

Clapham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Green, Lancaster, Lancashire LA2 8EJ

Inspection dates

18–19 June 2019

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Over time, there has been a significant decline in the standard of education provided for pupils. Leaders have not been effective in reversing or halting this decline.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are ineffective. Leaders have not acted to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Governors have not held leaders to account effectively for safeguarding, the quality of teaching or pupils' outcomes.
- The behaviour of a small number of pupils is poorly managed. This puts both pupils and staff at risk.
- Leadership for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is ineffective. Adults do not have plans for pupils with SEND and hence cannot support pupils in reaching their potential.
- Pupils' work often represents a lack of pride.
- Leaders do not check on the quality of teaching thoroughly or on the difference new initiatives have made to pupils' outcomes.
- The curriculum is poorly planned. Teaching does not offer pupils access to their full entitlement of subjects. Consequently, pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge.
- Across a range of subjects, and in all year groups, including early years, teaching is weak. This is because, over time, teachers have not had the professional development and training they need.
- Teachers are not secure in assessing pupils' progress accurately. Consequently, pupils' work is often not matched to their starting points. This results in pupils' passive behaviour and slow progress.
- Pupils' progress is weak in a range of subjects, including phonics, reading, writing and science.

The school has the following strengths

- Provision by specialist teachers for music and physical education (PE) is effective. Pupils have frequent opportunities to showcase their musical talents in performances and to compete in sporting events.
- Teachers are passionate about pupils learning about the cultural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales. Teachers are effective in making connections between conservation and farming and healthy eating and cooking.

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?

- Urgently implement effective safeguarding systems, ensuring that:
 - a culture of safeguarding is embedded in the school, with all adults fully aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe
 - leaders review all safeguarding policies and practices, including those relating to child protection, safer recruitment and health and safety
 - the leadership of behaviour is effective, including implementing plans and risk assessments to support pupils with challenging behaviour
 - staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding are in place and are effective in their role
 - records in relation to safeguarding, including child protection, are detailed and well maintained
 - all adults are subject to thorough checks on their suitability to work with children
 - governors hold leaders to account effectively for all aspects of safeguarding.
- Urgently improve teaching in all year groups, including in early years, so that it is consistently good or better and results in strong progress for pupils, by ensuring that:
 - teachers have appropriate subject knowledge for all the subjects they teach, including phonics and reading
 - teachers are skilled in making accurate assessments of pupils' starting points
 - teachers identify and address pupils' misconceptions and gaps in learning swiftly, including in mathematics
 - teachers use their assessments to plan purposeful and challenging activities that extend pupils' learning in all subjects
 - phonics teaching is effective in enabling pupils to develop early reading skills and spelling knowledge well
 - pupils acquire handwriting and English grammar, punctuation and spelling skills that they can apply consistently in their writing
 - pupils are given opportunities to develop a suitably deep understanding of books and texts
 - pupils take pride in their work
 - pupils are motivated to learn and are fully engaged in lessons

- children in early years consolidate and extend their reading, writing and mathematical skills independently through well-designed activities
- all teaching assistants are effective in contributing to pupils' learning.
- Urgently improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by ensuring that:
 - leaders check the quality of teaching and learning thoroughly in their areas of responsibility and secure essential improvements promptly
 - teaching staff have appropriate training and professional development opportunities
 - leaders support and challenge teaching staff effectively regarding pupils' outcomes
 - the curriculum is broad, balanced and well designed to support pupils' learning effectively
 - assessment systems are in place and effective in enabling teachers to build on pupils' knowledge and skills in all subjects
 - leadership for pupils with SEND is effective
 - leadership of early years is effective
 - governors hold leaders thoroughly to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

An external review of governance 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

- Since the last inspection, leaders have failed to halt a significant decline in the school's performance. Major shortcomings in the arrangements for safeguarding, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes now exist. There is no capacity to rectify the concerns or lead improvements.
- The school has faced considerable challenges through instability in leadership and staffing turbulence, restructure and absence, as well as financial difficulties and a consultation for closure. Leaders have not mitigated these issues and have neglected to make necessary improvements to teaching. Consequently, pupils' learning has suffered, and staff morale is low.
- Over time, leaders have not provided crucial training and professional development opportunities for teaching staff. This has left them lacking in expertise in a number of areas, including reading, phonics, early years and the requirements of the national curriculum. Despite this, teachers work incredibly hard and remain fully committed to doing the best they can for their pupils.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils are not taught the full range of national curriculum subjects in sufficient depth. For example, science lessons are infrequent and only cover a very small part of the science curriculum. This leaves pupils ill-prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders have not ensured that teachers' assessments of pupils' work are accurate. Consequently, leaders are not able to hold teachers to account for pupils' outcomes.
- Where initiatives have been introduced to strengthen teaching, for example in mathematics, leaders have not checked whether these are effective in improving pupils' outcomes.
- Subject leadership is not in place for a number of subjects, including science, and is ineffective for others. Subject leaders are often untrained and are therefore not equipped with the necessary skills to lead improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The role of special educational needs coordinator is not fulfilled effectively. As there is no clear system for the identification of additional needs, adults are unaware of which pupils are registered with SEND. Although leaders do gain advice from external agencies, as appropriate, specialists' recommendations and plans are not consistently shared with teaching staff. This means that teachers cannot successfully adapt activities to meet pupils' needs.
- Owing to a lack of expertise in early years, effective leadership of this area has not been secured. Leaders have begun to introduce systems for assessment and planning. However, this has not resulted in accurate assessments or effective teaching in early years.
- The school has received considerable support from a range of partner schools, the local authority and the diocese. Unfortunately, the challenges faced by the school, and the weaknesses evident in leadership, have meant that the difference this support has

made has been limited.

- Parents and carers who shared their views during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They praise the teachers and say that their children enjoy attending the school. They feel that the small size of the school contributes to a nurturing environment.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not held leaders to account effectively for crucial aspects of the school's performance. As a result, safeguarding arrangements are ineffective, teaching is weak and pupils underachieve considerably.
- Governors are honest and accurate in their evaluations of the school's effectiveness. They make no excuses for their failings and can see that they have been consumed by concerns with finance, staffing restructures and the consultation for closure. This has distracted them from ensuring that pupils are safe and well taught.
- Governors are passionate about the school and demonstrate high levels of commitment. They acknowledge the gaps they have in their expertise and have recently begun to attend training to equip themselves to fulfil their statutory responsibilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Across a range of different aspects, leaders have failed to ensure that safeguards are securely in place.
- At the time of the inspection, the school did not have a trained member of staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding. Instead, untrained staff were expected to take on this responsibility. No member of staff had access to child protection records and hence could not be sure whether all concerns had been followed up appropriately. This leaves pupils at risk of significant harm.
- The checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are not sufficiently thorough.
- Health and safety procedures are not maintained consistently. For example, records show that statutory checks on the fire alarm have not been carried out.
- The behaviour of a small number of pupils is not sufficiently well managed and this puts staff and pupils at risk. Necessary plans and risk assessments are not in place. This has resulted in the behaviour of a small number of pupils escalating to an unsafe level.
- Some members of staff are not fully aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Professional development for teaching staff in a range of vital areas has been neglected. This has left staff without the knowledge and skills they need. Additionally, leaders have not established a clear strategy for teaching, learning and assessment. For example, for all subjects other than mathematics, teachers receive no guidance about how to teach mixed-age classes. These factors have contributed to weak teaching, which is now typical across all age groups.
- Teachers are often inaccurate in their assessments of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, pupils' starting points are not established. This means that the activities pupils complete are usually either too easy or too hard. This limits pupils' progress.
- Pupils' learning behaviour is not effective. Some are often bored in lessons because the activities are not well matched to their existing knowledge. Although most pupils conduct themselves appropriately, they show a lack of enthusiasm for learning.
- Teachers are not skilled in identifying the gaps in pupils' learning or their misconceptions. For example, pupils in key stage 2 with insecure phonics knowledge are not supported to become fluent readers. This restricts pupils' progress in all subjects and hampers their confidence.
- The teaching of phonics is not effective. Teachers have not been trained in teaching early reading and therefore do not have the necessary expertise. This means that children's phonic knowledge at the end of Reception Year lags behind where they should be for their age. They are not supported in catching up and some pupils move through the school unable to read fluently.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to develop their reading comprehension skills. Teachers lack knowledge of the requirements of the national curriculum for reading. As a result, pupils' understanding of books and texts is often considerably underdeveloped.
- Teachers have low expectations of pupils' presentation and handwriting. Children in early years do not learn to form letters correctly. As they move into key stages 1 and 2, many pupils struggle to write neatly. Teachers do not insist that pupils produce their best work. Pupils' work often reflects a lack of pride.
- Pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge of English grammar, punctuation and spelling. The latter is a result of poor phonics teaching. These gaps are the legacy of weak teaching over time. Pupils have frequent opportunities to write at length. However, adults do not address pupils' basic errors. Pupils then continue to repeat the same mistakes in their writing. This limits their progress considerably.
- The contribution that teaching assistants make to pupils' learning is variable. Some adults are effective in supporting pupils. However, others lack necessary questioning skills, and some show a lack of engagement with pupils.
- In early years, child-led activities are not well thought out. Activities often do not represent a suitable level of challenge. Moreover, tasks do not provide opportunities for children to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Children do not find

the activities on offer enticing and hence they struggle to develop their independence and concentration as well as their knowledge.

- Following training for teachers, some improvements have been secured in the teaching of mathematics. Pupils now have frequent opportunities to reason mathematically and to solve problems. However, pupils' progress is hampered because the gaps they have in their knowledge of basic number and calculation are not addressed.
- Pupils' knowledge of wider curriculum subjects, such as science, history and geography, is patchy. This is because the curriculum is poorly designed and does not ensure full coverage of all subjects.
- Teachers take every opportunity to enrich the curriculum with first-hand experiences, for example through educational visits to local art exhibitions and discussions with the artists. However, these experiences are not consistently tailored to enhance what is being taught in the curriculum. Events are often opportunistic, based on what is offered to the school, rather than meaningfully chosen to enhance what pupils have learned or will be learning in the future.
- Pupils' learning often focuses on the cultural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales. For example, pupils recently participated in a project about quarrying. This supported their understanding of conservation and economic issues. Similarly, learning is frequently connected to understanding the role that farming plays in food supply. Pupils learn about where food comes from and about healthy eating.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. The weaknesses in relation to safeguarding mean that pupils' welfare has not been prioritised.
- Pupils' learning behaviour is not effective. Pupils are often passive in lessons and lack a thirst for learning. This is because the work they receive is rarely well matched to their starting points.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They trust their teachers to help them with any worries that may arise. Adults have focused on promoting pupils' mental health through developing pupils' strategies for recognising and dealing with their emotions.
- Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music and PE. They learn to play a range of musical instruments and have regular opportunities to showcase their talents in performances. They also enjoy taking part in sporting events and competitions with other local schools.
- Pupils have been taught about staying safe in a range of contexts. Most pupils are knowledgeable about the risks they face online and how to avoid these.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. A small but significant number of pupils show a lack of discipline and a lack of respect for others. This is because their behaviour has been poorly managed and has been allowed to escalate. Leaders have not ensured that poor behaviour is consistently followed up with appropriate sanctions. Additionally, parents are not always kept well informed about behavioural incidents involving their children.
- Almost all pupils conduct themselves well. They generally play well together and are sensible and polite.
- Most pupils attend school regularly. The school's attendance is in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Owing to the weaknesses in teaching over time, pupils underachieve considerably. Because pupils are not taught the full range of subjects, they have considerable gaps in their knowledge. Pupils' progress is weak because teaching does not identify and meet pupils' needs. This means that pupils do not reach the levels of attainment of which they are capable.
- Pupils' books show that their progress in reading, writing and science is particularly poor. Pupils also have gaps in their knowledge across a range of other subjects, including history and geography.
- In early years, children make limited progress, particularly in writing. Their writing shows little improvement in pencil control or letter formation. Considering each child's individual starting point, their attainment lags behind where they should be across all areas of learning.
- The ineffective teaching of phonics means that many pupils struggle to develop appropriate fluency in their reading. This hampers their progress in all subjects. Many pupils have poor spelling knowledge. This particularly restricts their progress in writing.
- Over the last three years, very few pupils at the end of key stage 1 or key stage 2 have reached the higher standards of learning in reading, writing or mathematics. This is because teachers' understanding of the requirements of the national curriculum is underdeveloped. Therefore, they do not reliably enable pupils to achieve or exceed the standards expected for their age.

School details

Unique reference number	121557
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10057872

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Ravey
Acting Headteacher	Katherine Marshall
Telephone number	01524 251371
Website	www.clapham.n-yorks.sch.uk
Email address	admin@clapham.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 May 2011

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than an average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. There are currently no children in Nursery Year.
- At the time of the inspection, the acting headteacher was absent from the school.
- The school is designated as having a Church of England character and is part of the Diocese of Leeds. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in September 2015.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and all speak English as their first language.
- Very few pupils are disadvantaged.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in a range of subjects in both classes. She looked at a wide range of pupils' books and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, in assembly and around the school, including at playtimes and lunchtimes. She gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions.
- The inspector met with teachers, including in relation to their role as middle leaders. She met with a group of governors, which included the chair of the governing body. A telephone call was held with a representative of the diocese. Meetings were also held with representatives of the local authority. The inspector spoke to staff both formally and informally.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents and external monitoring records of the quality of teaching and learning. She also evaluated information relating to pupils' outcomes, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector gathered parents' views at the start of the school day. She also took account of six letters from parents.

Inspection team

Karine Hendley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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