

Upper Arley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Upper Arley, Bewdley, Worcestershire DY12 1XA

Inspection dates

26–27 March 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Poor leadership has led to poor outcomes for pupils, especially in key stage 2.
- Senior leadership of the school is inadequate. Leaders are overly dependent on external support and lack the capacity to make substantial improvements.
- The governing body is inadequate. It does not fulfil its statutory responsibilities. Governors have failed to challenge leaders about pupils' outcomes or the use of additional funding.
- Staffing is unstable. There is too much dependence on temporary teachers.
- The curriculum is poorly planned. Pupils make insufficient progress in a range of subjects.
- For two out of the past three years, almost all Year 6 pupils underachieved in mathematics.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils' mathematical skills are good enough in key stage 2. Statutory requirements for mathematics, as set out in the national curriculum, are not being met.
- Most teachers have weak subject knowledge. As a result, pupils make poor progress, especially in mathematics, history and geography.
- In key stage 2 English, the most able and lower-ability pupils are underachieving. Teachers do not set work that is well matched to needs.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher has begun to address the inadequacies in the curriculum, but it is too soon to see improvements in pupils' outcomes.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class because teaching is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite and courteous and want to do their best.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in English and mathematics.
- The teaching of music, science and art is effective.

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 leadership and management, by making sure that governors:
 - fulfil their statutory responsibilities
 - plan strategically for the school's development and evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes
 - secure stable and sustainable senior leadership and staffing arrangements
 - monitor the impact of the school's use of the pupil premium funding on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Significantly improve the quality of the senior leadership and the management of the school, so that:
 - the school fulfils all requirements of the national curriculum
 - the quality of teaching improves substantially and leads to good progress for pupils in all subjects and year groups, particularly in key stage 2
 - leaders have an accurate view of pupils' progress that is shared by governors
 - disadvantaged pupils benefit from the pupil premium funding.
- Substantially improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by making sure that:
 - teachers have the knowledge they need to teach the national curriculum
 - teachers in key stage 2 use the school's assessment policy consistently and effectively
 - all teachers, including those who teach mixed-age classes in key stage 2, are skilled in planning for progression in pupils' knowledge
 - teachers use resources effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Improve outcomes for pupils, by making sure that:
 - pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a secure and deep understanding mathematics appropriate to their ages
 - disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress in a wide range of subjects
 - the highest and lowest prior-attaining pupils in key stage 2 English develop appropriate skills according to their ability
 - pupils learn about history and geography and develop knowledge and

understanding of these subjects.

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 the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers to classes in key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The school is in decline. Leadership has been ineffective for too long. There have been insufficient improvements since the last inspection. Leaders and governors are almost wholly dependent on local authority and diocesan support and lack the capacity to make further substantial improvements.
- Crucial aspects of the national curriculum are not being taught well enough, in particular in key stage 2 mathematics and humanities subjects. This means that pupils are not well enough prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils have been let down. Too many have not made good progress. National assessments in 2018 showed that in mathematics in key stage 2, almost all pupils made poor progress.
- Planning is weak and incoherent. Leaders' self-evaluation is poor and sometimes inaccurate.
- The school is without substantive leadership and the governing body's plans to address this are at variance with those of the local authority and the diocese.
- Leaders' plans for the use of the pupil premium funding and the evaluation of its effectiveness are weak. Leaders did not publish an evaluation of last year's pupil premium funding as they are required to do. Similarly, there is no clear plan for the additional funding received by the school for primary school physical education (PE) and sport. This spending has also not been adequately evaluated or published as required.
- School development plans do not make any specific reference to actions that will be undertaken to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, it is impossible for leaders to evaluate what is being done. The school's self-evaluation makes no mention of disadvantaged pupils, many of whom make poor progress, especially in mathematics, in key stage 2.
- The quality of teaching overall is inadequate and there is an over-reliance on temporary staff, most of whom lack the breadth of subject knowledge to provide adequate coverage of the curriculum, especially in key stage 2.
- Parents and carers have mixed views about the school. While there is a range of supportive comments on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, there are also a number of well-justified troubling concerns. For example, some parents expressed worries about their children's progress, the quality of teaching and the way in which the curriculum has been covered. Typical comments included: 'My son is bored, fed up with doing work he did two years earlier and now he is repeating it again,'; 'My child is well behind the level that is expected in many areas. Even basic things that he should have known for years are not embedded. I feel like my child has been badly let down by this school.' Typical positive comments included: 'It is a warm and caring environment in which the children begin their school life,' and, 'My children have always felt happy and safe here and being such a small school we all feel like a family.'
- The curriculum is poorly planned, particularly for mixed-year classes in key stage 2, where there is inadequate progression from one year to another. Pupils are too

frequently set the same work and level of challenge regardless of their age, which results in poor progress in mathematics and humanities. Pupils are making better progress in writing in Year 6, but insufficient challenge for the most able or support for the least able means they are not doing as well as they should.

- Pupils with SEND are not supported well enough, especially in English and mathematics in key stage 2.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make stronger progress than those in key stage 2. However, because of the weaker teaching in key stage 2, this progress is not built on.
- The acting headteacher and the acting senior leader have put much-needed energy into their temporary leadership of the school since their appointment in September. However, they have struggled against a background of staffing instability and a lack of support from the governing body. Their work with the teachers of Years 1 and 2 has led to better pupils' outcomes.
- The leadership of science, music and art is better than in other subjects. Pupils enjoy singing and taking part in public music concerts. Pupils' artwork is often of good quality and pupils' attainment in science in 2018 was above the national average.

Governance of the school

- Governance is inadequate. The governing body's strategic planning is weak, and it is currently dependent on external support from the local authority and diocese. Its plan for the school's future is at variance with that of the local authority and diocese.
- Governors have not fulfilled their statutory responsibilities. For example, they have failed to complete a review of the spending of the pupil premium funding that should be published to parents. They have not been effective in ensuring that leaders reverse the decline in standards of mathematics teaching in key stage 2. They have not been able to appoint either substantive leaders or teachers with good subject knowledge. As a result, too much pressure has been put on acting leaders, which has diminished their effectiveness.
- Governors' poor systems of evaluation mean that they have little understanding of the difference that the pupil premium and PE and sport premium funding has made to pupils' outcomes.
- At the previous inspection, governors were required to arrange a review of their work and devise a plan for improvement. Almost none of the actions they agreed in this plan has come about. The plan has no accurate measurable targets for improvement and does not made clear how governors' development should be monitored and evaluated. The school's self-evaluation does not evaluate the effectiveness of the steps taken to improve governance and those needed for further improvement.
- Governors have not monitored the way in which leaders make sure that the different needs of pupils in mixed-age classes in key stage 2 are met.
- Governors have ensured that the school is safe and that the school's systems for checking and vetting staff before employment are effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- New and temporary staff receive effective safeguarding training that ensures that they understand and are able to put into practice the school's policies.
- There are effective systems for checking and vetting staff prior to appointment and to ensure that supply agencies used by the school meet their obligations to check and train staff.
- The acting headteacher and the acting senior leader are committed to the welfare and safety of their pupils. A case study examined during the inspection showed that leaders engage effectively with local authority agencies, parents and families to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils know how to keep safe. They learn how to stay safe online. They say that there is no bullying in the school and that they know what to do if they have concerns about their welfare. They have respect for people different from themselves.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching across the school is variable. It is especially weak in key stage 2, particularly in mathematics. As a result, pupils underachieve in mathematics.
- Planning is weak in key stage 2. Teachers of the mixed-year classes are unsure how to plan effectively. They are dependent on external and leadership support to help them plan, teach and assess their lessons.
- There is insufficient challenge for pupils. Too many lessons are uninteresting for pupils and lead to poor progress. Teachers do not know how to use resources well enough to engage pupils' attention. This means, for example, that too frequently, pupils show little interest in finding out about historic events or the world around them.
- Across key stages 1 and 2, the teaching of geography and history is inadequate. Teachers do not have in place planning or assessment arrangements for these subjects that meet pupils' needs or the requirements of the national curriculum.
- Too many teachers lack the depth of subject knowledge required to plan and teach challenging and interesting lessons. They are eager to accept help and want to do the best they can for their pupils. While they know how to manage their classes, lessons are often uninteresting and keep pupils occupied rather than providing them with deep and secure learning. In key stage 2, pupils often start work in their books, complete a brief amount and then stop. Teachers in their assessment feedback do not challenge this.
- Assessment in key stage 2 is ineffective. Information about what pupils know, understand and can do is not well understood or used by teachers.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 and in Reception Year is effective, well planned and assessed. The relationship between Reception Year and key stage 1 is strong, and teachers use this to plan effectively. Key stage 1 teaching helps pupils make strong progress. Teachers are skilled at helping pupils sustain their interest in most subjects,

especially English, mathematics and science. However, the teaching of humanities subjects is weak in Years 1 and 2.

- The teaching of science, music and art is effective in both key stages. Pupils are interested in these subjects and so make effective progress. For example, pupils enjoy taking part in extra-curricular science activities, such as their visits to the Wyre Forest. Through activities such as this, pupils gain a secure understanding of, for instance, how living things grow and how important it is to care for their environment.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and highly professional, and provide a stable and secure point of reference for pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Care for pupils' welfare is at the heart of teachers' management of pupils' personal development. Pupils are respectful of others, and as one pupil said, 'We look after each other.'
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural work gives them an interest in other faiths and life in modern Britain. Pupils described a school visit to a mosque and how much this interested them. Staff make sure that pupils understand and welcome people's differences. Work in pupils' 'learning journey' books shows that they have an interest in how other people think and what they believe.
- Pupils' forest school work teaches them to respect their environment. They eagerly take part in lessons in this part of the school.
- Work in books is tidy and well organised. Pupils want to do well, and most are proud of the presentation of their work. However, when teaching does not challenge them, they take less care.
- Pupils feel safe because staff build their knowledge of what to do if they feel worried. Staff are skilled at spotting the signs that a pupil may need additional help, and offer high-quality support.
- Pupils understand how to keep healthy through a well-balanced diet and by taking part in physical activity. They enjoy PE and describe accurately how to make sensible choices about what they eat and drink.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to others. They enjoy school, get on well with each other and pay attention to their teachers. In lessons, pupils are polite and attentive. They work well when in groups and concentrate appropriately unless teaching does not match their abilities.
- Pupils respect their school and treat displays and learning materials with respect. There

is no litter.

- Around school at lunch- and breaktimes, pupils are polite and courteous. They play well together, respecting each other and the environment.
- When teachers give instructions, for example when pupils are coming into school at the start of the day and at the end of breaktimes, pupils respond quickly and sensibly.
- In 2017/18, attendance was too low. There have been significant improvements this year and almost all pupils in key stages 1 and 2 attend regularly. During the inspection, all pupils on roll were in attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils make inadequate progress, particularly in key stage 2. Mathematics is the weakest subject and historical underachievement is not being improved quickly enough. Pupils' progress is impeded by a poorly planned curriculum and as a result, they are not developing the mathematical skills required by the national curriculum.
- At too many points in the year, pupils in mixed-age classes are doing exactly the same work. This means that pupils are not learning skills or knowledge appropriate for their age or ability. As a result, they are not prepared well enough for the next stage of their education. For example, there is no evidence in Years 5 and 6 that pupils are developing adequate skills in algebra, statistics, ratio, geometry and measurement.
- In key stage 2 English, the curriculum is not taught well enough and pupils do not make enough progress to reach the standards of which they are capable. Pupils are often asked to learn exactly the same skills and knowledge regardless of their age or abilities. Lower-ability pupils in Years 3 and 4 give up and do not complete work. The most able pupils are not developing the skills they need to make good progress in Years 5 and 6.
- Last year, nearly all pupils in Year 6 made poor progress in mathematics. This year, because planning for these pupils in key stage 2 is inadequate, they are too frequently learning knowledge and skills not well matched to their abilities. There is no evidence that the spending of the pupil premium funding is making any difference to relevant pupils' learning.
- Pupils with SEND follow a curriculum that is not well matched to their abilities or age. Consequently, most are making weak progress, particularly in mathematics in key stage 2.
- Pupils make insufficient progress in history and geography across the school. The curriculum does not allow for any meaningful progression in these subjects by any group of pupils.
- Pupils' progress in writing, reading and mathematics in key stage 1 is strong. For example, pupils achieved well in the phonics screening check. However, poor teaching in humanities subjects weakens the wider key stage 1 curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make good progress in Reception Year. They enjoy learning and behave well.
- Leaders make accurate assessments of children's abilities on entry to Reception. Teachers use this and other information well, including home learning, evidence of pre-school work and their knowledge of children's interests. As a result, children are challenged appropriately and make good progress. Teachers provide well-planned activities that build on what they already know and can do, inside and outside the classroom. Teaching assistants work effectively with children to make sure that they understand what to do and how to improve their work.
- Most children join the school in Reception Year with skills and knowledge above those typical for their age. Teachers build on this through the well-planned curriculum. For example, children form accurate letter shapes and use number effectively. In 2018, all children achieved a good level of development in the national assessments.
- Teachers regularly monitor and check the progress children are making. Learning journals are very well organised and give adults a clear idea of the children's good progress and where they could improve. This is particularly the case in number and writing work. For example, in children's workbooks, the work on 'The Hungry Caterpillar' story stretches children's imagination, as do investigations about caves and how they are formed.
- The well-resourced indoor and outdoor learning environments are stimulating and interesting. This means children find and organise materials easily. Learning areas are secure and safe.
- The teaching of phonics is effective, and children make good progress in recognising and making familiar and unfamiliar letter shapes. Children read with confidence, effort and enthusiasm, knowing how to sound out new words.
- Induction arrangements for children are strong. Leaders make good links with pre-school settings and prepare children well for Reception Year. Children are helped to understand the school and to associate sociably with the school's older children. Children cooperate well with each other and adults. Their personal and social skills are developed effectively.

School details

Unique reference number	135037
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10058475

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	64
Appropriate authority	The board of governors
Chair	Mrs Sue Birch
Headteacher	Mrs Nina Geithner-Hill
Telephone number	01299 861260
Website	www.upperarleyprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@upperarley.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 October 2016

Information about this school

- The school is considerably smaller than the average-sized primary school. The school does not have a substantive leadership team. The school is a voluntary controlled Church of England school and it had an inspection under section 48 in October 2016.
- Most pupils are of White British ethnicity. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average.
- Children in early years attend full time and are taught in the single Reception Year class. There are three mixed-age classes: Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in each class. This included joint visits with senior leaders. He examined a range of pupils' work from across the curriculum.
- The inspector listened to pupils from all year groups read, both individually and as part of classroom activities, and spoke with pupils formally in groups and informally around the school.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, playtime and lunchtime, and when pupils were moving around the school.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day and meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, middle leaders and a representative from the local authority. A telephone discussion with a local authority officer and a representative from the diocese took place. The chair of the governing body was unavailable during the inspection.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and a review of governance. He also examined the systems in place to manage behaviour and attendance.
- Safeguarding documentation was scrutinised, and consideration was given to how this related to daily practice. The inspector spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Information from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, was taken into account. There were 42 responses to the parent free-text service. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire or to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Graham Tyrer, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019