**Four Dwellings Primary Academy**  
Quinton Road West, Quinton, Birmingham, West Midlands B32 1PJ

**Inspection dates**  
9–10 July 2019

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**Summary of key findings for parents and pupils**

**This is an inadequate school**

- The school’s overall effectiveness has declined since the previous inspection. Leaders and governors have failed to address weaknesses in pupils’ attendance and behaviour successfully.
- Many teachers do not manage pupils’ behaviour effectively. Low-level disruption and poor behaviour interrupt pupils’ learning in several classes. Behaviour in a small number of Year 5 and 6 classes is unruly.
- Safeguarding is not effective. Sometimes, pupils do not feel safe at the school.
- Pupils’ attendance is consistently low. High rates of fixed-term exclusion and the use of part-time timetables contribute to this.
- Leaders do not check thoroughly enough to see whether their actions to improve teaching, learning, pupils’ attendance and behaviour are making the intended difference.
- Leaders do not use assessment well enough to have a clear understanding of pupils’ progress across each key stage.
- Teachers do not receive the feedback they need to improve their teaching.
- Teachers do not provide work that matches some pupils’ needs closely enough. Work lacks challenge for the most able pupils. As a result, pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- Pupils repeat errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, because teachers do not routinely address these.
- The wider curriculum is broad and interesting. However, teaching does not build well enough on what pupils have learned before.
- Many parents and carers are unhappy with the leadership of the school. They are concerned about pupils’ behaviour and safety.

**The school has the following strengths**

- Leaders’ improvement plans focus on the right priorities. Support from the trust and effective training are improving the skills of leaders and teachers.
- Early years provision is good. As a result, children make a strong start to their education. They make good progress and develop into confident and independent learners.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including trips and after-school clubs.
- Pupils’ progress in English and mathematics is similar to other pupils nationally by the end of Year 6.
Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

■ Urgently improve pupils’ personal development, behaviour, safety and welfare by:
  – implementing clear and consistent procedures for managing behaviour, so that all pupils feel safe, and are safe, at all times
  – ensuring that staff receive the training and support they need to manage pupils’ behaviour effectively
  – making accurate records of pupils’ attendance and behaviour and analysing these to identify and act upon patterns and trends
  – putting in place effective measures to support the small number of pupils with challenging behaviour
  – reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions and eliminating the use of part-time timetables
  – working closely with families to improve pupils’ attendance and reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school
  – carrying out thorough checks on the safety and welfare of pupils who are absent from school.

■ Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  – checking more thoroughly that actions to improve teaching, pupils’ outcomes, attendance and behaviour are making the intended difference
  – providing teachers with more precise feedback about their practice, to ensure that all pupils make good progress
  – refining and using assessment systems to provide leaders with information about pupils’ progress across each key stage
  – ensuring that learning in the wider curriculum is carefully sequenced, so that pupils make good progress within topics and year on year
  – making more precise checks on the effectiveness of strategies funded by the pupil premium
  – governors holding leaders to account more thoroughly for pupils’ attendance and behaviour
  – restoring the confidence of those parents who are dissatisfied with the school.

■ Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
  – plan learning that meets pupils’ needs more closely
  – challenge the most able pupils to achieve the high standards of which they are
capable, particularly in writing

- assess pupils’ learning in lessons and adapt their teaching so that all pupils make good progress
- routinely address errors in pupils’ spelling, grammar and punctuation so that these are not repeated.
Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have failed to develop a culture of high expectations for pupils’ behaviour and conduct. They do not provide staff with the support and guidance they need to manage pupils’ behaviour effectively. In some classes, there is persistent low-level disruption. A small number of key stage 2 classes are unruly. Some pupils say there are occasions when they feel unsafe, because of pupils’ volatile behaviour.

- Many parents are not happy with the school. All parents who responded to Ofsted’s online survey Parent View say that the school is not well led and managed. They would not recommend the school to others. Almost all parents who spoke to inspectors raised concerns about the leadership of the school and pupils’ behaviour and safety.

- Systems for recording behaviour incidents and attendance are disjointed. As a result, leaders are not able to identify trends and patterns easily. This limits their ability to get to the heart of what is causing pupils’ poor behaviour and attendance to address this effectively.

- Staff changes at teaching and leadership levels have slowed the pace at which leaders have been able to secure consistently good teaching across the school. Consequently, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and pupils’ outcomes remain.

- Improvement plans demonstrate that leaders have an accurate understanding of what needs to improve. Plans focus on the right priorities and contain detailed and appropriate actions. Although leaders do not check and evaluate the impact of their actions thoroughly enough, they have identified the most important priorities and, together with effective support from the trust, demonstrate the capacity to improve teaching and learning.

- Leaders work alongside teachers to develop their practice. They provide training to refine teachers’ skills. This has led to some improvements in the quality of teaching, for example in mathematics and phonics. There is scope now to focus on providing more precise and consistent guidance for teachers to improve pupils’ learning.

- There is a clear plan for the use of the pupil premium funding. Leaders understand disadvantaged pupils’ barriers to learning and provide additional support to address their academic, social and emotional needs. However, leaders do not make precise enough checks to ensure that this support improves those pupils’ attendance, behaviour and outcomes. As a result, they cannot be sure that they are spending this funding wisely.

- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that teachers make accurate assessments of pupils’ learning. However, leaders do not use these assessments well enough to analyse the progress pupils are making across a key stage. As a result, leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of whether pupils are making enough progress.

- Pupils study a broad curriculum. Staff enrich pupils’ experiences by planning a wide range of trips to bring their learning alive. For example, Year 2 pupils recently enjoyed a trip to Warwick Castle, so that they could see at first hand what a castle is like. However, leaders have not ensured that there is sufficient progression in the
knowledge and skills pupils learn as they move through the school.

- Many leaders are new to their roles. They receive effective support from the trust to develop their skills. The leaders for English and mathematics have strong subject knowledge. They have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility and have started to make improvements to the quality of teaching.

- Leaders recognise the need to build relationships with parents. They lead curriculum workshops to support parents in knowing how to help with their children’s learning at home. Each half term, teachers invite parents into the school to work alongside their children. Participation at these events is increasing.

- Leaders make good use of the primary physical education and sports funding. Sports coaches model lessons to improve teachers’ subject knowledge and confidence. Pupils benefit from regular opportunities to take part in inter-school sports competitions. There is a wide range of after-school sports clubs, which successfully encourages pupils to take part in sports they might not otherwise experience.

**Governance of the school**

- Those responsible for governance have been too accepting of the high rates of pupils’ absence and exclusion over time. They have not provided leaders with adequate challenge and support to improve these fundamental aspects of the school’s work.

- Governors have not ensured that all pupils receive their entitlement to a full-time education. They have allowed leaders to use part-time timetables repeatedly as a strategy to manage pupils’ behaviour.

- The local governing body consists of education professionals who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to their roles. They know the school well and hold leaders to account effectively for the quality of teaching and pupils’ outcomes. However, they have not considered carefully enough the impact that poor behaviour and attendance are having on pupils’ progress and attainment.

- Effective systems mean that the trust has clear oversight of the school’s finances, the quality of education and pupils’ outcomes. They make regular checks on the work of the school and the local governing body. The trust has rightly identified that the school needs support to improve.

**Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

- Leaders have not ensured that all pupils feel safe in the school. During the inspection, pupils from different year groups told inspectors that they sometimes feel unsafe because of the behaviour of some pupils. Inspectors witnessed incidents of unsafe behaviour during the inspection.

- On occasion, staff use physical intervention to manage pupils’ behaviour. Leaders were unable to provide evidence that staff have received training to keep themselves and pupils safe when these incidents occur.

- Leaders are inconsistent in their approach to authorising pupils’ absence from the school. Attendance records do not show clearly why some pupils are absent from the
school for significant periods of time. Leaders do not take thorough enough action to make sure that some pupils who do not attend the school for many days and weeks at a time are safe.

- Staff receive regular training to ensure that they understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. As a result, they know the signs to look for that might indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. Records show that staff report concerns about pupils’ safety and welfare in a timely manner. Leaders respond appropriately to these concerns and make referrals to external agencies when necessary.

- Leaders are vigilant about pupils’ misuse of the internet in the school. An efficient system is in place to alert leaders to any concerns. Leaders follow up these alerts thoroughly.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because it is not consistently good across year groups and subjects.

- Teachers do not use assessment information to plan tasks that match pupils’ abilities closely enough. Too often, activities focus on the needs of middle-attaining pupils. Work is sometimes too difficult for low-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers do not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently.

- When learning does not meet pupils’ needs and interests, some pupils lose interest quickly or do not attempt activities. This leads to off-task behaviour and low-level disruption, which limit pupils’ progress.

- Within lessons, teachers do not check pupils’ understanding carefully enough. As a result, they are sometimes slow to notice if pupils are finding tasks too difficult or too easy. Often, teachers stop pupils working and ask them to listen to whole-class explanations that do not match their needs. This means that some pupils are reluctant to listen and disrupt others, making it difficult for the pupils who need the additional support to engage.

- The teaching of phonics is well structured and improving. Teaching matches pupils’ abilities, which enables them to make good progress. Pupils who are not working at the expected standard receive additional support to help them to catch up. Intervention sessions are lively and motivate pupils to learn.

- The teaching of reading is improving. Teachers plan lessons based on high-quality texts that interest pupils. These texts help to widen pupils’ spoken and written vocabulary. Pupils who are not able to read the text independently receive support, so that they do not miss out. However, comprehension activities are sometimes too difficult for these pupils, which has a negative impact on their learning and confidence.

- Teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to write at length and for different purposes. Some pupils make strong progress in their use of descriptive vocabulary and punctuation. However, this is not the case in every class and for all groups of pupils. Teachers do not consistently address errors in pupils’ spelling, grammar and punctuation, which limits their progress. They do not teach the skills pupils need to write at greater depth.
The teaching of mathematics follows a clear sequence. Pupils have increasing opportunities to solve problems and reason mathematically. In some classes, pupils are making good progress. In others, teachers do not take enough account of what pupils already know and can do. This means that work does not get progressively more challenging. Some pupils spend time completing too many tasks they have already shown they can do.

Teachers deploy additional adults effectively to support pupils’ learning and behaviour. These adults know pupils well and manage their needs sensitively. In some classes, pupils with SEND make the progress they should, because they receive the right support. However, this is not the case in all classes.

Teachers plan some interesting activities in the wider curriculum. However, coverage of different topics is superficial. Activities do not deepen pupils’ learning or extend their skills and knowledge sufficiently year on year.

Teachers are committed and enthusiastic. They build positive relationships with most pupils.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

#### Inadequate

**Personal development and welfare**

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- While some pupils say they feel safe at the school, others say there are times when they feel anxious and unsafe, because of the behaviour of a small number of pupils.
- Pupils’ views about bullying are mixed. Most pupils spoken to during the inspection say that bullying happens. Some say that adults deal with this effectively. Others report that, even when they have told an adult, bullying continues. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View say that the school does not deal effectively with bullying.
- A small number of pupils do not receive their entitlement to a full-time education. This is because leaders use part-time timetables as a strategy to manage pupils’ behaviour. They do not ensure that the use of part-time timetables is exceptional and limited to very short periods of time.
- Some pupils lack resilience. They are quick to give up when they find work difficult or uninspiring. Some pupils do not take care to present their work neatly.
- Pupils are lively and friendly. During the inspection, many pupils were confident and keen to talk to inspectors about their school. However, there are pupils that lack confidence. For some, this impacts negatively on their behaviour.
- Teachers ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils learn how to manage risks they might encounter in the local community.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. During conversations with inspectors, pupils talked about how much they enjoy clubs such as badminton, drumming, basketball and jewellery making.

**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Policies for behaviour and attendance are not
clear and effective. Pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour go for too long without receiving the support they need.

- In key stage 1, a small number of pupils do not listen carefully and respond to adults’ instructions. In lower key stage 2, teachers do not consistently challenge low-level disruption and they allow pupils to distract others. In upper key stage 2, there are occasions when teachers allow pupils’ off-task behaviour to escalate, leading to disorderly classrooms. Pupils across the school say that poor behaviour regularly disrupts their learning.

- Pupils do not have a clear understanding of the school’s reward and consequence system. This is because staff do not use a consistent approach to manage pupils’ behaviour. Not all teachers use the school’s agreed ‘behaviour ladder’ to respond to pupils’ inappropriate behaviour. Furthermore, the consequence of being ‘moved down’ the ladder varies in each class for different pupils and from day to day.

- Systems for recording behaviour incidents are weak. Although leaders record incidents, they do not analyse them systematically. This means that leaders do not notice and address patterns in pupils’ behaviour well enough.

- Leaders seek advice from external agencies about how best to manage the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils. They put in place additional support. However, leaders do not make thorough enough checks to ensure that this support is effective.

- Exclusion rates have been well above the national average for the past three years and show little sign of improvement. Fixed-term exclusions are not helping a small number of the most challenging and vulnerable pupils to improve their behaviour. Although it has reduced this year, the rate of repeat exclusion is too high. The number of school days lost to exclusion has increased during the past 12 months.

- When a small number of pupils become disruptive, leaders ask parents to come into the school. Too often, parents take their children home. Leaders do not formally record this as an exclusion. This is not appropriate.

- On the playground, younger pupils play positively together. However, older pupils’ behaviour is too boisterous. Fights sometimes break out, which make pupils feel unsafe.

- Absence and persistent absence are high and show little sign of improvement. Absence for the past three years has been in the highest 10% of schools nationally. Persistent absence has been much higher than the national average in this period. This trend is continuing. Absence has increased this year. The number of pupils who are frequently absent from school is currently more than double the national average.

- In some classes, staff manage pupils’ behaviour well. They have clear expectations and insist that pupils respond quickly to instructions and stay focused on their work.

**Outcomes for pupils**

**Requires improvement**

- Pupils do not make consistently strong progress across the school, because teaching in
some classes and subjects is not good enough. In some classes, low-level disruption and disorderly behaviour hinder pupils’ progress.

- In 2018, national assessments showed that pupils’ attainment at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 rose to be in line with national averages. The school’s assessment information shows that current pupils are attaining similarly well.

- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check fell to below the national average in 2018. Leaders have taken effective action to improve the teaching of phonics this year. As a result, attainment has risen. Key stage 1 pupils enjoy reading. They use their phonic skills to decode unknown words and to spell with increasing accuracy.

- Published information shows that pupils leaving Year 6 in 2018 made average progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading and mathematics, this was a considerable improvement compared to the previous year. However, pupils do not make consistently good progress throughout the school. In some classes and subjects, pupils’ progress and attainment are better than in others. In almost all year groups, pupils’ attainment in writing is lower than in reading and mathematics.

- Teachers do not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently. As a result, too few pupils achieve the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Currently, in almost all year groups, no pupils are writing at greater depth.

- Disadvantaged pupils make progress that is broadly in line with their peers. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils working at the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics has improved in most year groups since the start of the year. However, as with other pupils, their attainment in writing is too low.

- The progress of pupils with SEND varies across year groups and in different subjects. This is because some teachers are more skilled than others at planning learning that meets these pupils’ needs.

- Pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in subjects other than English and mathematics. Although pupils study a broad range of subjects, learning does not build progressively on what they already know and can do. This limits pupils’ progress in subjects such as science, history and geography.

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- Leadership of the early years is effective. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision. They have established a culture of high expectations and are ambitious for what all children can achieve. All adults who work in the early years share this ambition.

- Over the past 12 months, leaders have taken effective action to develop the quality of teaching and to create an engaging and well-resourced indoor and outdoor learning environment. Children are reaping the benefits of these improvements.

- Almost all children start the Nursery Year with knowledge, skills and abilities below those typical for their age. By the time they enter the Reception Year, some of these children have caught up.
School assessment information and inspection evidence show that children make strong progress in the Reception Year. Although the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the early years has been below national averages for the past two years, it shows improvement. This year, leaders predict attainment to rise further, and inspection evidence reflects this.

Teaching is strong across the early years. Adults are enthusiastic and know children well. They use questioning to develop children’s thinking and to support their learning and independence. For example, during the inspection, children were carefully making ‘watches’. An adult asked them to describe what they had done so far and what else they needed to include. She then left the children to make improvements before checking their progress later.

Adults make regular and accurate assessments of children’s learning. They use these increasingly well to plan activities that match children’s abilities. This is particularly the case in mathematics, where work in books shows an appropriate level of challenge for low-, middle- and high-attaining children.

Well thought out, stimulating activities capture children’s interests and develop their knowledge and skills across the curriculum. For example, linked to the theme of ‘Tell me a story’, children in Reception sculpted birthday cakes from play dough, designed glass slippers, dressed as traditional story characters and created ‘potions’. They practised reading, writing and counting, while developing their fine and gross motor skills.

The teaching of phonics and early writing is effective. Children learn the sounds that letters make and use this knowledge to read and spell basic words. Children make good progress in their writing, moving from mark making when they enter Reception to writing simple sentences by the end of the year.

Adults promote reading well, which means that children develop a love of reading from an early age. Children in Nursery were spellbound while listening to adults read stories aloud. They were keen to share their favourite books with inspectors and bubbled over with enthusiasm while they pointed out the most exciting parts.

High expectations and clear routines support children to behave well. Children listen carefully to adults and follow instructions quickly. They develop good personal and social skills. Children work well together and independently, sharing resources and taking turns. Children have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to please.

Relationships between adults and children are strong and nurturing. As a result, children feel happy and safe at the school. Adults provide children with warm encouragement while they learn. This helps them to develop into confident learners.

Adults’ expectations of children increase as they move through the early years. In Nursery, adults expect children to sit and listen for increasing periods of time. By the time children near the end of the Reception Year, they have less choice in their activities and work more formally for some of the day. This prepares children well for learning in Year 1.

Prior to starting in the early years, adults make home visits to start to get to know children and their families. This helps children settle well. Adults continue to work closely with parents once their children are at the school. Parents can join their children in activities at the beginning of each day. Adults lead workshops to guide
parents in how to support their children’s learning at home.

- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Staff receive appropriate training, and the indoor and outdoor areas are safe and secure.
School details

Unique reference number: 139131
Local authority: Birmingham
Inspection number: 10088498

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

Type of school: Primary
School category: Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils: 3 to 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll: 429
Appropriate authority: Board of trustees
Chair: Jack Boyer
Headteacher: Penelope Webb
Telephone number: 0121 464 3351
Website: www.fourdwellingsprimaryacademy.org
Email address: contactus@fourdwellingsprimaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection: 7–8 February 2017

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET). The trust comprises 57 schools nationally. The board of trustees has overarching responsibility for the governance of the school. A local governing body is in place to hold leaders to account for the school’s performance. This governing body reports to the board of trustees.
- Nearly two thirds of pupils are disadvantaged. This is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average. The number of pupils with an education, health and care plan is broadly in line with the national average.
- There are two classes in each year group from the Reception Year to Year 6. There is one part-time Nursery class.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils’ learning in parts of 39 lessons. Some of these observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. An inspector visited the breakfast club.

- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons, at social times and around the school. They spoke informally to pupils in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors also met formally with two groups of pupils.

- Inspectors examined the quality of work in pupils’ English, mathematics, science and topic books. Inspectors scrutinised work in children’s learning journals in the early years settings.

- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the two assistant headteachers and other leaders. The lead inspector met with two representatives from the AET multi-academy trust. She also met with the chair of the local governing body.

- Inspectors spoke with staff around school. There were no responses to Ofsted’s online staff questionnaire.

- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plans; information about pupils’ achievement; records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance; minutes of trust and local governing body meetings; and information on the school’s website.

- Inspectors took into consideration the 30 responses to Parent View, including the 18 free-text comments. Inspectors spoke to parents during both days of the inspection.

**Inspection team**

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<tr>
<td>Claire Jones</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Inspector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lois Kelly</td>
<td>Ofsted Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Maybank</td>
<td>Ofsted Inspector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesley Yates</td>
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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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