

Inspection of Roman Way First School

Colts Lane, Winyates West, Redditch, Worcestershire B98 0LH

Inspection dates: 10–11 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a difficult time. Several staff, including leaders, left and new subject leaders have not yet started. Standards in some subjects have declined. The headteacher and governors have not focused on improving the school quickly enough.

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They enjoy the clubs the school offers, such as gardening and art clubs. Pupils enjoy singing and performing in school and in the wider community. But the quality of education is poor. Curriculum planning is weak, and teachers do not have high enough expectations for the pupils. On many occasions, pupils make little progress in their learning.

The teaching of reading has declined since the last inspection. This is because staff do not teach phonics well enough. Leaders do not have a good enough understanding of why pupils do not read well.

Pupils say that they feel safe. Some pupils said that they had been bullied in the school, but were confident that staff helped them to sort this out. Their behaviour on the playground and around school is generally respectful and caring. However, there are instances of low-level disruptive behaviour in some classes. This is not always dealt with by staff.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Senior leaders and governors do not have a good enough overview of the areas of weakness across the school. The school's self-evaluation is overgenerous. Plans to improve the school lack detail.

Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what all pupils can achieve. This is because the curriculum is poorly planned and sequenced. Teachers do not get enough guidance from leaders about what they should be teaching. As a result, the curriculum has significant gaps.

Teaching does not build on pupils' previous knowledge and skills. This prevents pupils from making the progress they could. Staff do not have a clear view of what the pupils know and can do. As a result, many pupils complete work that is either too easy or too hard. This is also the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers' use of assessment is weak. They do not identify where pupils can improve their work or guide them in a meaningful way.

The teaching of early reading is weak. Teachers do not have the subject knowledge they need to teach reading well enough. Teachers do not ensure that pupils are taught the correct phonic sounds. Many pupils cover the same sounds too many times. Teachers do not say the sounds in the right way and pupils are learning to say sounds incorrectly. Too many pupils are struggling with their reading. The books they take home do not match the sounds they know.

Teachers do not understand how to teach the writing curriculum. Too often, they allow pupils to write without any thought to the content and presentation of their writing. This means that many pupils do not understand what they are writing or why. They are not helped to become better writers. The sequencing of writing does not help pupils to learn about different styles of text. As a result, the pupils are not clear about how to write for different purposes. For example, they do not know how to write a diary, a report or a recount. Lessons do not help pupils build on their knowledge and skills in a logical way. Teachers do not pick up on pupils' basic errors when looking at their work. Too many pupils make the same mistakes several times.

Not all pupils are receiving the full content of the mathematics curriculum. Leaders are not keeping a close enough eye on what pupils are learning in mathematics. This is placing pupils at a disadvantage as they are missing out on key mathematical knowledge. Leaders have not ensured that the extra funding given for disadvantaged pupils has been spent well enough. As a result, these pupils are not acquiring the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the next steps of their education.

Children in the early years are making gains in their learning appropriate for their age. Children play and learn alongside each other, sharing resources when completing activities. The early years leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the early years. However, leaders have not yet begun taking action to improve the weaker areas of the early years provision.

Pupils are aware of British values and can talk about the main values of respect and trust. The personal, social and emotional education curriculum helps them to develop a better understanding of relationships and how to keep healthy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that the appropriate checks have been made to ensure that staff are safe to work with the children. The staff know what to do if they have any concerns to report. Staff have received training in how to protect children from harm. However, staff are not sufficiently aware of the specific issues that might affect pupils in this area.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are not doing enough to tackle the weaknesses in the quality of education. The sequencing of the curriculum is not well developed. There are no clear plans in place that identify the skills and knowledge pupils need to learn in a range of subjects, including mathematics. As a result, pupils are not making the necessary gains in their learning. Most pupils are falling behind or have gaps in their learning. Leaders need to review the curriculum so that it covers the skills and knowledge expected from the national curriculum. They need to ensure that

the curriculum is well planned and taught so that more pupils across the school reach age-related expectations.

- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils. This is because they do not have a good enough understanding of what pupils can and cannot do. Teachers need to develop their use of assessment so that pupils are given the right level of work that is challenging across a range of subjects.
- The teaching of reading is weak, and outcomes in phonics have declined. Not enough pupils are developing the key skills they need to learn to read. Teachers lack the necessary subject knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that staff are well trained in how to teach pupils to read and deliver good-quality phonics lessons. There needs to be a clear understanding of what pupils need to know and be able to do in reading by the end of each year group. Teachers need to ensure that pupils take home reading books that are matched to the sounds they know. This should support their reading and help them to understand the content of the books.
- Gaps in the writing curriculum mean that teachers do not teach pupils to write for different purposes. Leaders need to ensure that there is a clear structure to writing across the school. This structure needs to teach the pupils how to write well for different purposes.
- Too many pupils repeat mistakes in their writing. This is because the pupils are not given the opportunity to redraft their work and build on previous knowledge. Teachers need to identify how pupils can improve their writing and help pupils to achieve this.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	116733
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10131333
Type of school	First deemed primary
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Wood
Headteacher	Jane Scarborough
Website	www.romanway.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 February 2015

Information about this school

- The school has seen considerable staffing turbulence since the last inspection. A number of teachers have left the school. The school is currently without subject leaders for English or mathematics.
- Leaders have recently appointed two new assistant headteachers.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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.

- We met with senior leaders, including the headteacher, assistant headteacher and three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and the vice-chair. We also spoke to leaders with responsibility for other aspects of the school, such as SEND and the early years.

- We spoke to several staff about safeguarding. We also checked the school's documentation in relation to safeguarding, including the single central record, training records, attendance and behaviour records and the school's safeguarding policy.
- We focused on reading, writing, music and art. As part of this focus, we talked to subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, heard pupils read and talked to them about their work.
- We spoke to parents and carers and considered their views from the 15 responses to Parent View and 11 free-text comments received. We also looked at the seven responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and the 30 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- We observed pupils at playtime and talked to them informally, as well as meeting with groups of pupils.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Susan Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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