

Newtown Primary School

Anne Close, Off Dunkirk Avenue, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 0ES

Inspection dates

7–8 November 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 not acted swiftly enough to address weaknesses in teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- The capacity to secure improvement is fragile because of instability in staffing. Difficulties in retaining and recruiting staff have led to a rapid decline in the quality of teaching.
- Outcomes are low and have declined over the past two years. Too many pupils cannot communicate, read, write or apply mathematics as well as they should.
- The pupil premium grant has not been used well. Leaders and governors do not measure or evaluate the impact of this funding. Disadvantaged pupils underachieve as a result.
- Governors have not done enough to address the decline in outcomes. They have not challenged leaders to ensure that assessment information is reliable.
- Leaders cannot analyse weaknesses in pupils' progress because assessment information is inaccurate. Pupils who fall behind do not receive the support to enable them to catch up.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching lack precision and do not support teachers to improve their practice. Training for staff does not focus on the most vital priorities.
- Teachers do not use accurate subject knowledge in order to show pupils how to produce high-quality work. As a result, pupils do not succeed in the main aim of the lesson.
- Teachers do not ensure that work is matched appropriately to pupils' ability. Pupils sometimes find work too easy or too hard.
- The teaching of reading is particularly weak. Pupils do not read regularly enough and their comprehension skills are poor.
- The curriculum does not enable pupils to acquire skills, knowledge and experiences across the full range of statutory subjects.
- A lack of extra-curricular clubs and school trips limits pupils' personal development.
- Leaders do not make the most of assessment information in order to accelerate the progress of boys and disadvantaged in the early years.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are happy and respectful because of the caring relationships that exist in the school.
- Outcomes in Year 1 phonics are positive.
- Pupils know and understand the British values.

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?

- As a matter of urgency, leaders and governors must:
 - focus on securing high-quality permanent members of staff who will provide good teaching and bring continuity for pupils' learning
 - secure accurate assessment information so that the progress and attainment of groups can be analysed reliably
 - use assessment information to put in place high-quality support for pupils who need to catch up
 - ensure that additional funding for pupil premium is well planned and has measurable success criteria linked to the improvement in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - check the quality of teaching thoroughly and give precise next steps of support so that teachers can make the necessary improvements
 - arrange high-quality training for staff that focuses on the most important priorities for improvement
 - provide a curriculum that enables pupils to acquire skills, knowledge and experiences across the full range of statutory subjects
 - ensure that the governing body has the capacity to provide appropriate support and challenge to leaders, particularly in relation to outcomes for pupils
 - develop more enrichment activities for pupils such as extra-curricular clubs and trips linked to the curriculum
 - make sure that the physical education (PE) and sport premium grant is used to increase participation in clubs and in competitive sport
 - make sure that the school's website is fully compliant.
- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching and outcomes in reading by ensuring that:
 - pupils read widely and often with books that spark their imagination
 - teachers develop pupils' reading comprehension skills effectively
 - the culture of reading is raised in class environments and around school so that pupils see the importance of it
 - leaders and teachers work with parents so that they can support their child to read at home more frequently
 - pupils for whom English is not a first language receive precise support to develop their reading skills.

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning in key stages 1 and 2 by ensuring that teachers are supported to:
 - assess accurately and match work appropriately to pupils’ needs so that they are challenged and make good progress
 - use effective subject knowledge to demonstrate to pupils how to produce high-quality work
 - respond during lessons to provide support to pupils finding work difficult or to challenge those finding it easy
 - improve pupils’ grammar, punctuation and spelling so that they can apply these skills into longer pieces of writing
 - plan meaningful opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills through reasoning.
- Improve the early years and foundation stage provision by:
 - using assessment information to target provision more closely to the needs of boys and disadvantaged children.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school’s use 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

- Leaders and governors have failed to maintain an acceptable standard of education and outcomes for pupils are declining. They have not responded swiftly to weaknesses in teaching and assessment. As a result, standards are low and too many pupils are leaving Year 6 poorly equipped for their next phase of education.
- High staff turnover and some unforeseen staffing absence have placed a strain on the leadership of the school. Leaders have had difficulty recruiting high-quality staff to key positions. In key stage 2 there are a number of temporary teachers. Staffing inconsistency has led to a lack of continuity in the classroom for pupils. The deputy headteacher and a middle leader are also temporary appointments. Several other leaders are new into post. Leadership does not have capacity to rapidly improve the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher has not put sufficient focus on addressing the decline in standards. Since September 2017, she has worked well with the deputy headteacher to put in place clear plans to address weaknesses in teaching. However, the initial actions are in the early stages so improvements in pupils' outcomes are yet to be seen. The most pressing priorities, such as reading, are not being improved thoroughly or swiftly enough.
- Leaders' and governors' analysis of assessment information is futile because the data is unreliable. While leaders have been proactive in trying to improve the assessment system, it is not fit for purpose. Leaders have not supported teachers to make accurate assessments. As a result, pupils who are falling behind are not accurately identified and do not receive the support they need to catch up.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is not used well. The activities planned cannot be evaluated for impact because they do not have specific measurable outcomes. Leaders cannot identify which activities are the most or least successful. Disadvantaged pupils do not receive the precise support that they need and make poor progress over time.
- A weak curriculum does not enable pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding across the full range of subjects. Leaders have not ensured that statutory requirements have been met. For example, older pupils in the school have not been taught subjects such as music and languages for some time. A lack of curriculum trips fails to broaden pupils' curriculum experiences and limits their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are not thorough. More frequent observations of teaching have taken place recently, but they are not linked to sufficient further support, training or follow-up for teachers. Sometimes feedback lacks precision so teachers do not know exactly how to improve. As a result, weak teaching is not being eradicated swiftly enough.
- Leaders' plans for staff training do not always address the most important priorities. For example, the quality of teaching in reading is poor and outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are strikingly low. However, leaders have not put in place enough high-quality

training to improve teachers' skills more rapidly.

- The special educational needs coordinator is new into post and has made a positive start to the role. She has planned the provision carefully to achieve the best use of resources and ensure that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities have targeted support. Early indications show that some of this support is having a positive impact. However, this support needs to be embedded over a longer period in order for this group of pupils to reach standards that they are capable of.
- Parents and pupils feel strongly that there is a lack of extra-curricular clubs. Their view is justified because pupils receive few wider enrichment opportunities. As a result, pupils are not able to develop their physical, social and creative skills as well as they should.
- The additional funding for PE and school sport has had a varied impact. Specialist coaches are used well to develop pupils' key skills in a range of physical education activities. However, the funding has not been used to increase participation in extra-curricular clubs or competitive sport.
- The local authority has carried out a number of visits and their support has had a positive impact in the school. A major review in February 2017 highlighted significant concerns and intensified the level of challenge from the local authority. They have put in place effective support for leaders to improve attendance and behaviour. They have also helped leaders to stabilise staffing, including securing a national leader of governance to add capacity to the governing body. Some of the local authority's recent support strategies for assessment and teaching have not yet had the time to have impact on the outcomes for pupils.
- Most of the staff feel supported by leaders and are proud to work at the school. There is a sense of teamwork among staff.
- Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Governance of the school

- Over time governance has not been effective. Governors have contributed to the decline in the performance of the school because they have not had the capacity to challenge leaders effectively. This is particularly the case in the analysis of assessment information where governors have been surprised by two years of weak test results at the end of key stage 2. Governors have not provided enough challenge to leaders to make sure that they are provided with reliable assessment information.
- Governors do not have a good understanding of how the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils has been used. They do not know the specific impact of the strategies used and effect they have had on disadvantaged pupils' progress.
- The capacity of the governing body is improving but it is still fragile. There are still a number of vacancies. The chair and vice-chair of governors are now well supported by a new national leader of governance. The three of them understand the current key issues and are committed to making the necessary improvements. They have already started reconstituting the governing body to ensure that it has the required capacity.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders operate organised and thorough systems for keeping pupils safe. The designated safeguarding leads provide regular training for staff. As a result, staff know their responsibilities well and the culture for safeguarding is positive. If staff are concerned about a child they report and record their concerns diligently. Leaders follow up concerns tenaciously and involve external services in a timely manner.
- Leaders' risk assessments provide an effective layer of safety precaution. The site manager is very thorough in his work. He has put in place various successful strategies to ensure that the site is a safe place for staff and pupils.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Staff help them to learn about road safety and how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils are clear about the dangers associated with social media and cyber bullying. They know to tell an adult if they are concerned about something they experience on the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate because the teaching does not demand enough of pupils. Most of the teachers in key stage 2 are temporary and there have been regular changes of classroom staff. Pupils have not had continuity and there are gaps in their learning for reading, writing and mathematics. Unsurprisingly, by the time pupils reach Year 6 they are underachieving considerably.
- Teachers have not been supported to develop their assessment practice, so they do not have a deep understanding of what pupils can and cannot do. As a result, pupils are set work that is either too hard or too easy. The most able pupils are often set work that is too easy. Staff do not make sufficient checks on learning during lessons, so do not identify where additional support or challenge is required.
- Teachers' assessments are currently inaccurate. Leaders and teachers cannot analyse where pupils are falling behind because there is not a firm grip on pupils' progress. There is also a weak understanding of the exact barriers for pupils. As a result, additional support lacks precision and pupils who fall behind fail to catch up.
- Teachers do not have strong enough subject knowledge to give pupils a clear idea of exactly how to produce high-quality work. For example in writing, teachers do not work with pupils to demonstrate the exact skills that they require pupils to develop. Consequently, in some lessons pupils do not acquire sufficient skills, knowledge and understanding to meet the intention of the lesson.
- The teaching of reading is inadequate. Leaders do not have a clear approach to teaching reading and there is a lack of professional development for staff. As a result, pupils do not read widely or often and their comprehension skills are particularly weak. Parents are not well supported to help their children read at home more frequently. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are not supported to develop the complex reading skills that are required in key stage 2.
- The standard of pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar is particularly weak. Teachers' subject knowledge is inconsistent which means that pupils lack confidence in

their writing skills. Pupils are given opportunities to write at length but because their work is technically inaccurate, their writing shows limited progress over time.

- Teachers have developed the accuracy of pupils' calculation skills in mathematics. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to apply their understanding to solve problems, particularly in developing their reasoning skills. Consequently, pupils' progress in mathematics is restricted. The most able pupils rarely get challenged with complex problems to stretch their understanding.
- Since September 2017, teaching in Year 6 enables pupils to make accelerated progress. However, previously weak teaching and constant staff changes have left this group of pupils with significant gaps in their learning.
- The teaching of phonics enables pupils to reach standards similar to pupils nationally in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Teachers in the early years and in Year 1 use accurate subject knowledge to help pupils to learn tricky words. Pupils can confidently and accurately split up words into manageable sounds.
- Despite inconsistencies in staffing, relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Most pupils work hard and present their work with pride. Staff provide effective support to pupils with complex emotional needs so they are settled and ready to learn.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' personal development is not good because too many pupils lack confidence to develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils do not have a clear idea of how to be a successful learner because of weak teaching, and rely heavily on adult support when learning is challenging.
- Pupils' physical, social and cultural development is not well developed because of the lack of extra-curricular clubs or curriculum trips that are on offer at the school.
- Pupils are happy at Newtown Primary School because it has an inclusive ethos. A quote in the school hall, 'Everyone is different, but we are all equal in our differences' was well known by pupils. One pupil explained, 'It means we need to respect each other no matter what our background.'
- Staff provide effective support to meet the emotional needs of vulnerable pupils. Some pupils with complex needs become more settled and integrated into their class through additional nurture and play therapy support.
- Pupils are safe in school and feel safe. Pupils speak knowledgeably about cyber bullying and how dangerous it is. They know to seek the support of an adult and block anyone that they are concerned about online.
- Pupils have a good understanding of British values like individual liberty, respect and democracy. This is developed through thoughtful displays, alongside learning in the curriculum and in assemblies.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In the last academic year, pupils' behaviour declined from a previously much better position. Between January and July 2017, the number of fixed-term exclusions and number of behaviour incidents rose sharply. Leaders revised the school behaviour policy so that all staff managed behaviour more consistently. Since September 2017, incidents have reduced significantly and there have been no fixed-term exclusions. Pupils with complex behavioural needs are given specialist support which has a positive impact on their behaviour over time.
- During the inspection, pupils conduct in class was positive. Staff use effective praise to reward good behaviour and give appropriate warnings to pupils if their behaviour does not meet expectations. However, some of the weaker behaviour arises when pupils are not challenged enough in their learning. Some pupils do become switched off or bored.
- Most pupils behave well during social times and are appropriately supported by adults. Leaders monitor and follow up incidents well. More serious incidents are discussed in partnership with parents and pupils, so that they know the standards of behaviour that are expected.
- In 2016/17 attendance dropped below the national average. In the previous year it was above the national figure. Leaders have responded well to this decline by identifying low attendance more rigorously and by putting in place better support for families. As a result, attendance so far this academic year has risen sharply.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils' attainment is low in reading, writing and mathematics. The quality of teaching leads to weak progress so there is no sign of attainment improving quickly enough. High proportions of pupils in key stage 2 have made little progress since their key stage 1 assessments and are long way behind the expected level for their age.
- By the end of key stage 2 standards are low and progress is weak. In 2017, the school failed to meet the government's floor standard, which is the minimum standard that schools are expected to meet. Reading is a significant issue and progress in reading has been very low for two years. In 2017, nearly two-thirds of pupils left Year 6 below the level expected for their age. In mathematics over the last two years half of the pupils have left Year 6 below the expected level.
- At the end of key stage 1 standards declined in 2017. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average. Boys and disadvantaged pupils perform particularly low in key stage 1 because they are not targeted with specific additional support.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is a concern. By the end of key stage 2, their progress in reading, writing and mathematics is a long way behind other pupils nationally. In the last two years, just a quarter of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils underachieve because of a lack of good-quality teaching and precise additional support.

- Teachers' assessments are not accurate. Leaders and teachers do not accelerate pupils' progress because they cannot identify which pupils need support the most. There are fluctuations in teachers' assessments. For example, at the end of key stage 1 in 2017, a quarter of pupils achieved the higher standard in reading compared to just a few pupils in writing. At the end of Year 6 in writing in 2017, more pupils achieved the higher standard than the national average. These pupils' books were analysed during the inspection and some did not show evidence of writing at the higher standard.
- The performance of the most able pupils is not strong because they are not challenged to reach the higher standards. In the end of key stage 2 tests for reading and mathematics for the last two years, the proportions reaching the higher standard have been very low when compared to national averages.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make weak progress. Leaders have only just started targeting specific support for this group and the impact of this provision is too early to be seen.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are not given the precise support that they need to progress well in reading skills by the end of key stage 2. They do better by the end of key stage 1, but as reading skills become more complex in key stage 2, their progress slows.
- The curriculum does not enable pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding across the full range of statutory subjects.
- Phonics teaching starts well in the early years and gets built upon positively in Year 1. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check has been similar to the national average for three years.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years leader has an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. She works well with the staff to successfully address priorities. As a result, the achievement of children is improving each year.
- Leaders do not make full use of assessment to meet the needs of disadvantaged children and boys. Leaders have identified this in their self-evaluation and there is a clear plan to target and adapt the curriculum more effectively. For example, leaders discussed how mathematics and science activities, as well as the outdoor provision, need to be used more effectively in order to accelerate children's progress.
- A high proportion of children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below expectations. Most children receive effective teaching and make typical progress from their starting points. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen over the last three years. Leaders have rightly identified that the achievement of some disadvantaged children and boys could be raised.
- Staff in the early years know pupils as individuals and offer them a high level of care. They have a particularly effective understanding of children's emotional, social and communication needs. Staff use this understanding to help children to settle and socialise. As a result, children are happy and behave well.
- Teaching of phonics and language acquisition in Reception is particularly strong. Staff

recognise that children's language and communication are a barrier to their learning. Staff share new language and focus well on making sure that children pronounce sounds accurately. This constant reinforcement enables children to acquire new language well. For example in one lesson, children were keen to share and repeat the new words that they had learned to describe the sounds that fireworks make.

- Leaders and staff make accurate and frequent assessment of children's work. They use this information to plan work that matches children's interests and offers effective challenge for most groups of children. Staff encourage children to write at a level appropriate to their development. Some children work on their fine motor skills through play, others make basic marks on paper, while some are writing full sentences.
- Staff plan thoughtful activities so that children develop skills such as creativity and independence. For example, children were choosing different activities and enjoyed painting their own fireworks display or making their own model firework with a range of materials.
- Staff ensure that parents receive effective communication about their child's learning. Parents are able to see evidence of their child's development when they drop off and pick up each day. Staff put on workshops for parents so that they know the sort of learning that is expected for their child. Several parents shared with inspectors the positive start that their children receive in the early years.
- Leaders make effective use of wider agencies. The early years leader and staff have visited other settings to learn from best practice. They have also worked with a university to help improve their provision for language and communication.
- Children are kept safe in the early years and all of the statutory welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	103924
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10037876

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

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	233
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Robert Whale
Headteacher	Karen Godwin
Telephone number	01215 578504
Website	www.newtown.sandwell.sch.uk
Email address	school.office@newtown.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website about the pupil premium grant or the key stage 2 test results.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is well above the national average.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and

mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.

- The school is highlighted as a concern by the local authority and receives frequent visits from an adviser. The local authority have instigated task group meetings, involving governors and school leaders, in order to challenge the performance of the school.
- The governing body has several vacancies at the moment and is going through a process of reconstitution. The local authority has brokered a national leader of governance who is now part of the school's governing body.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 17 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, as well as other senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with three members of the local governing body and the local authority adviser.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress. They also scrutinised the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is monitored and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors considered 10 free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start and end of the school day. Inspectors evaluated five responses from the staff survey.

Inspection team

Matt Meckin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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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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