultants. Reviews of governance and the use of pupil premium funding have both been carried out, and there are positive signs that their findings are beginning to bring about positive change. However, the overall impact of support has been insufficient to halt the decline in the school's fortunes.

Governance of the school

- Until recently, the governing body has not been fully effective in holding school leaders to account for the quality of education in the school. As a result, the school is having to make up lost ground caused by delays in fully implementing a suitable assessment system and curriculum changes. Where governors have raised questions or concerns, these have not consistently been followed up rigorously. As a consequence, the governing body has not tackled the decline in the school's performance effectively.
- Governors have recognised their own weaknesses and instigated a review of governance. This has led to governors becoming more involved in the everyday life of the school and there are signs that they are beginning to provide more challenge to school leaders. However, any improvements have not yet had a significant impact on the school's overall performance.
- Governors have been effective in ensuring that the school site is secure and well maintained. External fencing, an electronic signing-in system for visitors and security codes on doors all help to ensure that staff and pupils are safe in school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is given a high priority by the school. Staff and governors all receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge is up to date. Checks are carried out diligently to ensure that staff, governors and volunteers are suitable people to work

with children.

- Staff know what to do if they are worried about a pupil's well-being. Records confirm that any concerns raised are conscientiously followed up. The school has established good partnerships with external agencies to ensure that support is put in place to help the most vulnerable pupils and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teaching, learning and assessment are weak across key stages 1 and 2 in a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils make poor progress and too few reach the standards expected for their age. This means that pupils are not adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school was slow to introduce changes to the curriculum and to its systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, pupils were ill-prepared for the expectations of the revised curriculum, and standards fell. The school has now introduced an appropriate assessment system, but this is not being effectively used by all staff and consequently activities that are planned do not consistently meet pupils' different learning needs.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are typically too low. This is particularly noticeable in writing, where pupils currently in the school are not making the rapid progress needed for them to make up lost ground. Teachers do not consistently challenge pupils to use more complex language, and are too ready to accept poor handwriting and careless errors, particularly in spelling.
- The teaching of phonics and reading has been weak for some time. This can be seen in the declining results in the phonics check in Year 1 over the last three years. Over the same period, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 has been below average. The approach to teaching reading is fragmented, with individuals and groups of pupils often being withdrawn from English and mathematics lessons at inappropriate times to take part in reading sessions, interrupting both their learning and that of their classmates.
- Teachers are inconsistent in their use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding and move learning on in key stages 1 and 2. During the inspection, in some classes, teachers used questions very effectively to check what pupils already knew so that they could then build on that knowledge. In others, teachers' questions were more general and less effective at identifying what pupils' learning needs were.
- In mathematics, teachers are beginning to find an appropriate balance between developing pupils' mathematical skills and providing them with opportunities to apply these skills to solving problems. As a result, progress in mathematics is starting to accelerate in some classes, although there are marked inconsistencies across the school. However, teachers do not consistently spot and address pupils' mathematical mistakes and misconceptions, and opportunities to stretch and challenge the most able pupils are often missed.
- While the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate overall, there are pockets of stronger practice. Teaching in the early years, although not consistently good, is improving. In some classes in key stages 1 and 2, teaching is having a more

positive impact on pupils' progress. There are examples of effective support being given to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and to newly arrived pupils. However, the quality and effectiveness of this support is also variable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are supportive of each other and those who are relatively recent arrivals in the country say that they are happy and have been made to feel welcome. Relationships between staff and pupils are typically warm and positive.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is effective. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They recognise the potential dangers of using the internet and know not to share personal information online. Pupils also say that they feel safe in school because of work about safety that they have covered, including visits from the transport police and fire service.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different types of bullying, including homophobic and racist bullying, and know that all kinds of bullying are wrong. Pupils say that bullying in their school is rare and that staff deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The majority of pupils behave sensibly in lessons. However, some pupils, particularly groups of boys, become distracted and engage in silly behaviour when they find work to be uninteresting. This is because pupils have not developed wholly positive attitudes to learning during their time in school.
- Over time, attendance rates have been consistently below average, and the proportion of pupils classified as being 'persistent absentees' is typically double that found nationally. Too many pupils miss school regularly, and this has a negative impact on their progress and attainment.
- In recent years, rates of exclusion at the school have been consistently significantly higher than the national average and some pupils have been excluded from school for a number of fixed-term periods. While school works hard to manage and support pupils' individual behavioural needs, until very recently this work has not been successful in reducing the number of regular exclusions.
- Pupils' conduct around school and on the playground is typically good. Outside, pupils play well together and enjoy using the wide range of playground equipment provided for them. They are sensible when moving between the school's different buildings, for example when going to have lunch.
- Pupils are well-mannered and friendly. They hold doors open for visitors politely, and were happy to show their work to and talk to inspectors.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The attainment and progress of pupils at the end of key stage 2 have declined markedly since the previous inspection. In 2016, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading and mathematics were well below the national average. Overall, less than one in five pupils left Year 6 in 2016 having reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, and thus few were adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' books, and the school's tracking data, show that the situation for pupils currently in the school is equally poor. For pupils in Year 6, while attainment in mathematics and reading is beginning to improve, outcomes in writing are weak. There are significant weaknesses in pupils' written work across the school as pupils make many basic errors in spelling and punctuation.
- The school's assessment data shows that fewer than half of the pupils in the school are currently working at the level expected for their age in reading, writing or mathematics. This is confirmed by the work that inspectors saw in pupils' books and around school, which also showed that there are significant inconsistencies in outcomes between different classes. While some pupils are making better than the expected amount of progress and are catching up, an equal number are making slower progress and are dropping back.
- In reading, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2 has been consistently below the national average. In 2016 in key stage 1, very few pupils who were working below the expected level at the end of early years were able to catch up. Pupils' performance in the national phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils has also been declining each year and is now well below the national average.
- Standards in mathematics in key stage 1 in recent years have also been consistently below the national average because too few pupils make better than expected progress from their different starting points. Attainment in mathematics in key stage 2 has declined recently. These weaknesses in mathematics have been partly caused by the slow introduction of the updated mathematics curriculum. There are signs in some classes that performance in mathematics is beginning to improve, but these improvements vary between year groups.
- Few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment by the end of key stage 2. This is because even the most able pupils make too many unnecessary errors in their written work and have gaps in their mathematical knowledge, or are unable to apply that knowledge when solving written problems.
- The school's tracking information and the work of pupils currently in the school show that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making steady progress, but not enough to enable them to catch up with their peers. The leader with responsibility for special educational needs is ensuring that there is greater consistency in provision for these pupils, but systems have not been in place long enough to evaluate any additional impact on pupil outcomes.
- There are some early signs of improvement in the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils. The headteacher instigated a review of the use of pupil premium spending soon after she arrived, and has brought a sharper focus on the spending of

this additional funding. School data shows that disadvantaged pupils are now regularly achieving at least as well as their peers across the school. However, there are still significant gaps in their performance compared with other pupils nationally.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter early years with a level of skills and knowledge that is below typical for their age. Many children have particularly underdeveloped skills in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics.
- From their different starting points, children typically make expected rather than rapid progress, and by the time they leave Reception class the majority have not achieved the good level of development required. Records of children's learning show that most children's attainment is lower in mathematics, reading and writing than in the other areas of learning. While children benefit from taking part in focused mathematics and English sessions led by teachers and teaching assistants, there are too few opportunities for them to further develop their learning in these areas when choosing activities for themselves.
- The Nursery and Reception classrooms provide bright and welcoming environments in which the children can learn. Children are able to access activities across the different areas of learning and quickly develop the confidence to make their own choices. The outdoor area provides children with different learning choices, including a large digging area and access to sand and water play. However, leaders acknowledge that there is more to be done to develop the outdoor area so that its potential as an environment for learning is maximised.
- Staff assess children's development accurately and gather a good range of evidence to support their views of children's progress and attainment. The effectiveness of how this information is used is currently variable, and the next steps for children's learning are not consistently identified. This is one of the reasons why children are currently not making faster progress.
- Additional funding has been used to put additional support in place for disadvantaged pupils. Evidence shows that these interventions are starting to have a positive impact on these children's progress and more are catching up from their starting points.
- The leader currently responsible for early years is knowledgeable and experienced. She has begun to ensure that the early years team work more closely together and has identified further development of the outdoor area and the provision of activities that children choose for themselves as key areas for improvement. Leaders have ensured that all statutory welfare requirements for early years are met.
- Relationships between home and school are positive, and parents are encouraged to come into early years to see their children's work or take part in workshop activities. Parents are supportive of the early years staff and feel that they are approachable and helpful.
- Children behave well in the early years. They learn to share toys and play with other children because staff model these actions effectively. Staff care for the children well and children clearly trust and are comfortable with different members of staff. Nursery and Reception provide children with a nurturing start to their time at Tonge Moor.

School details

Unique reference number	105164
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10024376

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	384
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Scowcroft
Headteacher	Joanna Riley
Telephone number	01204 333755
Website	www.tonge-moor.bolton.sch.uk
Email address	office@tonge-moor.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 March 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- In 2016 the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for achievement in Year 6.
- In the early years children attend Nursery provision part time. Children in Reception class attend on a full-time basis.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school runs daily breakfast and after-school clubs.

- The proportion of pupils leaving or joining the school at times other than the beginning or end of the school year is higher than in most schools nationally. An increasing number of these pupils are new arrivals from abroad, many of whom are at an early stage of learning English.
- The overall proportion of pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons, year groups and subjects. On the first day of the inspection a number of visits to classes were conducted jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in books, records of children's learning in the early years and other information about pupils' attainment and progress, including the school's own current assessment information.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with two groups of pupils. Inspectors also talked informally with pupils around the school and in the playground.
- Inspectors took account of six free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and also spoke with a number of parents before the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered 21 responses to Ofsted's staff survey, and five responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with six governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for teaching and learning, English and mathematics, for provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, for pastoral support and for children in the early years.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority and held a telephone conversation on the second day of the inspection with another representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's reviews of its own performance and checks on the quality of teaching and development plans. Inspectors also examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

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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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