

Clarksfield Primary School

Grasmere Road, Clarksfield, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL4 1NG

Inspection dates

17–18 May 2017

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception Year is unsafe. Welfare requirements are not met. Children's abilities are inaccurately assessed on entry. They make inadequate progress due to a bland curriculum and poor-quality teaching.
- Outcomes are inadequate. Standards at key stage 2 are consistently well below the national average. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development in Reception is well below the national average.
- The quality of teaching over time is inadequate. While there are examples of stronger teaching in school, there is too much variability and inequality in the quality of teaching pupils receive.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make inadequate progress because their learning needs are not met.
- Attendance has declined and is below the national average. Too many younger children do not attend school regularly.
- Safeguarding is ineffective. Procedures for visitors gaining entry to the school and pupils' arrival at breakfast club are inadequate.
- Safer recruitment procedures have not been followed, the child-protection policy is out of date and welfare staff have not been adequately trained to report concerns.
- Leaders and managers are not demonstrating the capacity to improve. There has been a significant decline since the previous inspection and self-evaluation is wide of the mark.
- Governors have not discharged their statutory duties effectively. They do not challenge effectively senior leaders about the standards pupils achieve.
- Many pupils behave well. However, a minority of pupils use inappropriate and derogatory language and are disengaged from their learning. Some pupils misbehave because they are bored.
- Pupil premium funding is not used effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The deputy headteacher has rightly recognised many of the weaknesses and is beginning to address them.
- A recently appointed assistant headteacher has put effective systems in place to begin to improve the teaching of reading and to broaden the curriculum.

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?

- Rapidly improve outcomes in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 by:
 - raising expectations of what children and pupils can achieve
 - ensuring that children and pupils of different abilities are challenged by their learning
 - assessing accurately children's abilities on entry to school in their first language
 - ensuring that teachers and support staff are adequately trained to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Improve behaviour, safety and create a culture of safeguarding by ensuring that:
 - welfare requirements are met in the early years provision
 - there are suitable surfaces beneath play equipment
 - toilet facilities are suitably private
 - welfare staff receive thorough child protection training
 - pupils do not use inappropriate or derogatory language
 - attendance improves, particularly in the early years and in Year 1
 - safer recruitment procedures are followed.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - governors effectively challenge leaders about the standards pupils' achieve
 - governors discharge effectively their statutory duties
 - self-evaluation is accurate
 - the school's website meets statutory requirements.

An external review of pupil premium 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

- Expectations are too low. As a result, the quality of teaching and outcomes over time are inadequate.
- There has been insufficient investment in staff training and development. Special educational needs funding is not used effectively. Some support staff have not had the requisite training, support and guidance to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- A lack of effective dialogue with parents, particularly regarding pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, inhibits progress.
- Pupil premium funding is not having the desired impact. Some of it is used to fund free places for disadvantaged pupils at the school's breakfast club where pupils are not effectively safeguarded. Much of the funding is spent on additional teachers and support staff. While there is some effective practice, poor leadership renders teachers' efforts ineffective.
- The narrow curriculum restricts pupils' progress. There is not enough curriculum coverage of subjects other than English and mathematics. Where other subjects are taught, the quality of teaching varies greatly.
- Leaders pay due regard to the promotion of British values. Pupils are typically polite and respectful to each other. For example, Year 2 pupils appreciate the care and support they receive from their Year 6 reading buddies. Pupils of different faiths and cultures get along well. The recently introduced 'learning challenge curriculum' enhances pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well.
- In the headteacher's absence, the deputy headteacher has rightly identified and started to address some of the weaknesses highlighted by this inspection. However, due to the scale of underachievement and low standards, she cannot do it on her own.
- The physical education and sports premium funding has been used to buy sports equipment, to provide sports coaching and to fund the well-attended clubs.
- The local authority issued the school with a warning notice in March stating: 'There has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, such standards of performance.'

Governance of the school

- Governors have failed to effectively tackle stubbornly low standards across the school. They have not held the headteacher and her team accountable because:
 - too much of the governing body's time and efforts have been spent discussing who is best to take the role of chair
 - there has been an insufficient focus on the progress and safety of children and pupils in the school
 - governors have not discharged their statutory duties. They have not followed safer recruitment procedures. They have failed to ensure that all staff have adequate child protection training

- they have not declared their own pecuniary interests on the school's website or ensured that other statutory information is made available in that way.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- There is complacency where safeguarding is concerned. A catalogue of safeguarding issues makes the school unsafe.
- Welfare assistants are not sufficiently trained to know how to properly report any safeguarding concerns. A number of them have an insufficient grasp of English to understand if a pupil makes a disclosure.
- The surface underneath a climbing wall is unsuitable. Dangerous equipment, such as a saw, and a spade were left lying around for pupils to access unsupervised.
- There is no 'handover' at the breakfast club. Many pupils are dropped off on the main road yet are not registered on arrival at school. Visitors are let into the building without sufficient vetting. The procedures to register visitors are haphazard.
- Some of the school's toilets do not offer appropriate privacy for boys. Some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities complete sensory activities such as blowing bubbles in the school toilets, which is wholly inappropriate.
- Safeguarding in the early years is not effective. Welfare requirements are not met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Teachers have a skewed view of pupils' abilities due to inaccurate assessment information.
- There is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching within year groups and key stages, and for different groups of pupils.
- Pupils across the ability range, including the most able pupils, are not sufficiently well challenged and this occasionally leads to disengagement.
- The quality of teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is poor. There is a lack of appropriate strategies for teaching assistants to support this group effectively. Their progress is not reviewed regularly enough and assessments of their abilities are too vague.
- There have been recent improvements in the teaching of reading due to the well-focused efforts of a recently appointed assistant headteacher. Pupils benefit from well-organised guided reading sessions where teachers help them to improve their comprehension, punctuation, grammar and spelling.
- There are some classes where pupils are challenged, expectations are higher and pupils are interested in their learning. For example, in a Year 5 class pupils enjoyed learning about Fairtrade. Pupils in Year 3 enjoyed learning about Hinduism. They understood there were different gods and could also explain reincarnation. This made a positive contribution to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Pupils are not safe. This is because safer recruitment procedures have not been followed. Some staff do not know the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern regarding child protection and procedures for visitors entering the school and pupils arriving at breakfast club are lax.
- The curriculum for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is inappropriate. This is having a negative impact upon their confidence as learners and in some cases is causing them distress.
- Boys and girls do not mix well at playtime, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Boys dominate the play equipment and girls wait for their turn until the boys finish. This goes unchallenged by supervising staff who do little to promote gender equality.
- Pupils say that a few pupils use derogatory language in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The majority of pupils are extremely polite and well-mannered. However, a minority of pupils, particularly boys, do not behave well and use inappropriate or derogatory language.
- Behaviour at social times and in the breakfast club is variable. Where the behaviour system is used well it is extremely effective but pupils report, and inspectors observed, that this is not always the case.
- Attendance has declined since the previous inspection and is below the national average. It is especially low in Year 1. Children in the early years do not come to school regularly.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is some bullying in school but are confident it will be dealt with if they tell an adult.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Standards in English and mathematics at key stages 1 and 2 are too low. Since the previous inspection, overall attainment at key stage 2 has been significantly below the national average.
- Leaders and managers are expecting significant improvements in results this year, which will buck this trend. The wide variations in the quality of teaching and assessment information mean that this view of leaders is insecure.
- Pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. The majority of pupils do not have a sufficient grasp of English and mathematics to enable them to successfully access the key stage 3 curriculum. Furthermore, they have gaps in their

knowledge and understanding across different subjects. This is because subjects other than English and mathematics have not been afforded the priority they deserve.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make little progress because teachers and support staff have not had sufficient training to meet their needs.
- Much of the pupil premium funding has been spent on teachers and support staff but it is having too little impact upon improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- The most able pupils, including those who are also disadvantaged, make little progress because the curriculum is insufficiently challenging.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The Nursery and Reception Year offer a dismal introduction to school life. The provision, including nappy changing facilities, is dirty and disorganised. Less than half of the children achieve a good level of development and leave Reception ready to join Year 1.
- Welfare requirements are not met and safeguarding is ineffective. Leaders have failed to consider the quality of provision through the eyes of a child. Leaders and teachers conduct daily safety audits of the outdoor provision but scrutiny of these records shows that potential risks have not been identified or dealt with.
- When children are outdoors, they are merely supervised by staff with little emphasis on learning.
- The leadership and management of the early years is inadequate. Leaders do not compare children's achievement to that of all children nationally. Children's abilities on entry are inaccurately assessed, particularly since children are not assessed in their first language. Although their grasp of English may be underdeveloped, their abilities to read, write and count are not.
- There is evidence of stronger practice in the early years. Some children are making reasonable progress due to higher expectations. However, the impact of this work is undermined by poor quality provision elsewhere in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	133711
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10035669

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	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	491
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Saima Kauser
Headteacher	Patricia O'Donnell
Telephone number	0161 770 5400
Website	www.clarksfield.oldham.sch.uk/
Email address	info@clarksfield.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 June 2014

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

- The school receives support from the local authority.
- The school runs a breakfast club every day.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website. There is no contact name for enquiries, there is no detail on the content of the curriculum, just topic titles or questions, and the phonics scheme is not referenced. Attendance records for governing body meetings are not up to date and only refer to the previous academic year. Governors' pecuniary interests are not listed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across the school.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was off work. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with the headteacher.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, school policies, records relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation information and a range of other documentation.
- There was one response to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, to be considered. Inspectors spoke with many parents in the school playground before school.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body.
- Meetings were also held with senior and middle leaders and representatives from the local authority.

Inspection team

Sally Kenyon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Edmondson	Ofsted Inspector
Lisa Morgan	Ofsted Inspector
Moira Atkins	Ofsted Inspector
Sheila O'Keeffe	Ofsted Inspector

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